

**MODELLING VISITOR EXPERIENCE:  
A CASE STUDY FROM WORLD HERITAGE SITES, THAILAND**

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## ABSTRACT

The subject of this Ph.D. Thesis is *Modelling Visitor Experience: A Case Study from World Heritage Sites, Thailand*. The research is conducted in three historical parks in Thailand by using an inductive approach of Grounded Theory. This aims to propose a model of visitor experience of heritage. It focuses on experience consumption related to what, why and how visitors consume the heritage experience when they interact with the cultural heritage. The construction of experience, factors affecting experience consumption and patterns of experience consumption are explored in this thesis. It provides theoretical and methodological contribution to the knowledge in both tourism and management fields.

The opportunity to collect data for this study stems from the three historical sites in Thailand by which grounded theory approach allows for a wider variety of data collection methods. The research had been conducted in the historical sites for over six months during October 2003 – March 2004. The results presented in this thesis are based on a survey of 60 cases of participant observations with ethnographic interview and 180 cases of observation with visitors visiting the historical sites, and 48 unstructured and semi-structured interviews with visitors who visited those sites. The results are also based on a number of supplementary data such as travel journals, visitor books, and interpreted photographs written and taken by visitors who visited to the sites. Survey instruments for this study consist of interview and observation guides that were developed accordingly to emergent concepts during the field survey.

The contributions comprise four major themes. Firstly, the development of the '*Visitor Heritage Experience Model*' based on multiple sources of data conceptualised by a systematic analysis process. The model provides the insight of visitors' subjective interactions with the heritage when they were engaged in a consumption of experience. This study reveals the multi-dimensional nature of visitor experience which expands what has been reported in the literatures. It also explains the complex attributes of visitors' on-site experience in terms of process and components of experience construction. Secondly, the emergent of '*Interactive Experience Process*' as a core of the proposed model, acknowledges the dynamic nature of on-site experience through a multi-phase experience process and multiplicity of visitors' experience consumption practices. Rather than acknowledging the tourist typology, this study explores the extent to which the elements of experience hold in

different contexts and types of consumption experiences. The emergent theory can be used as a substantive theory to apply for other case studies involving visitors' experience of place. Thirdly, the findings of this study have significant implications for designing principles and practices of an effective and sustainable visitor management in cultural heritage sites. The development of the '*Visitor Experience Management Framework*' discusses the creative use of the heritage and visitor empowerment to provide interactive experience of heritage to visitors. It suggests the consideration of a paradigm shift and crucial elements of visitor experience management especially in sensitive cultural heritage sites. Finally, this study provides several conceptual and methodological research perspectives through the use of '*Grounded Theory Approach*'. The applications of the grounded theory's systematic analysis process can be adopted by future consumer and management research.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2	BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.....	2
1.3	THE NEED FOR THE STUDY.....	5
1.4	HERITAGE TOURISM IN THAILAND.....	6
1.5	SCOPE OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.5.1	Research Questions.....	7
1.5.2	Overview of Study.....	8
1.5.3	The site syrvey.....	8
1.6	OUTLINE OF THE THESIS.....	10
1.7	CONCLUSION.....	13
CHAPTER 2	THE MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE TOURISM.....	14
2.1	INTRODUCTION.....	14
2.2	HERITAGE AND HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS.....	14
2.2.1	Definitions of Heritage and Heritage attractions through Different View Points	14
2.3	HERITAGE TOURISM EXPERIENCE.....	18
2.3.1	Heritage Tourism Experience.....	18
2.3.2	The Paradox of Management of Cultural Heritage Tourism and Tourism Experience.....	19
2.4	THE HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE.....	21
2.5	CONCLUSION.....	25
CHAPTER 3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	26
3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	26
3.2	THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	27
3.3	RESEARCH DESIGN.....	27
3.3.1	Research Paradigm: Interpretive Social-science Paradigm.....	28
3.3.2	Research Approach: Grounded Theory.....	30
3.3.2.1	Rationale for using grounded theory in this study.....	31
3.3.2.2	Reflexivity and experience of the grounded theory.....	32
3.4	THE PROCESS OF BUILDING THEORY THROUGH THE GROUNDED THEORY.....	33
3.4.1	The Research Process Design.....	35
3.4.2	Data Collection.....	38



3.4.2.1	Developing the rigorous data collection protocols: .....	38
3.4.2.2	Entering the field - data collection methods .....	38
3.4.2.3	Reflexivity of data collection process .....	46
3.4.3	Data Ordering .....	47
3.4.4	Data Analysis .....	47
3.4.4.1	Open coding .....	51
3.4.4.2	Axial coding .....	53
3.4.4.3	Selective Coding .....	55
3.4.5	Literature Comparison .....	64
3.5	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	66
3.6	CONCLUSION .....	67
CHAPTER 4	THE VISITOR HERITAGE EXPERIENCE .....	69
4.1	INTRODUCTION .....	69
4.2	VISITOR HERITAGE EXPERIENCE MODEL .....	69
4.2.1	The Visitor Interactive Experience Process .....	71
4.2.2	Factors Constructing Visitor Heritage Experience .....	72
4.3	COMPONENTS OF EXPERIENCE .....	73
4.3.1	Perceived Value of Heritage .....	74
4.3.2	Stimuli .....	82
4.3.3	Visitor Involvement .....	83
4.3.4	Acquisition of Knowledge .....	84
4.3.5	Matter of Choice .....	89
4.3.6	Perception of Authenticity .....	91
4.3.7	Behavioural Norms .....	95
4.3.8	Conservation Ethic .....	97
4.4	CONCLUSION .....	99
CHAPTER 5	THE VISITOR HERITAGE EXPERIENCE .....	100
5.1	INTRODUCTION .....	100
5.2	EXPERIENTIAL ASPECTS .....	101
5.2.1	Quest for Culture .....	102
5.2.2	Quest for Religion .....	107
5.2.3	Quest for Sense of Place .....	111
5.2.4	Quest for Nostalgia .....	116
5.2.5	Quest of Pleasure .....	121
5.2.6	Quest for Heritage Trails .....	126
5.3	EXPERIENCE CONSUMPTION PRACTICE .....	128
5.3.1	Enjoying the sight .....	129

5.3.2	Appreciating the Heritage.....	140
5.3.3	Idealising the Past.....	148
5.3.4	Doing the Park.....	156
5.3.5	Exploring the Heritage .....	164
5.3.6	Comprehending the Heritage.....	172
5.3.7	Religious Rituals.....	186
5.3.8	Transforming of Sight.....	190
5.4	EVALUATION OF EXPERIENCE.....	206
5.4.1	Elements of Evaluation .....	207
5.4.2	Managing the Outcome .....	218
5.5	CONCLUSION .....	224
CHAPTER 6	EXPERIENCE IN TOURISM CONTEXT.....	226
6.1	INTRODUCTION .....	226
6.2	EXPERIENCES IN TOURISM CONTEXT.....	226
6.2.1	Experience Process.....	226
6.2.2	On-site experience.....	229
6.2.3	Dynamic Nature of Experience .....	230
6.3	VISITOR EXPERIENCE.....	231
6.3.1	Visitor Experience through Different Approaches.....	232
6.3.2	Meaning of Experience .....	239
6.3.3	Authenticity of Visitor Experience.....	243
6.3.3.1	Approach to authenticity.....	244
6.3.3.2	Authenticity and experience consumption .....	246
6.4	AN APPLICATION OF LITERATURE TO THE STUDY .....	249
CHAPTER 7	THEORETICAL COMPARISON AND DISCUSSION .....	250
7.1	INTRODUCTION .....	250
7.2	EMERGING THEORY WITH RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND THEORETICAL COMPARISON.....	250
7.2.1	Response to the Research Questions One (RQ1) – The construction of visitor experience.....	251
7.2.2	Response to the Research Question Two (RQ2) – The Rationales behind Visitor Experience.....	258
7.2.3	Research Question Three (RQ3) – Visitor Heritage Experience.....	267
CHAPTER 8	CONCLUSION: THE RESEARCH EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	289
8.1	INTRODUCTION.....	289
8.2	THE RESEARCH EVALUATION: CONTRIBUTION OF THE THESIS .....	289

8.2.1 Theoretical Contribution .....	289
8.2.2 Methodological Contributions.....	295
8.3 VISITOR EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT IN HERITAGE SITES.....	304
8.3.1 Crucial Elements for Visitor Experience Management.....	305
8.3.2 Experience Principles and Practices.....	306
8.3.3 Visitor Experience Management Framework.....	307
8.4 MY REFLECTION ON PH.D. RESEARCH JOURNEY.....	316
8.5 CONCLUSION.....	320
REFERENCES .....	321
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A: THE SURVEY SITES .....	335
APPENDIX B: CLASSIFICATION HERITAGE .....	358
APPENDIX C: UNESCO SELECTION CRITERIA OF WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE SITE.....	360
APPENDIX D: DEFINITIONS OF HERITAGE TOURISM.....	361
APPENDIX E: THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF CATEGORIES AND INSTRUMENT USED IN THEORISING THE GROUNDED THEORY .....	362
APPENDIX F: THE TOURIST TYPOLOGIES.....	384



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	Characteristics of research method under the interpretive social science paradigm .....	30
Table 3.2	Examples of the application of grounded theory to tourism research.....	33
Table 3.3	The process of building grounded theory .....	34
Table 3.4	Reflexivity of the pilot study .....	36
Table 3.5	The structure of data collection.....	39
Table 3.6	Illustration of open coding in theoretical memos.....	52
Table 3.7	Rational questions used for coding .....	60
Table 3.8	Illustration of conditional relationship guide .....	61
Table 3.9	Illustration of reflective coding matrix .....	61
Table 4.1	The concepts relating to visitor experience at heritage site .....	73
Table 4.2	The perceived value of heritage and its dimensional range and properties ...	74
Table 4.3	Concepts of the matter of choice .....	89
Table 5.1	Definition of heritage used by visitors.....	100
Table 5.2	Quest for culture: dimensions and characteristics.....	103
Table 5.3	Quest for religion: characteristic and dimensions.....	107
Table 5.4	Quest for sense of place: characteristics and dimensions .....	112
Table 5.5	Quest for nostalgia: dimensions and characteristics .....	117
Table 5.6	Quest for pleasure: characteristics and dimensions .....	122
Table 5.7	Quest for heritage trails: characteristics.....	126
Table 5.8	Characteristics of enjoying the sight.....	130
Table 5.9	Characteristics of appreciating the heritage .....	140
Table 5.10	Characteristics of idealising the past.....	149
Table 5.11	Characteristics of doing the park .....	157
Table 5.12	Characteristics of exploring the heritage .....	164
Table 5.13	Characteristics of comprehending the heritage.....	172
Table 5.14	Characteristics of religious ritual .....	186
Table 5.15	The three concepts relating to the evaluation of experience.....	207
Table 6.1	The literature reviews and the objectives of discussion.....	240
Table 6.2	Cohen's modes of tourist experience .....	248
Table 6.3	Urry's five types of visual consumption.....	249
Table 7.1	Dimension and aspect of authenticity .....	264

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Multi-stage nature of tourism consumption.....	4
Figure 1.2	Overview of research.....	8
Figure 1.3	Flow chart of thesis structure.....	12
Figure 2.1	The model of heritage and heritage tourism shows how many elements influence and shape heritage experience.....	18
Figure 2.2	Heritage management process with visitor experience at its heart.....	22
Figure 3.1	The research process for modelling visitor experience .....	35
Figure 3.2	Coding procedures in data analysis process .....	48
Figure 3.3	Data analysis process.....	49
Figure 3.4	The open coding process .....	51
Figure 3.5	Simplified paradigm model used for construction of categories .....	54
Figure 3.6	Illustration of category constructed by paradigm model .....	55
Figure 3.7	The Illustration of selective coding process .....	57
Figure 3.8	The interrelated process of data collection, data ordering and data analysis in grounded theory .....	60
Figure 3.9	Illustrate causal relationship matrix used in theorising core categories .....	61
Figure 3.10	Paradigm model used in selective coding.....	62
Figure 3.11	Core category and categories developed in selective coding .....	63
Figure 3.12	The development of proposed model by grounded theory approach.....	64
Figure 4.1	The visitor heritage experience model .....	70
Figure 4.2	Framework of the acquisition of knowledge .....	85
Figure 5.1	Experiential aspects in visitor perspectives .....	101
Figure 5.2	The categories and dimensions of experiential aspects .....	102
Figure 5.3	Experience consumption practices .....	128
Figure 5.4	The experience consumption practice: categories and dimensional ranges..	129
Figure 5.5	Framework of enjoying the sight.....	130
Figure 5.6	Framework of appreciating the heritage.....	141
Figure 5.7	Framework of idealising the past.....	157
Figure 5.8	Framework of doing the park .....	164
Figure 5.9	Framework of exploring the heritage .....	173
Figure 5.10	Framework of comprehending the heritage.....	174
Figure 5.11	Process of orientating .....	178
Figure 5.12	Interpretive framework of assimilating .....	182



Figure 5.13	Interpretive framework of analyzing the heritage .....	182
Figure 5.14	The framework of religious ritual.....	186
Figure 5.15	Framework of Transforming the Sight .....	190
Figure 5.16	Evaluation of experience framework.....	207
Figure 6.1	Model of leisure experience .....	227
Figure 6.2	Conceptual model of wilderness experience .....	229
Figure 6.3	The travel experience process.....	231
Figure 6.4	The three phases of the vacation experience .....	231
Figure 6.5	Theory of planned behaviour (TPB).....	232
Figure 6.6	Experience triangle.....	241
Figure 7.1	The construction of visitor experience .....	251
Figure 7.2	The roles of heritage in the interactive experience process .....	255
Figure 7.3	The construction and effect of the external environment in the evaluation of experience .....	257
Figure 7.4	Classification of heritage value perceived by visitors .....	259
Figure 7.5	Significances of heritage to visitors.....	261
Figure 7.6	A comparison of experience models.....	270
Figure 7.7	Continuum of experience consumption.....	280
Figure 8.1	Visitor Heritage Experience Model.....	290
Figure 8.2	Rules of interactive experience management .....	307
Figure 8.3	Visitor Experience Management Framework.....	308
Figure 8.4	Interpretations of place and competing variables in the representation of World Cultural Heritage.....	310
Figure 8.5	On-site experience management implementations .....	313

## LIST OF IMAGES

Image 4.1	The image of a staged performance – light and sound performance .....	92
Image 4.2	Illuminated Ruins.....	92
Image 4.3	Buddhist monks wandering around the ruins.....	93
Image 4.4	The heritage ‘Then’ and.....	94
Image 4.5	The heritage ‘Now’ .....	95
Image 4.6	Visitor climbing a ruined monument without realizing its religious value...	97
Image 4.7	Visitor imitating Buddha posture.....	97
Image 5.1	A visitor roams a ruined temple in Sukhothai Historical Park.....	101
Image 5.2	Atmospheric setting of the heritage site offers an opportunity for what visitor mentioned ‘ <i>a good bike out</i> ’ .....	132
Image 5.3	The park-like atmosphere offers an opportunity for a relaxing day.....	133
Image 5.4	The sunset set against historic scenery.....	135
Image 5.5	Visitor experiencing a peaceful moment in a tranquil ruined temple .....	136
Image 5.6	A peaceful and spiritual atmosphere offering visitors escape and freedom..	137
Image 5.7	Picturing the past ‘ <i>then</i> ’ and ‘ <i>now</i> ’ used by visitors to idealize the past .....	151
Image 5.8	An illustration of temple layout used for object manipulation.....	152
Image 5.9	A sight of heritage that enchants visitors’ imagination of the past .....	154
Image 5.10	A ruin by which visitor quoted ‘ <i>I like the way it’s broken</i> ’ .....	155
Image 5.11	A picnic scene appearing everywhere in heritage sites.....	161
Image 5.12	A visitor with a headless Buddha statue .....	163
Image 5.13	The perspective from the front gate of Wat Mahathat.....	188
Image 5.14	A photo of the most respected Buddha in Sukhothai representing visitor’s artistic view of the statue .....	191
Image 5.15	Local people harvesting watercress in Sukhothai Historic Park.....	192
Image 5.16	Image of the famous Wat Pra Sri San Petch representing the set of scene ...	193
Image 5.17	The sunset at Wat Sra Sri in Sukhothai Historical Park.....	194
Image 5.18	The famous desired sight of Wat Ratchaburana .....	195
Image 5.19	The image of reclining Buddha at Wat Logayasutha.....	196
Image 5.20	The image of Buddha head at Wat Mahathat Ayuttaya worshipped by visitors.....	197
Image 5.21	An impressive scene of Wat Mahathat Sukhothai .....	197
Image 5.22	The sight of ruins and Buddha statue at Wat Sri Chum .....	198
Image 5.23	The three prang (stupa) at Wat Sri Sawai .....	199

Image 5.24 ‘ <i>An impression of the past splendour</i> ’ quoted by a visitor.....	.200
Image 5.25 A row of headless Buddha representing a quest for nostalgia .....	.200
Image 5.26 The Buddha head at Wat Mahathat.....	.201
Image 5.27 The historic ruins of Wat Pra Sri Sanpetch representing a nostalgic Sentiment of history .....	.202
Image 5.28 Wat Yai Chaimongkol illustrating the historic victory of the great king.....	.203
Image 5.29 Hand-drawn image of Ayutthaya which reflect the town structure and the significances of heritage attractions .....	.204
Image 5.30 Hand-drawn image of Ayutthaya that reflects the town structure and significance of heritage attractions.....	.205



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This research was undertaken at three world cultural heritage sites in Thailand to investigate how visitors experienced heritage attractions and to propose a model of visitor experience. The participants involved in this research were mainly visitors to three historical sites. Through the grounded theory approach, comprising inductive analysis and multiple data collection methods (i.e. in-depth interviews, observations, and document) with a broad range of visitors and insiders (heritage site staff, community and tour guides), a model of the visitor heritage interactive experience was generated that contributes to the limited existing knowledge in the area of attraction consumption. The focus of discussion (Chapter 4, 5) and theoretical comparison (Chapter 6) highlights the process, practices and characteristics of visitor experience consumption, which in turn provides some implications for visitor management.

There are many studies researching tourism consumption; however, the visitor experience at attractions has not been well explored. The majority of existing studies examining tourism and leisure experience have not attempted to explore the multiplicity and complexity of how visitors experience the sites when they are there. The lack of in-depth research into the visitor experience is surprising because in the 1990s Urry (1990) identified the concept of the “*tourist gaze*” and in doing so identified the ways that tourists manipulate contexts and create their own personal experiences. Ryan (1997) also raised the issue of the subjectivity of tourist experiences and suggested that positivism had dominated tourism research to that point. Wickens (2002), Uriely *et al* (2002) and Hemmington *et al* (2005) conducted primary research that revealed the tourists experience as a diverse and plural phenomenon and Uriely (2005) developed this theme further when he identified four conceptual developments in the broader tourist experience including the subjectivity and multiplicity of experiences. Indeed, in exploring the “*shift toward postmodernist or late modernist theorizing*,” Uriely (2005) suggests that future research should not ignore “*the nature of the visited object or the particular form of tourism*” as a determinant of the subjective experience. Moreover, future studies related to visitor experience should focus on the nature of the



relationship between the objects and the subjects that constitute the experience. The most recent study on consumption of the past as an experience (Chronis 2005) provides the conceptual framework of benefits embedded in visitor experience; however, the author suggests that future research should also examine the extent to which the elements of experience hold in different contexts and types of consumption experiences.

The lack of research into visitor experiences means the nature of visitors and their subjective interactions with heritage attractions are not fully understood. The research into the on-site experience will provide a deeper understanding of the interaction between visitors and attractions, the meaning of experience for the visitor, and their heritage interpretation. Consequently, this study aims to explore the visitors experience as a much wider and deeper concept. This study seeks to understand visitor experiences in their own terms. This knowledge could, in turn, lead to the development and application of sustainable visitor management practices at the heritage sites.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the tourism industry. Significance of tourism to cultural and natural sites has existed at least since the time of Greek antiquity, as reflected by the Hellenistic world's invention of the Seven Wonders of the World (Endresen *et al* 1999). In its forecast *Tourism 2020 Vision*, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 2004) predicts that cultural tourism will be one of the five key tourism market segments in the future, and notes that growth in this area will present an increasing challenge in terms of managing flows to cultural sites. In short, the economic impact of heritage is significant and still growing; thus, it makes an important contribution to economic development of the countries to which the heritage tourism belongs. However, it can generate a variety of positive and negative impacts. There is tension between tourism and cultural heritage when cultural heritage serves as a tourist attraction. Tourism can encourage the revival of traditions and finance the protection of cultural heritage as well as increase visitor appreciation of that heritage; however, tourism can also damage heritage when not well managed, and limits on visitation can damage tourism or affect its expansion (Timothy and Boyd 2002). The challenge is, therefore, to manage the future growth of the industry so as to minimize the negative impacts on the cultural environment and host community whilst maximizing the benefits it brings in terms of economic growth, conservation of culture and nature and socio-cultural environment. Indeed, visitor management has become an important element of cultural management that aims to balance the needs and requirements of visitors with the potential impacts that visitors may have on fragile cultural heritage. Furthermore, the literature indicates that visitor experience is a central element of attraction management and consumer satisfaction (Dann 1981; Martin 1989; Saleh and Ryan 1991; Vogt and



Fesenmaier 1995; Hall and McAuliffe 1998; Frochot and Hughes 2000; Khan 2003). Hence, destinations and attractions must cater to repackaging the visitor experience they offer and recognise the potential that exists from selling and reselling the past.

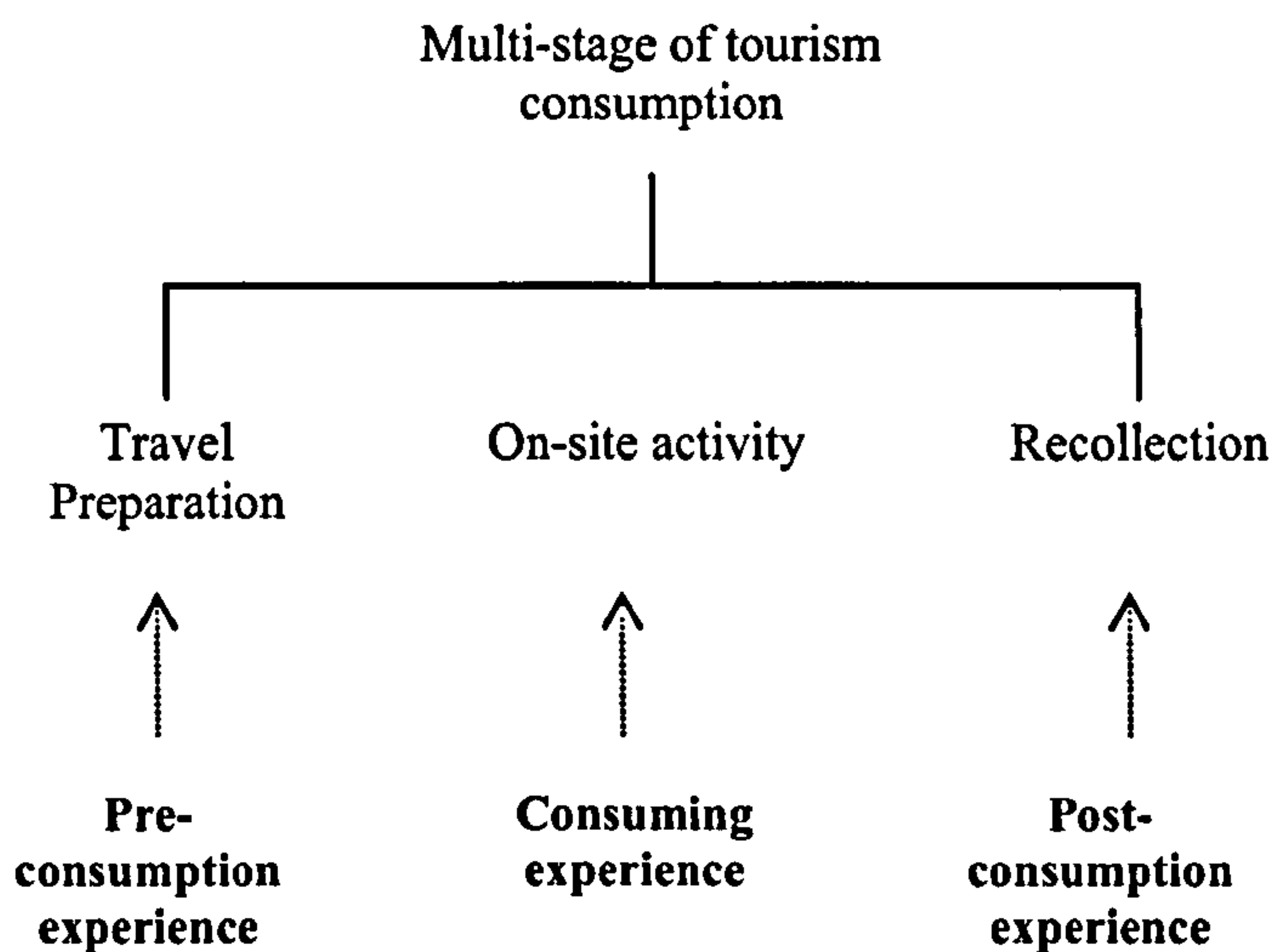
The experience has been claimed to be an objective of various tourism studies; however, most studies still have not reached the specific knowledge on essential elements and experience construction. In the academic study of tourism, the experience of visitors itself has often been neglected as the focus has customarily been on geography with the greatest contributions in the area of impacts and conservation, and marketing (Mitchell and Murphy 1991; Hall 1992; McCarthy 1991, 1994; Fennell 1999; Gordon and Goodall 2000). Consequently, there is still little knowledge in the tourism academic arena about consumption that yields experience of place, which in this thesis is considered a '*tourism product*'. The tourist's experience has been studied in the social sciences with a primary focus on the perceived image of tourism (Boorstin 1972; Turner and Ash 1975), the perceptions of authenticity (McCannell 1976; Urry 1992; Goulding 1997), cognitive behaviour (Pearce 1988; Walmsley and Jenkins 1992) and perspective of experience (Tuan 1977). The hedonic and experiential typologies of consumption practice are also widely acknowledged (Cohen 1979; Holbrook and Hirschman 1983; Jewell and Crofts 2001; McKercher *et al* 2002; Goulding 2002). These studies describe an interesting consumption process consisting of motivation, choice of destinations, product assessment and satisfaction. MacCannell (1976) and Dann (1996) considered symbolic structures that characterize tourist experiences. From a traditional orientation, the knowledge about tourist's cognition of places is the closest to an understanding of tourists' experience of place. The relationship between identity and consumption and experience has become one of growing interest to scholars of consumer behaviour (Belk 1988; Elliott 1994; Thompson and Hirschman 1995; Belk 1995; Goulding 1997). Nonetheless, the consumption context of personal experience should be taken into account in any attempt to understand visitors while consuming experience at the places.

It has been found that the consumption context of 'on-site experience' of cultural heritage attractions has not been well explored. Moreover, various scholars have suggested that the understanding of how visitors consume or actually engage in the production process while consuming and the subjective experience as well as the relationships between the heritage objects and the subjects that constitute experience and the construction of experience should be given consideration (Holt, 1995, Chronis 2005; Uriely 2005). Hence, identifying visitors' behaviour and experience while on tour should give interesting concepts of interaction that will contribute to the body of knowledge related to tourism consumption.

Researchers have noted the multi-dimensional nature of the consumption experience and the multi-phase nature of tourism and leisure experience that involves five distinct, and yet interactive

packages. The process of the tourism experience includes anticipation, travel to the site, the on-site activity, return travel, and a recollection, each of which entails a different kind of tourism and leisure experience (Clawson 1963, Tinsley and Tinsley 1986; Kelly 1987). Mathieson and Wall (1982) divide tourism demand into five stages: travel desire, information collection and evaluation, travel decision, travel preparation and experience, and travel satisfaction evaluation. This study focuses on the consuming experience stage which occurs while visitors are visiting the site. The multi-stage nature of tourism consumption of visitors is conceptualised in Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1 Multi-stage nature of tourism consumption**



Despite the multi-stages of tourism experience, the majority of existing studies examining tourism and leisure experience have not attempted to explore the complexity and dynamics of the real-time visitor experience on the site. There are studies which provide some important insights into on-site real-time perceptions of an activity (Hull *et al* 1992, Roggenbuck and Driver 2000, Chronis 2005, Uriely 2005). A study on park visitation by Mugican and Vicente De Lucio 1995 has reported that on-site experience plays an important role on tourism landscape preferences, and it suggests the importance of providing more opportunities for visitors to interact with the park's peculiar and unique features, given that this interaction has positive effects on visitors' attitudes towards its landscape. Hence, identifying the reasons behind the differences in preferences and patterns of consumption is a valuable tool to be used in activities directed at determining conservation attitudes. The goal of sustainable heritage management, therefore, should be to maximize visitors' appreciation and enjoyment of heritage places and minimize negative impacts.



### 1.3 THE NEED FOR THE STUDY

Although cultural heritage tourism has been identified in numerous studies as important new areas of consumer demand, it is only in the last two decades that cultural heritage has been identified as a specific tourism market (Richards 1996). Chronis (2005) contends that the major trend related to selling the past is identified as a 'contemporary quest for history' (Goulding 1999) and involves various consumption practices that result in the '*commodification of history*' (Barthel 1996). However, notwithstanding importance and multiplicity of these consumption phenomena are lacking a theoretical viewpoint that will assist in better understanding and facilitating the experience of the past (P: 213). There is awareness of the need for future studies to focus on the nature of the relationship between the objects and the subjects that constitute the experience (Uriely 2005).

Further, because of the expanding array of heritage experience (especially on-site experience), heritage tourism development, management and protection remain important public concerns. This involves the consumption of heritage by visitors. The heritage should be managed overtly to provide opportunities for the realization of '*meeting visitor expectation*' and '*enriching visitor experience*'. Therefore, understanding the construction of heritage experience and its aspects is fundamental to effective, efficient and responsive heritage management. The research should aim to explore and examine the visitor experience of heritage, and its construction and meaning during the phrase of experiential engagement.

Visitors are key stakeholders in tourism and thus the need to understand them is fundamental in achieving tourism that is more sustainable and ethical. This study is therefore conducted to investigate the evidence of the visitor experience at the world cultural heritage sites in an attempt to formulate a conceptual model of heritage experience consumption. Indeed, the conceptual framework will be conceptualised from the perspectives of visitors who are considered a major stakeholder in heritage tourism management. The issues identified will contribute to an effective and valuable sustainable marketing and development plan, and ultimately improve the visitor management. In summary, this study focuses on visitors' interaction with the cultural heritage. The conceptual model will be developed through a discussion of experience consumption characteristics and the factors constructing the experience consumption of cultural heritage. Consequently, the study will provide a new focus for increasing the quality of the visitor experience. Based on this study, recommendations for visitor management and the future development of cultural heritage tourism products and destination will be addressed in order to strengthen the unique elements of the cultural heritage attractions and valuable visitor experience



leading to sustainability in tourism development. The sustainable development will, in turn, provide local people with economic benefits in the long-run.

## 1.4 HERITAGE TOURISM IN THAILAND

Tourism has influenced the Thai economy and played a major role, as number one industry, in the regional development priorities with activities focused geographically on cultural heritage destinations in addition to sea and sun type of tourist destinations. Tourism Authority of Thailand stated that the average number of international tourists in the past decade (1997-2006) has grown by 8 percent per year. The Thai tourism industry expects to attract 15.12 Million tourists and to generate 7.6 billion pounds (533,000 Million Baht) of revenue to the economy by the end of 2006 (double the revenue of 1997). There is also an increasing domestic tourist demand. The Thai tourism industry expects 73.33 million trips that will generate 5.4 billion pounds (378,000 million baht) by the end 2006 (double the revenue of 1997). Indeed, cultural tourism and heritage have been immensely significant throughout the whole of Southeast Asia and especially the Indo-China region including Thailand. Apart from being famous for sun and beach type destinations, Thailand is among Southeast Asia's top cultural destinations due to its rich cultural and historical theme. In the 1980s, 'cultural heritage' became the promotional catch phrase for events in Thailand.

Thailand, as is emphasised by tourism advertisements, is a country with a rich cultural heritage: the uniqueness of architecture related to religion as a consequence of the secular presence of the Buddhist faith; public museums with valuable archaeological collections, monument ruins that are among the most significant of Southeast Asia, together with its prehistoric sites (Peleggi 1996). These cultural heritage sites have a critical role in tourism popularity and development as they provide the essence of the heritage tourism base. In 1991, the World Heritage List included the ancient cities of Sukhothai and Ayutthaya, in northern and central Thailand respectively. These archaeological sites and ancient ruins are the most popular type of attractions among domestic and international tourists. Moreover, Thailand itself has been largely promoted as the destination for cultural tourism by Tourism Authority of Thailand.

The importance of heritage values over commercial and economic gain must be recognised and commercial activities remain appropriate and sensitive to the quality of an historic area. In Thailand, whilst cultural heritage clearly represents an important aspect of the Thai tourism product, and as part of the Indo-China region, there is wide concern that Thai culture is being diluted through tourist interaction and its own over-development of destination. It seems there is a lack of sufficient understanding about the reality of how visitors experience cultural heritage tourism

products. A study by the Tourism Authority of Thailand performed to formulate a tourism development plan shows that the image of a cultural heritage destination from a tourist perspective has become less satisfied over time (Onseng 2001). This is due to the over development and inefficient performance of management, activities and events for cultural heritage visitors. The study also states that besides the scenery, these attractions somehow do not provide what the visitors wish to learn or consume. Further, the complexity and tension between heritage and tourism have not been the focus of many studies. The lack of explicit linkage to interdisciplinary theories is a major limitation on the advanced understanding on this theme whereas the heritage tourism requires great care on planning, development, management and marketing where different approaches may be needed in establishing heritage tourism especially in developing countries (Naruyanti, 1996). Hence, the need to understand crucial elements especially visitor experience and visitor management is essential for the sustainable development of heritage tourism.

## **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study of visitor behaviour will provide a new challenge that needs to be taken into account to increase the quality of visitor experience leading to the sustainable development and marketing of the product. The implications raised from this study will further assist government policies related to strengthening efficiency of tourism product development in heritage destinations, improved visitor experience in parallel with visitor management to provide visitors with satisfaction and enjoyment. The scope of the study consists of the formulation of research questions, overview of the study, and a brief detail of the survey sites.

### **1.5.1 Research Questions**

The research questions of this study are:

1. What are the factors that influence the visitors' experience at the sites and how do these factors affect their experience?
2. How do visitors perceive cultural heritage sites and how do they interpret their interaction with the sites?
3. How do visitors experience heritage sites and what meaning do they associate with the sites and their participation? How do visitors construct and shape their experience of heritage sites?

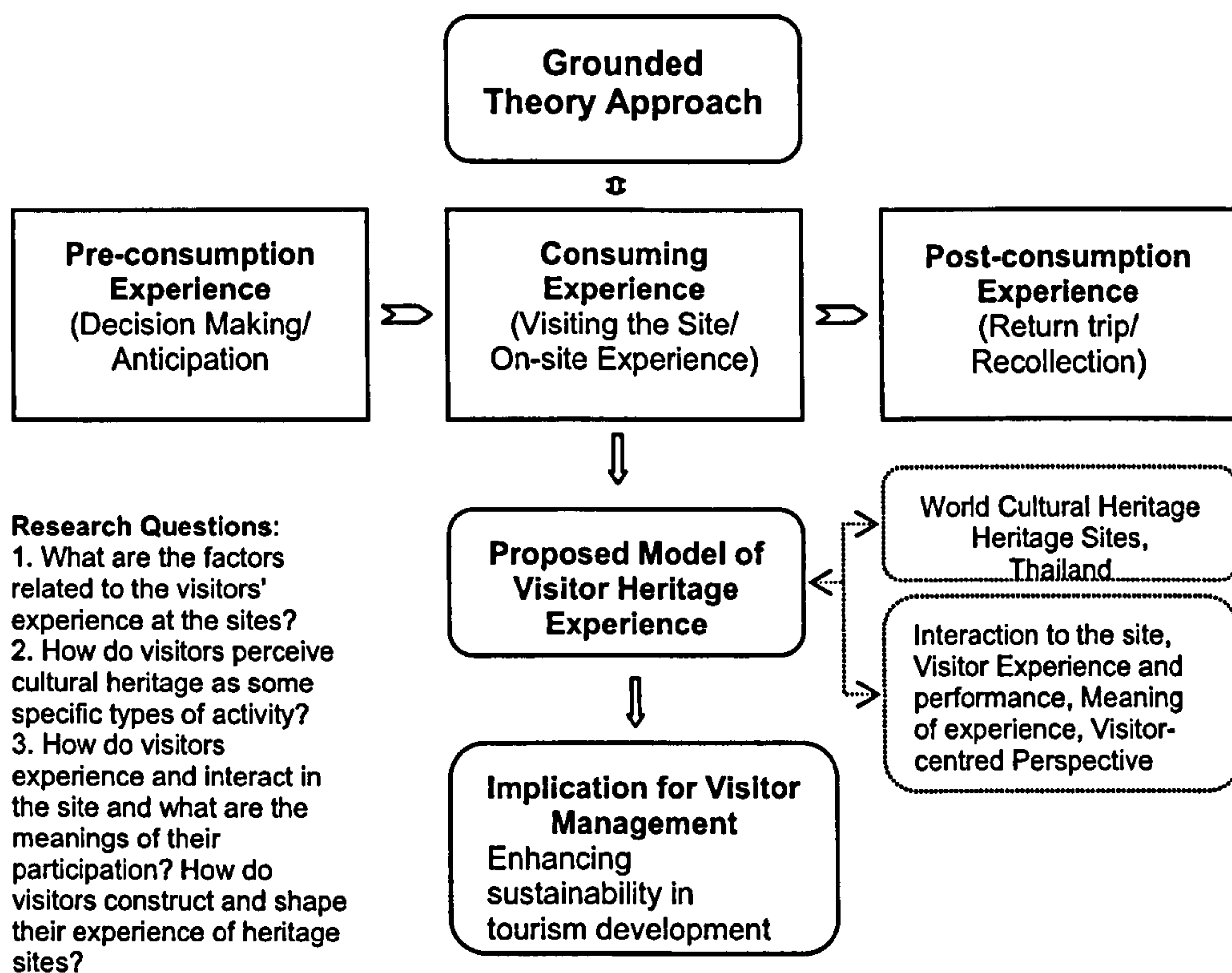


The research questions are formulated in order to explore visitors' experience in the destinations and to identify the major ways in which different tourists make sense of the cultural heritage site and how they perform a diverse range of interactions at the sites. The objective of this study is to propose a model of visitor experience of heritage sites. The conceptual knowledge will lead to the development of a framework for visitor management which responds to sustainability of heritage tourism development.

### 1.5.2 Overview of Study

This study focused mainly on the consuming experience phase or on-site experience stage in the tourism consumption process (Figure 1.1). A grounded theory approach was adopted for this study. An overview of the study is provided in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2 Overview of research



### 1.5.3 The Survey Sites

The research was conducted in three stages at three world cultural heritage sites. The sites were chosen based on their characteristics, ideological and historical significance as well as economic significance. Details of the survey sites are described in Appendix A. This description is needed for

a grounded theory approach in providing a good understanding about the context of those heritage sites. The three world cultural heritage sites are:

### **1. Sukhothai Historical Park**

The ancient city of Sukhothai, regarded as the first Siamese independent state in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century, lies 450 kilometres north of Bangkok. The site is best known among Thailand's nine historical parks. A 70 square-kilometre site contains 193 monuments. The park's landscaping, with trees, plants and ponds were openly inspired by description of old Sukhothai in a stone inscription written about its history. Sukhothai historical park has proven very successful. It attracted more than 500,000 visitors in 2004 (The Fine Art Department) approximately half of which were foreigners. The park's visitor ratio is reflected in that of the nearby national museum. In addition, the figure of official guests is considerably larger than any other museums, which proves Sukhothai's role as a showcase of national heritage.

### **2. Si Satchanalai Historical Park**

Si Satchanalai Historical Park is similar in style to that of Old Sukhothai. The ruins span from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and are set amongst scenic hills. There are 140 documented sets of ruins here including old walls, stupas, gateways, moats and kilns. A few kilometres to the north of the historical park, the center contains a display of kilns, artifacts and excavated ceramics. Over 500 kilns have been excavated so far in the area of Sawankhalok town and there is evidence of the ceramics being shipped as far as China, Malaysia and Indonesia. Having linkage to Sukhothai Historical Park, Si Satchanalai also attracts a large number of visitors each year.

### **3. Historic city of Ayutthaya**

The historic city of Ayutthaya, regarded as a former capital of Thailand from 1350 to 1767, lies 80 kilometres north of Bangkok. Unlike other tourist centres, Ayutthaya's main attraction is not its beautiful scenery, but its calm atmosphere with the remains resulting from destruction by the invading Burmese army in 1767. The ruins offer the visitors a glimpse of old Ayutthaya, which once was a prosperous and majestic capital with over 400 magnificent Buddhist monasteries. The tourist number doubles to that of Sukhothai Historical Parks because it is an interesting historic spot visited by a large number of visitors on day trips from Bangkok (The Fine Art Department).



## 1.6 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

This thesis consists of eight interrelated chapters, which take the reader from the rationale for the topic through the methodological approach, the findings and discussion, the thesis evaluation, and recommendation for sustainable visitor management. The flow chart of thesis structure (Figure 1.3) illustrates the structure of the thesis.

*Chapter 1* introduces the framework of research by providing the rationale for the topic chosen for investigation and the scope based on which this topic will be examined. The chapter states the research questions for this study. It also provides an explanation of what the thesis will do in relation to information collected, data analysis and methodological choice.

*Chapter 2* provides an explanation of concepts in heritage tourism and visitor management, which facilitates an understanding of the background of this research study. The chapter includes various definitions of heritage, the significance of heritage tourism, the linkage between heritage and heritage tourism leading to the need for sustainable management, the rationale for selection of world cultural heritage sites for the study and, importantly, the recognition of heritage management approaches of which visitor experience is their crucial element. The chapter points out the lack of understanding and implication of management of multiplicity of visitor experience despite widely known sustainable management approaches. Hence, this chapter indicates a starting point of this study on visitor experience and a rationale for applying a grounded theory approach.

*Chapter 3* provides a comprehensive discussion of the methodology for this study and particularly emphasises the use of the grounded theory approach in the conceptualization and construction of a model of visitor experience. The chapter includes the formation of research questions, research design involving the interpretive social science paradigm that suits the objectives of the study and facilitates the answers for the research questions, the selection of a grounded theory approach, illustrations of grounded theory analysis and the theorizing processes. These interactions do not always begin with the pre-conceptual framework and inception of the research project. The emergent theory about experience consumption of heritage is discussed throughout Chapter 4 and 5.

*Chapter 4* conceptualises the heritage experience as experiential consumption behaviour and explains its grounded framework from the visitors' perspective. Components of experience together with intervening external factors were explored and described. The findings of this chapter are structured in the form of the 'visitor *heritage interactive experience*' model. This organises the concepts of experience consumption under two headings: the interactive experience model and the



factors constructing the process. This section indicates the dynamic process of the interactive experience and the complex nature of visitor experience that leads to the exploration of the multiplicity of experiences in Chapter 5.

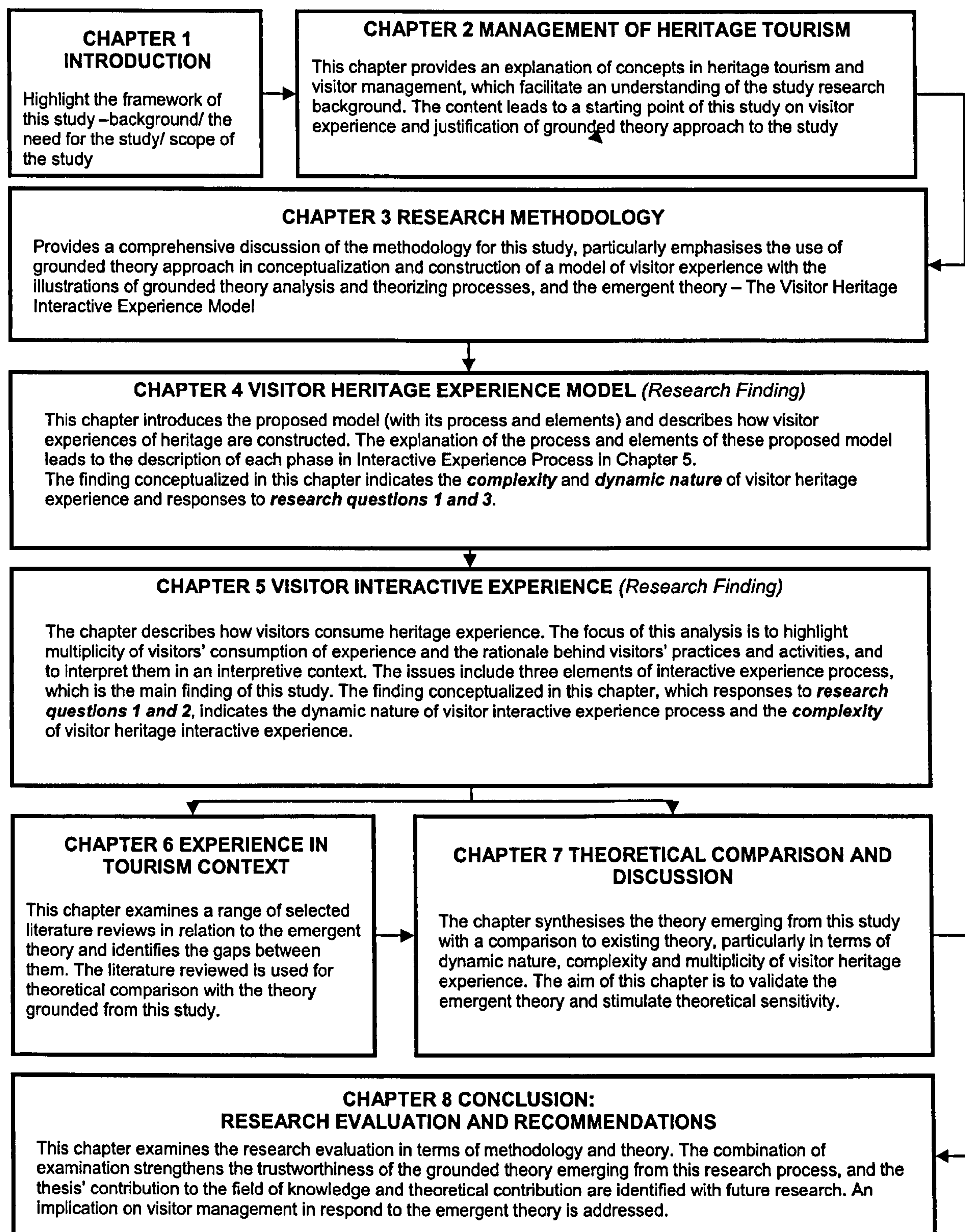
*Chapter 5* describes the visitor experience of heritage as conceptualised through participation at world cultural heritage sites in Thailand. The focus of this analysis is to highlight the multiplicity of visitors' consumption of experience and to interpret it in an interpretive context. This chapter aims to describe experiences of heritage based on visitors' perspectives of their participation at heritage attractions and the rationale behind the visitors' practices and activities. The discussion includes three elements of the interactive experience process. These elements are experiential aspects (the anticipation phase of interactive experience process), experience consumption practices (patterns of experience indicating multiplicity of visitor interactive experience or ways the visitors participate in and interact with heritage attractions) and evaluation of experience (ways in which the visitors handle the results of heritage experience in the consumption phase).

*Chapter 6* examines a range of literature in relation to the emergent theory and identifies the gaps in existing literature could be filled up by the result of this study. The literature reviewed is used for theoretical comparison with the theory generated through this study. The content of this literature includes experience process, on-site experience, visitor experience through different approaches, meaning of experience, authenticity in tourism experience and post-modern tourist experience. This literature is used as a source for theoretical comparison with the emergent theory (discussed in Chapter 7) rather than for theoretical framework development.

*Chapter 7* synthesises the theory emerging from this study with a comparison to existing theory, particularly in terms of dynamic nature, complexity and multiplicity of visitor heritage experience. The aim of this chapter is to enhance the explicit validity of the emergent theory. The chapter will examine the emerging theory from this study with comparison to existing theories and a response to the research questions.

Finally, *Chapter 8* examines the research evaluation in terms of methodology and theory. The combination of examination strengthens the trustworthiness of the grounded theory emerging from this research process and heightens the ability to provide applicability and reliability of the research process, essential to ongoing theory development. Aspects of methodology that could strengthen research in this area are also considered. In the final section of the chapter, the contribution to the field of knowledge and theoretical contributions are identified with future research and actions generated.

Figure 1.3 Flow chart of thesis structure





## 1.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides the rationale for the current research into visitors' experience at heritage attractions. It explains the overview of the study which is led by a set of three research questions and an objective to propose a model of visitors' experience at heritage sites rather than to describe the destination experience. The lack of direct research in this area, the need to focus on the nature of the relationship between the objects and the subjects that constitute the experience suggested by Uriely (2005), and the construction of visitors' consumption experience suggested by Chronis (2005) emphasise the need for this study. A description of research framework, instructions to the historical sites where the study was conducted, and the thesis outline are afforded in this chapter as a guide to the content and the flow of discussion in the following chapters.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE TOURISM

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores several key concepts and approaches that are woven into the research questions and interests including definitions of heritage, the links between heritage and heritage tourism, and the significance of heritage tourism in providing an understanding of the background to the study and the need for sustainable management. The importance and criteria for World Cultural Heritage selection is addressed to explain why the World Cultural Heritage sites are chosen for this study. Consequently, this chapter emphasises and recognises the approaches to heritage management.

#### 2.2 HERITAGE AND HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS

This section explains various definitions and encompassing views of heritage, the classification of heritage attractions, and cultural heritage. Moreover, it explains the basic knowledge about World Cultural Heritage as the background to knowledge of the visitors' experience of heritage.

##### 2.2.1 Definitions of Heritage and Heritage attractions through Different View Points

###### (1) Definitions of heritage

Heritage has been defined as *'an inheritance or a legacy; thing of value which has been passed from one generation to the next'* (Prentice 1993: 5). Millar (1995: 120) states *'heritage is about a special sense of the belonging and of continuity that is different for each person'*. On the one hand, Ashworth (1997) prefers to refer to heritage as *'the contemporary uses of the past'*, whereas on the other, Lowenthal (1996:1) considers heritage was a new *'cult'* whose shrines and icons multiply daily. Moreover, the word heritage is generally associated with the word *'inheritance'* or something transferred from one generation to another (Naryanti 1996). Indeed, the heritage includes both cultural and natural elements. The *cultural element* includes material and immaterial forms, e.g. artefacts, monuments, historical remains, buildings, architecture, philosophy, traditions,



celebrations, historic events, distinctive ways of life, literature, folklore or education whereas the *natural element includes* landscapes, gardens, parks, wilderness, mountains, rivers, islands, flora and fauna. Natural components also include *cultural components* since their values are dependent on subjective human assessment.

## **(2) Classification of heritage attractions**

There are several types of heritage attractions, as illustrated in Appendix B, ranging from nature history, scientific features, transportation attractions, craft centre and workshops, socio-cultural attractions, performing art attractions, pleasure gardens, theme parks, festivals, religions and religious attractions, seaside and seascapes, and towns and townscapes. The concept of heritage attractions is not only centred on architectural preservation, archaeology, archives and collecting institutions but also represents a network of interrelated elements. Hall and McArthur (1996) classifies heritage into three main characteristics: tangible and intangible, natural and cultural (human), personal and collective. However, Prentice (1993) classifies heritage according to the types of attractions including natural heritage, living cultural heritage, built heritage, industrial heritage, personal heritage, and dark heritage Ashworth and Tunderbridge (1996) apply the word '*heritage*' to a wide variety of contexts. Heritage can be identified as heritage places, memories, cultural and artistic production, heritage landscapes, flora and fauna, and industrial heritage. Boyd and Timothy (2002) classify heritage as *tangible immovable resources* (e.g. buildings, rivers, natural areas); *intangibles* (e.g. values, customs, ceremonies, lifestyles, and experiences such as festival, arts and cultural events). Further, heritage may be viewed as the identity of an interest in the past and an interest in cultures, buildings, artefacts and landscapes of both the past and present. Therefore, heritage tourism is more than simply tourism based on the past since it can be determined by the sets of criteria imposed on it and these values differ over time, space and across society. However, the heritage sites defined and used in this study belong to the category of socio-cultural attractions or cultural attractions.

## **(3) The Definitions of Cultural Heritage**

There is as much a dynamic concept of cultural heritage – a springboard for future action – as a catalyst for nostalgia. Cultural heritage, as defined by the 1972 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage, is the complex of monuments, buildings and archaeological sites of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science (Hewison 1987, 1992). Culture is viewed as comprising what people think, do and what they make to represent their beliefs (Gartner 2002). Cultural tourism covers both heritage tourism (things of the past) and art tourism (expression of the past and present). Cultural Heritage is,



therefore, a transformed part of free nature resulting from human's invention according to a particular concept of culture (Svobodova 1990:24).

The Burra Charter or the Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance uses the term '*place*' to define cultural heritage as site, area, landscape, building, group of buildings, or other works and may include components, contents, spaces and views, which involve human activities and associated cultural traditions. Thus, the concept of place links the integral components together and puts them into context with their cultural and intellectual background of which they are a product. The Guidelines to the Burra Charter (UNESCO 2006) define cultural significance as:

*"...a concept which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past to enrich the present, and which will be of value to future generations"*

The Burra Charter recommends that significance of cultural heritage mean the following values for past and present generations. It includes '*aesthetic value*' to do with sensory perception; '*historic value*' relating to historic events, figures, events, phases; '*social value*' embraces the qualities for which a place is a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment; and '*scientific value*' depends on the importance of data, rarity, quality or representativeness and its ability to contribute substantial information. Additionally, cultural landscapes reflect the interactions between people and their natural environment over space and time. Fischer (1995) indicates that cultural heritage is a complex phenomenon with a tangible and intangible identity and an intangible component. This component arises from ideas and interactions that have an impact on perceptions and the shaping of a landscape, such as sacred beliefs closely linked to the landscapes that mirror the culture that created them. Ultimately, the cultural heritage experience is distinctive and unique to the individual. According to Leask and Yeoman (1999), cultural heritage has become a source of fun and boisterous relaxation. There are different applications of notions of heritage that make this research important to answer what heritage attractions are to visitors.

#### **(4) World Cultural Heritage**

As designated in World Heritage Convention 1972: Article 1, to be included on the World Cultural Heritage List, cultural sites must satisfy the selection criteria, which provide for the recognition of cultural landscapes as '*combined works of nature and human*'. They are selected based on both their outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of



view, and whether they are representative in terms of a clearly defined geo-cultural region and for their capacity to illustrate the essential and distinct cultural elements of such regions. World Heritage Sites differ from a site of other national heritage because of its "outstanding universal value".

World Heritage sites were selected based on six cultural and four natural criteria. With the adoption of the revised Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, only one set of ten criteria exists (Appendix C). To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must meet at least one out of ten selection criteria. These criteria are explained in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, which, besides the text of the Convention, is the main working tool on World Heritage. The criteria are regularly revised by the Committee to reflect the evolution of the World Heritage concept itself (UNESCO 2005). World Heritage Site is therefore instantly recognised as designating something very special, in tourism terms, a definite 'must see' (Shackley, 1998). The sites selected for World Heritage listing are approved based on their merits as the best possible examples of cultural and natural heritage. Most *World Heritage Sites* are major cultural attractions and some of them (such as the Pyramids or the Great Wall of China) are universally recognised as symbols of national identity and the majority of visitors to these sites are generally motivated by an interest in culture, nature and heritage (Shackley 1998).

It could be assumed that the World Heritage Site status automatically results in a high number of visitors. Through the steady growth in tourism, local, regional and international tourists have visited world heritage sites for an appreciation. Indeed, these attractions and the resulting personal and commercial transactions they generate are perhaps the best ambassadors of intercultural exchange. However, conflicts of interest are most likely to emerge among the various parties involved in the management of a site. Governments (or tourism organizations) may wish to use the site as a marketing tool for image creation while local people expect increased a tourist flow to bring employment and income. Meanwhile, site managers attempt to preserve the quality of a given world heritage site and avoid the negative impacts of visitation, by restricting the number of visitors and educating visitors about appropriate behaviour. Nevertheless, the practices may cause controversy. Therefore, alongside the benefits, the pressure of tourism can also create a host of potentially destructive side effects which must be dealt with carefully. An important consideration of tourism development at the World Heritage Sites should be that the site's environment retains the original spirit of the place (Ratz and Puczko 1999). Hence, visitor management has become a new and as yet inexact science which aims to balance the visitors' needs and requirements with the potential impact that the visitors may have on fragile buildings or artefacts and to encourage the

sustainable establishment of industry growth while ensuring the survival of the heritage on which the tourism industry is based.

## 2.3 HERITAGE TOURISM EXPERIENCE

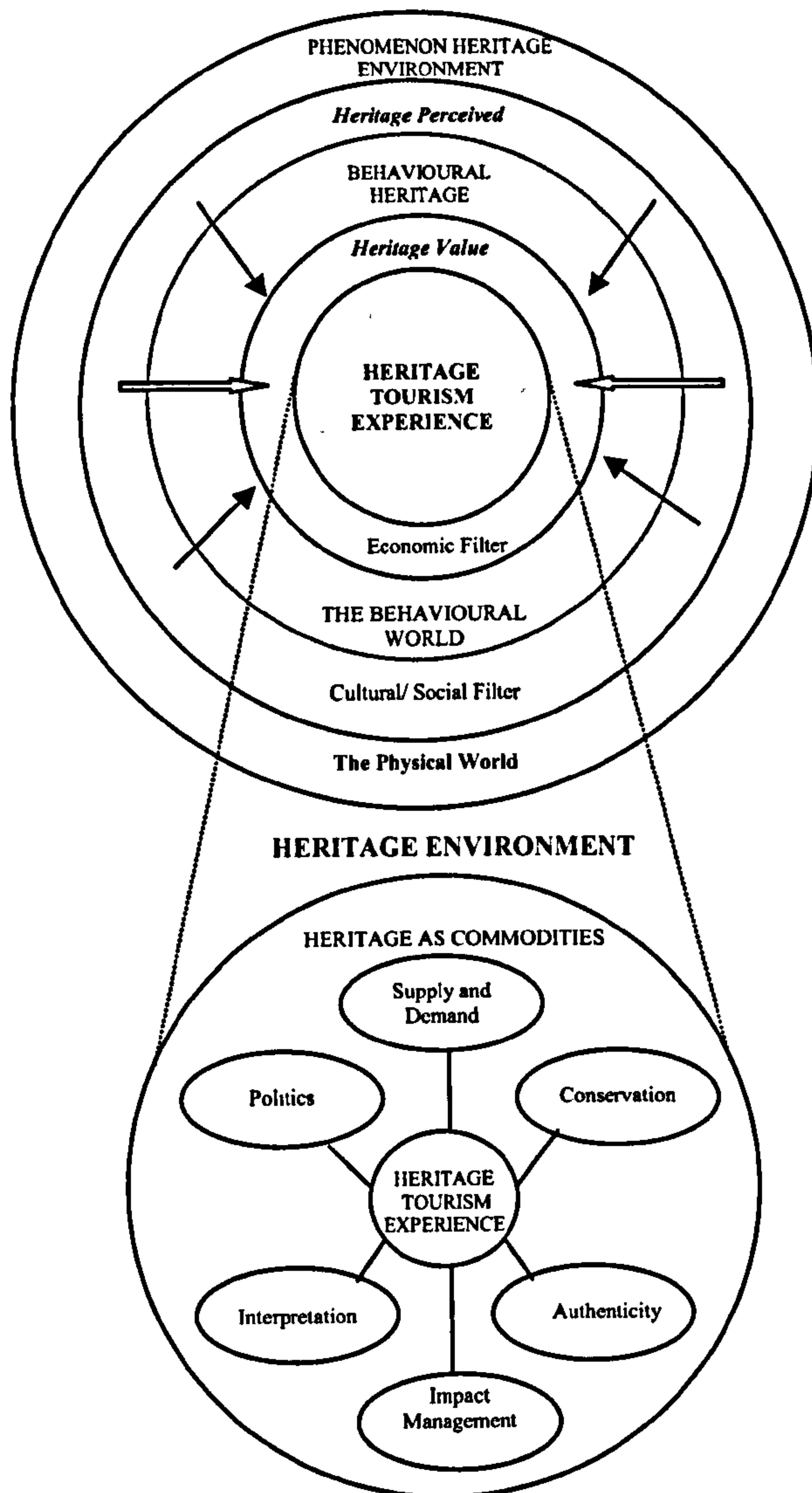
Heritage is viewed as a part of the cultural tradition of society whereas tourism is a form of modern consumption dynamic in nature (Li 2003: 249). However, there are several meanings of heritage tourism provided by scholars (Appendix D). Of these, Fyall and Gerrod (1998) define heritage tourism as an economic activity that makes use of socio-cultural assets to attract visitors. Heritage tourism is a mixture of many things. It is a highly competitive and market oriented business, based upon nostalgia for the past, and it sells a heritage product in the name of authenticity. Therefore, the sustainability of heritage tourism lies in the preservation and promotion of its authenticity. The authenticity is related to heritage tourism experience. Additionally, an effective marketing system aims to satisfy not only customers' needs but also the community's perceptions to be acceptable, profitable and manageable – in short, sustainable. Therefore, the relationship of heritage tourism and its experience is vital. This section addresses issues involving relationship between heritage tourism and heritage tourism experience.

### 2.3.1 Heritage Tourism Experience

Hall and McArthur (1998) illustrate that heritage is formed by elements, namely *phenomenon environment* (including physical and social factors), of the past that people want to keep, so heritage is a product that has passed through a number of filters centred on the '*heritage tourism experience*'. Therefore, tourism experiences, formed within the '*experiential heritage environment*', are the key outcome of tourism, which people want to take away from their trips. The heritage tourism experience is influenced and shaped by a mixture of elements and factors including supply and demand, interpretation, conservation, politics, impact management as well as *authenticity* (Boyd and Timothy, 2002) as illustrated in Figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1 The model of heritage and heritage tourism shows how many elements influence and shape heritage experience



Source: Boyd and Timothy (2002: 8)

This general model of heritage and heritage tourism is approached from a behavioural and phenomenal perspective. It emphasises heritage tourism experience as the key element of heritage tourism. The model suggests the heritage that is valued as a commodity that forms the heritage marketed and sold to visitors. Heritage has shifted through an 'economic filter'; hence, heritage tourism emerges. At the centre of this model, the heritage tourism experience lies at the centre of the model as the key outcome of tourism that people want to take away good experiences from their interaction with the heritage site. The heritage tourism experience involves several key elements: supply and demand, the nature of heritage landscape, and the impacts of heritage tourism development, the management of heritage attraction, authenticity, heritage interpretation and

presentation, as well as the roles politics plays. Therefore, heritage tourism is formed within an '*experiential heritage environment*'. This notion of linkage between heritage and heritage tourism leads to recognition of the significance of the heritage tourism experienced by visitors as a focal point for heritage management, especially, the management of cultural heritage attractions. However, this visitor experience has not yet been well explored.

### **2.3.2 The Paradox of Management of Cultural Heritage Tourism and Tourism Experience**

The popularity of cultural heritage tourism and heritage management has increased during the past two decades. The heritage attractions, especially heritage sites, museums, events and cultural festivals, domestically and internationally, fuel the local tourism industry. Thus, link between heritage and tourism is inescapable, especially in terms of economics for most Asian countries, but prompts the question as to how far should the link go (Taylor 2004). It raises the question of how heritage attractions can be presented to contribute to the economy while they can be preserved and enjoyed. There are several issues involving the conflict between the development and management of cultural heritage tourism.

First, the commodity has become integral with cultural heritage: language, music, dance, visual arts and literature (Boyd and Timothy 2002), and the commodification is the process in which the heritage is evaluated primarily in terms of their exchanged value within the context of trade. Commoditization of place occurs in one of two ways: by controlling access to a site or by commodification of other aspects of the visit that tourists purchase there to take home (William and Shaw 1992). Despite the appeal of exotic cultures and histories, one of the characteristics of the tourism industry has been a marked tendency to commoditize products, experiences and destinations (Laws 1989). Considered as a form of commodity, heritage tourism development is cyclical (Butler 1980), and heritage tourism in a destination can prove to be unsustainable especially when it performs a declining growth derived from the site management's misfortune; dilution of heritage supply and experience and evolution of the market.

Second, heritage is viewed as part of the cultural tradition of society whereas tourism is a form of modern consumption that is dynamic in nature. Moreover, it is a basic promise of marketing of tourism in which the needs and expectations of consumers (visitors or tourists) must be understood in developing and presenting products. Hence, heritage management provides a paradox as it becomes more difficult to fulfil as population increase, industries develop, the natural environment and cultural value is degraded, tourists overwhelm heritage sites and modernization threatens to change traditional ways of life. The heritage could encounter some sorts of impact, e.g. physical, biological and socio-cultural from the visitation as people are interested in preserving and visiting



cultural heritage. The impact could affect the heritage value that enriches the visitor experience of heritage to various degrees. Indeed, the visitor experience lies at the centre of this issue.

Third, visitor is a dynamic element leading to a problematic gap between heritage management and consumers with regard to perception, consumption and evaluation of heritage products. Thus, the management informed by the visitor experience of the site is a critical factor and what needs to be developed is a synergy between heritage and heritage tourism with improved modes of interpretation and preservation of sites to cater for a wide range of visitors and experiences. It is essential that the multiplicity of visitors' needs in terms of site planning and interpretation at heritage places will be considered as a part of the conservation management process.

Finally, in a heritage management system, the challenge of linking cultural heritage and tourism is how to reconstruct the past in the present through interpretation in order to satisfy the needs of tourist consumption (Li 2003). This process involves ascribing meanings to the past, cross-cultural sensitivity, reconstruction techniques and conservation planning (Nuryanti 1996). However, the traditional heritage management systems have focused on the heritage resource as the central element of the process whereas the human element, especially the significance of the visitors, is inadequately considered. Hall and McArthur (1996) argue that by providing high-quality experiences that satisfy the expectations, motivations and needs of visitors, the management can modify, encourage and develop consumption behaviours, which will ensure the maintenance of heritage values and assist in making traditional approaches to heritage management more effectively.

## 2.4 THE HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

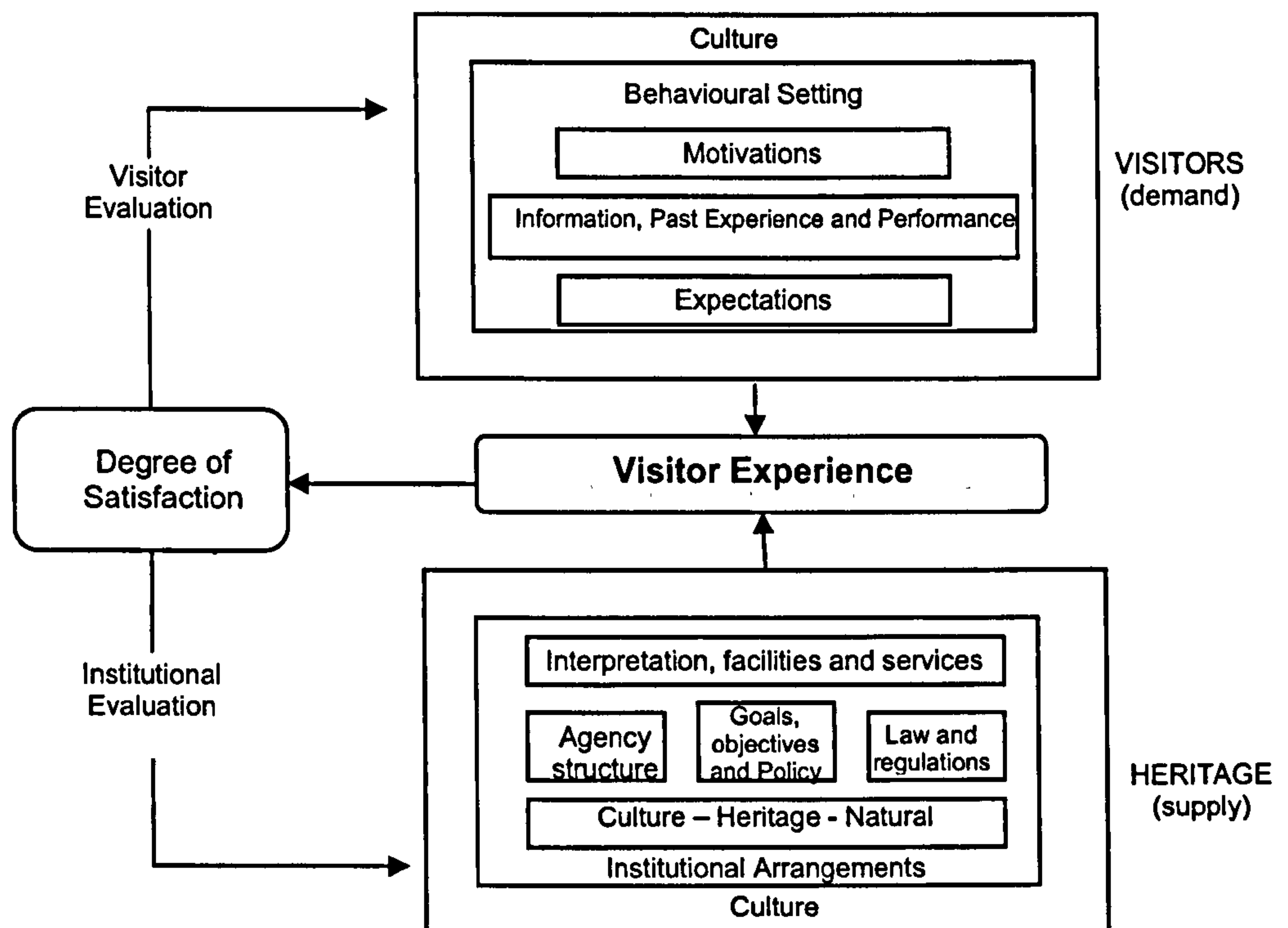
Visitors and heritage have a *symbiotic relationship* (Hall and McArthur 1996:37). Visitors attractions or destinations are '*the most important component of the tourism system*' and the '*core of the tourism product*' (Swarbrook 1995). However, destinations especially cultural heritage are some of the most difficult entities to manage and market, due to the complexity of the needs of tourists and the relationships of local stakeholders (Leisen and Sautter 1999). The tourism attraction is viewed as being imbued with meaning precisely through its consumption by the tourist (MacCannell 1976). People need heritage to add perspective and meaning to their lives. However, it is rarely possible for visitors to directly experience heritage without causing some sort of impact, whether physical, biological, chemical, social or cultural. The impact may reduce the quality of the heritage value and the visitor experience as well as dilute the community identity and wellness. Hence, the marketing and management of such destinations require an understanding of tourists' perceptions and perceived values of the tourism product at the destination. Management of heritage

attractions and destinations needs to explore what is important to visitors and how to enhance the reality of their experience, or perception of that reality, and how they experience the destination. It has become clear that visitors in some way own the heritage; therefore, they have a right to experience it, and the existence of the natural and cultural conservation is dependent on how they feel about it (Knudson *et al* 1995:104).

The visitor management will demand not only that the visitor receives a satisfying and high quality experience but that the sustainable destination is developed. Therefore, the goal of sustainable heritage management should be two-fold: to *maximize visitors' appreciation and enjoyment* of heritage places and to *minimize the negative impacts* (Boyd and Timothy 2002). In order to maintain heritage values and provide appreciated visitor experiences, heritage management needs to identify demand and integrate it with the provision of heritage resources. In the context of heritage, visitor management is a practice of ensuring visitor achievement of a quality sustainable experience. The management of visitors should maximize the quality of visitor experience while assisting the achievement of the area's overall management objectives. Hall and McArthur (1996) have proposed that '*visitor experience*' should be placed at the heart of any heritage management process (Figure 2.2).



Figure 2.2 Heritage management process with visitor experience at its heart



Source: Hall and McArthur (1996)

According to the model, the cultural background of the visitor determines the demand and behavioural setting for heritage experiences. It is essential to identify their *motivations, past experiences, preferences* and *expectations* in order to understand what current and potential visitors may be seeking from heritage sites and to produce an effective visitor management plan. Stone and Planel (1999) contend that the ability of construction site to attract visitors also often acquires a political dimension as local and state-authorities become aware of the undeniable potential of these sites for reinvestigating the local economy and generating revenue (p. 6). The structure of management agencies, policy and the legal framework directly influence the delivery of visitor management services and facilities, including interpretation. The institutional arrangements are formed to assist a local authority to develop a safe and controlled tourism plan as part of a visitor management for heritage sites. Further, evaluation plays a critical role in the visitor management system in terms of both the strategic planning process and the effectiveness of the methods and tools. On the supply side, evaluation provides feedback to improve the delivery of the visitor experience and the maintenance of heritage values. On the demand side, it creates a new set of visitors' expectations, preferences and desired experiences. Therefore, it is also important to encourage and empower visitors to take part in the implementation of the visitor management plan.

Visitor empowerment should be placed as the ultimate goal of the visitor management plan. Since acknowledgement of the existence of cultural heritage is not enough to ensure long-term survival,

the participation of visitors, government at both national and local level and local communities living adjacent to the heritage site should participate in the management and conservation of their site in order to maintain economic and social benefits, and social and cultural traditions. Successful heritage preservation depends on a long-term commitment on the part of stakeholders to ensure that all kinds of heritage are properly managed and that their unique cultural values are preserved. The visitor management philosophy is becoming increasingly important to assist people to see the environment from a new perspective.

It has also proved reasonably that all these frameworks are only as effective as the quality of information about the visitors and where a system of control, data collection and analysis is in place (Hall and McArthur 1996, Boyd and Timothy 2002) while the visitor is an element that is dynamic and difficult to control. There is a problematic gap regarding perceptions and evaluations of heritage products between heritage management and visitors. The understanding of tourist or visitor behaviour and their perceptions towards the destination play a vital role in the marketing and development plan. An understanding of visitors' preferences for different activity patterns in an attraction, i.e. for visitors' preferences of when to do what, may provide information for heritage tourism planners to improve the development of the destination as a potential tourism product. Thus, the variables that should be understood are visitors' perceptions, motivation, and behaviour. Regarding previous studies by Hassan (2000) and Enright (2005), the touchstone of modern visitor management should comprise '*customer value*', the ability to ensure the visitors experience and lead it to enrich a community's stakeholders.

This thesis concerns the relationship between three phenomena: heritage tourism, the context of the place, and, most importantly, experience of heritage consumed by visitors. This triangular relationship can be viewed as bases for sustainable heritage tourism which can be investigated in two directions. First, by examining the management of heritage for tourists, which requires answers to the questions, '*why are visitors interested in heritage?*' and '*how do visitors use heritage?*' Secondly, heritage tourism can be managed for the attainment of local objectives, frequently local economic development, which requires investigation of the relationship between heritage and places and between heritage tourism and local economies (Ashworth, 2000). This study focuses on the management dimension which involves how visitors use the heritage. Integrated with the provision of heritage resources, the visitor experience should be refocused and recognised in order to effectively provide insightful knowledge and implication for visitor management.



## 2.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides an exploration of concepts in heritage tourism and visitor management, which facilitates a deeper understanding of the context of this study. The chapter includes various definitions of heritage, the significance of heritage tourism, the linkage between heritage and heritage tourism leading to the need for sustainable management, the rationale for selection of world cultural heritage sites for this study and, importantly, the recognition of heritage management approaches in which the visitor experience is the crucial element. Despite the fact that the principles of heritage management have been widely recognised in tourism education and research, this chapter points out the lack of understanding and the implications of the management of a multiplicity of visitor experiences despite widely known sustainable management approaches. Hence, this chapter indicates the starting point of this study on visitor experience and the rationale for applying grounded theory approach to the study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodological approach adopted for the study. The aim of this study is to propose a model of the visitor experience of heritage attractions and heritage experience consumed by visitors in this study is examined in their contexts through their own accounts.

Research in this context requires a methodology able to cope with complex and interrelated phenomena. The research methodology used in this study needs to be flexible to allow for the diversity of themes that are generated from the information collected while maintaining the methodological rigour and trustworthiness. The grounded theory approach is selected for conducting and developing theory because of the lack of research into visitors' experiences related to subjective interactions with heritage attractions. It is this subjective experience that is real to them as visitors; therefore this study seeks to understand visitors' experiences in their own terms. This study will provide a deeper understanding of the interaction between visitors and attractions, how the visitors shape the experience, the meaning of the experience for the visitors, and their interpretation of the heritage site and objects.

The opportunity to collect data for this study stems from the three historical sites in Thailand by which grounded theory approach allows for a wider variety of data collection methods. The research had been conducted in the historical sites for over six months during October 2003 – March 2004. Prior to the field survey, the researcher conducted interviews with insiders including staff and tour guides who work in each historical site to gain an over view of visitors and their behaviours. The results presented in this thesis are based on a survey of 60 cases of participant observations with ethnographic interview and 180 cases of observation with visitors visiting the historical sites, and 48 unstructured and semi-structured interviews with visitors who visited those sites. The results are also based on a number of supplementary data such as travel journals, visitor books, and interpreted photographs written and taken by visitors. The survey instruments for this



study consist of interview and observation guides that were developed accordingly to emergent concepts during the field survey.

This chapter discusses the approach and methods used in this study to develop a visitor experience model. The chapter provides a rationale for the use and application in this research of the grounded theory approach. It begins by addressing the research questions, research design with the assumptions that underpin the methodological choice, discussion on methodological choice, and an explanation of the grounded theory in this study. Subsequently, the research methods used as part of the grounded theory approach are described and an illustration of research process is then provided. Finally, the limitations and ethical considerations of the research project are discussed.

## **3.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In order to meet the research goals, this study aims to identify the answers to three research questions.

1. What are the factors that influence the visitors' experience at the sites and how do these factors affect their experience?
2. How do visitors perceive cultural heritage sites and how do they interpret their interaction with the sites?
- 3 How do visitors experience heritage sites and what meaning do they associate with the sites and their participation? How do visitors construct and shape their experience of heritage sites?

These research questions are led by the need to study the insights of visitor experience of heritage attractions – what actually happens when visitors are at the heritage sites and how this relates to the need for sustainable visitor management, the implications of which are derived from the study discussed in Chapter 1 and 2.

## **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This section provides explanation of methodology used in this study. The issues discussed include the research paradigm and the methodological choice.

According to the research questions, the study called for a methodology with characteristics that would provide flexibility of process and method design that is appropriate for understanding how

visitors consume in a cultural heritage setting and generate new knowledge in relation to visitors' experience. The approach should support the understanding and interpretation of meaning of heritage experience. Moreover, it should be suited to situations that have an interaction element needed to be interpreted. The complex and dynamic nature of the tourism experience and visitor behaviour requires a critical reflection on the methodological selection. This provides the impetus for the study to be investigated through theoretical development and participation of respondents. The aim of this research firmly establishes within the interpretive social science paradigm.

### 3.3.1 Research Paradigm: Interpretive Social-science Paradigm

This study applies the interpretive social-science paradigm to guide the research design. This section discusses the properties of the paradigm and its role in guiding the research design and the grounded theory as the research approach.

The interpretive social-science paradigm asserts the multiple explanations or realities to explain a phenomenon rather than one causal relationship or one *'theory'* (Jennings 2002). It views the consumer behaviour as in a process of continuous emergence, the *"reality"* which matters most during consumption as that which is subjectively experienced in the consumer's mind (Hirschman and Holbrook 1986). The description of the method of existential-phenomenology (Thompson *et al* 1989, supports that this approach presents consumers' experience as *"being-in-the-world"* and describes this experience as it emerges or is *"lived"*.

Therefore, the *'interpretivist'* is represented as seeking understanding. This involves identifying both individual and shared meanings while accepting this to be only present understanding subject to the hermeneutical understandings of the *"reality"* of what is under the study. Indeed, the researcher and the phenomenon or subject studied is actually interactive. The researcher cannot *"distance"* him/her self from a particular phenomenon nor can the phenomenon be understood without personal involvement of the researcher. This leads to an ability to describe its complexity and internally constructed meaning (Hirschman 1986).

The interpretive social-science paradigm is examined for methodological justification for this study using three bases:

#### (1) Ontological Basis

The interpretive paradigm considers that the world is constituted of *'multiple realities'*. The interpretivist assumes an inductive approach to research and commences their study in the



empirical world in order to develop explanations of phenomena. These generalizations are used as the basis for *'theory'* building and generation. This paradigm emphasises the real world *'out there'* as being very important especially with regard to the interaction between the objective reality and people's subjective experience (Hirschman and Holbrook 1986). Indeed, the reality is subjectively experienced by consumers.

## **(2) Epistemological Basis**

In the interpretive social-science paradigm, the relationship between the researcher and subject (or, to use the terminology of the interpretive social sciences paradigm, *'social actors'*, *'respondents'*, *'participants'* or *'interviewees'*) is subjective rather than objective. Interpretivists may identify patterns of behaviour but fundamentally believe that the world is complex and changeable to attempt the identification of causal relationships (Thompson *et al* 1990). Researchers typically do not enter the field with identified relationships to test; the research design evolves within the changing environment.

## **(3) Methodological Basis**

To investigate and comprehend the consumption experience, the researcher needs to be involved with the phenomenon (Hirschman and Holbrook 1986). In this way, the researcher cultivates an openness that will be receptive to the structures and meanings that come directly from the consumer. They add that consumers' experiences need to be understood in their own terms rather than forcing them into some pre-existing structure of the researcher's making.

Additionally, an interpretivist seeks to understand phenomena from the insider's perspective (Jennings 2002) which its *'emic perspective'* allows for the identification of multiple realities (Fetterman 1989: 31). The views of social actors are taken into account and are equally valued. The language of the paradigm includes terms such as ideographic view, participants, respondents, emic perspective, reflexivity, reciprocity, grounded theory analysis, content analysis and triangulation (Jennings 2002). To gather knowledge from the empirical world, the qualitative methodologies are appropriate. The Table 3.1 summarises characteristics of the research method with respond to the paradigm.

**Table 3.1 Characteristics of the research method under the interpretive social science paradigm**

- 
- The research process should be subjective rather than objective.
  - Data should be collected from the insider's perspective rather than from an outsider's perspective.
  - Data should be collected in their real world or natural setting as opposed to being collected under 'experimental' conditions.
  - The method of data collection would include, for example, participant observation, in-depth interviews, case studies, focus groups and appreciative inquiry.
  - The development of a theory of visitor experience draws on both structural and interpretive perspectives of research.
- 

As the premise of this study is to begin the process of validating alternative epistemological practices outside the heritage tourism system, the experience of visitors involved in this study provides comprehensive information on their experience at heritage attractions. Thus, knowledge is subjectively attained. Beyond being discovered, the knowledge is constructed. Consequently, the study requires a research approach that allows the essence of the interactions between visitors and heritage attractions to be expressed by those in this study. The interpretive social-science paradigm is an appropriate approach for this study, which is concerned with subjective experiences (Uriely, 2005) requiring subjective methods. Hence, the grounded theory approach was chosen for this study.

### 3.3.2 Research Approach: Grounded Theory

The grounded theory approach is an interpretive and inductive research approach that was originally developed by Glaser and Strauss in the 1960s. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), it is

*“a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures and simultaneous process (not sequential) of data collection and analysis to develop an inductive derived grounded theory about a phenomenon”.*

The rigour of the grounded theory approach offers qualitative researchers a set of clear guidelines from which to build exploratory frameworks that specify relationships among concepts. In other words, it is *‘a systematic model of induction and emergence’* (Glaser 1998). Its methodological emphasis is on the participants' own (emic) interpretations and meanings to emerge with minimal researcher intervention (etic). Theory is grounded in the data emerges through constant comparison, coding and analysis of interview and observational data (Douglas 2003).

In the grounded theory approach, the reality is assumed to be socially constructed and subjectively given meaning by actors in a social setting. This statement is applied to characteristics of visitor behaviour, which consists of the integration of acts, performances, processes, interaction between people and tourism and are predominantly intangible (Gilmore and Carson 1996). Therefore, there is a need for consumer research to look at what Belk *et al* (1989) calls *‘interpretive contexts’* of



consumption phenomenon. The focus of the grounded theory approach is clearly on visitor experience through a dialectical rationality that aims at obtaining an understanding of consumption process and its meaning.

The grounded theory approach details each step of the analytic process towards the development, refinement, and interrelation of concepts emerging from data collection and analysis. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), the interpretive strategies of the grounded theory approach include (a) simultaneous collection and analysis of data, (b) a three-step data coding process, (c) comparative methods, (d) memo writing aimed at the construction of conceptual analyses, (e) theoretical sampling to refine emerging theoretical ideas, and (f) integration of the theoretical framework.

The following sections discuss the justification of the research approach.

### **3.3.2.1 *Rationale for using grounded theory in this study***

Presented as an alternative approach for conceptualizing and studying the consumer experience, basic theoretical tenets of the grounded theory approach are contrast with more traditional assumptions and research methods. The justification of the methodological choice for this study is as follows.

1. The general aim of the grounded theory is to construct theories that explain complex social phenomena especially experiences, social interaction and subjective behaviours.
2. The grounded theory is rooted in the reality of the experience (Charmaz 2000); therefore, it requires immersion of the researcher in the field, and in the data, with a view to gain insight and a depth of understanding about the subjectivity and multiplicity of visitors' experiences.
3. Because the approach allows the researcher to gain a richness of data from a range of perspectives (multiple realities) and emphasises a focus on meaning and interpretive understanding, the researcher is able to holistically interpret the active role of visitors in shaping the worlds they occupy and the experiences that they are engaged in (Charmaz 2000).
4. The advocates of the grounded theory, as an interpretive approach, seek a continuous interplay between data collection and theoretical analysis in order to examine causal factors and patterns of experience (Riely 1995). Data collection and analysis are consciously combined, and initial data analysis is used to shape continuing data collection. Interacting data collection and analysis in this manner is also designed to increase insights and clarify the parameters of the emerging theory.

5. The grounded theory is most accurately described as an inductive research method in which the theory is developed from the data, rather than the other way around. The method of the study is essentially based on three elements: concepts, categories and propositions, or what was originally called hypotheses.

The methodology is designed to assist the researcher to produce '*conceptually dense*' theories that consist of relationships among concepts representing '*patterns of action and interaction between and among various types of social units*' (Strauss and Corbin 1994: 278). It provides the researcher with opportunities to increase the "*density*" and "*saturation*" of recurring categories, as well as follow-up procedures to unanticipated results. Thus, the primary objective of the grounded theory is to expand an explanation of a phenomenon by identifying the key elements of that phenomenon, and then by categorizing the relationships of those elements to the context and process of the experience. There is no pre-conceptualised framework or hypothesis guiding the study. Hence, the approach enables understanding to be formed into concepts and theories without *a priori* definition in that emergent theory. Consequently, an '*emergent theory*' is the possible outcome of using the grounded theory approach.

### **3.3.2.2      *Reflexivity and experience of the grounded theory approach in tourism and consumer research***

The methods of the grounded theory are appropriate when the purpose of the research is to discover consumer-based theories (Hirschman and Thompson 1997). The approach is also a way of analysing qualitative data through which the findings lead to emergent theories. Tourism studies such as '*Prestige-worthy Tourism Behaviour*' (Riley 1995), '*The Travel Experience of Cruisers*' (Jennings 1997), '*post-modern and tourist experience*' (Goulding 2002), '*perceptions of place*' (Johns and Gyimothy 2002), '*tourism entrepreneurship*' (Douglas 2003) and '*stakeholder perceptions of tourism*' (Hardy 2005) are conducted following a grounded theory approach. Within these studies an '*ethnographic*' approach has been applied to emphasise the exploration of the entire culture since the approach allows for a great variety of practices for the gathering of rich data from participants (Table 3.2)



**Table 3.2 examples of the application of a grounded theory to tourism research**

<b>The studies</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Finding</b>
<i>The Travel Experience of Cruisers</i>	To demonstrate the similarities and differences between cruises and special interest tourists, and cultural tourists in regard to each of phases of the “total travel experience”	Jennings 1997
<i>A grounded theory of beer consumption in Australia</i>	To explore a popular Australian consumption activity to provide an insight into consumption process in general and the consumption of beer in particular.  To generate a substantive theory of beer consumption that describes the specific cognitive emotional process involved in the selection and consumption particular brands of beer amongst the members of the Australian culture.	Pettigrew 2002
<i>Prestige-worthy Tourism Behaviour</i>	To investigate the underlying dimensions of travel-related prestige and the relationship of the prestige conferrer and the conferee	Riley 1995
<i>Mythologies of a theme park: an icon of modern life</i>	To investigate customers’ perceptions and satisfactions	Johns and Gyimothy 2002

The Grounded Theory Approach serves as a powerful tool in the interpretive study of consumer behaviour. These studies indicate that the approach has been used to identify recurring experiential patterns in specific tourism situations. This is an approach which has significant practicality as well as theoretical potential in providing insight and knowledge

### **3.4 THE PROCESS OF BUILDING THEORY THROUGH THE GROUNDED THEORY**

The process of building the grounded theory consists of five iterative sequential analytic phases: (1) research design, (2) data collection, (3) data ordering, (4) data analysis and (5) literature comparison. Within the process, there are basic concerns about the methodology including construct, internal validity, external validity and reliability. The process of grounded theory building (Table 3.3) enhances practical and useful tools for investigation and exploration to allow the emergence of new knowledge.

Table 3.3 the process of building a grounded theory

Phase of Study	Activity	Rationale
<b>RESEARCH PROCESS DESIGN</b>		
<b>1. Review of technical literature</b>	Defines research questions/the research process/ pilot study	Focuses efforts: Constrains irrelevant variation and sharpens external validity
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>		
<b>2. Developing rigorous data collection protocol</b>	Employs multiple data collection methods	Strengthens grounding of theory by triangulation of evidence Enhances internal validity Allows synergistic view of evidence
<b>3. Entering the field</b>	Overlaps data collection and analysis  Employs flexible and opportunistic data collection methods	Reveals helpful adjustments to data collection under the theoretical sampling concept Allow investigators to take advantage of emerge themes and unique case features
<b>DATA ORDERING</b>		
<b>4. Data Ordering</b>	Arraying event chronologically	Facilitates easier data analysis Allows examination of processes
<b>DATA ANALYSIS PHASE</b>		
<b>5. Analysing data relating to the first case</b>	Uses open coding  Uses axial coding  Uses selective coding	Develops concepts, categories and properties Develops connections between a category and its sub-categories Integrates categories to build theoretical framework To enhance internal validity
<b>6. Theoretical sampling</b>	Literal and theoretical replication across cases ( <i>go to step 2 until theoretical saturation</i> )	Confirms, extends, and sharpens theoretical framework
<b>7. Reaching closure</b>	Theoretical saturation when possible	Ends process when marginal improvement becomes small
<b>LITERATURE COMPARISON PHASE</b>		
<b>8. Compare emergent theory with extent literature (theoretical literature review)</b>	Comparisons with conflicting frameworks  Comparison with similar framework	Improves construct definitions, and therefore internal validity  Improves external validity by establishing the domain to which the study's findings can be generated

Adapted from Eisenhardt (1989)

The following sections provide a comprehensive discussion of the research process in terms of methodological strategies used in this study.

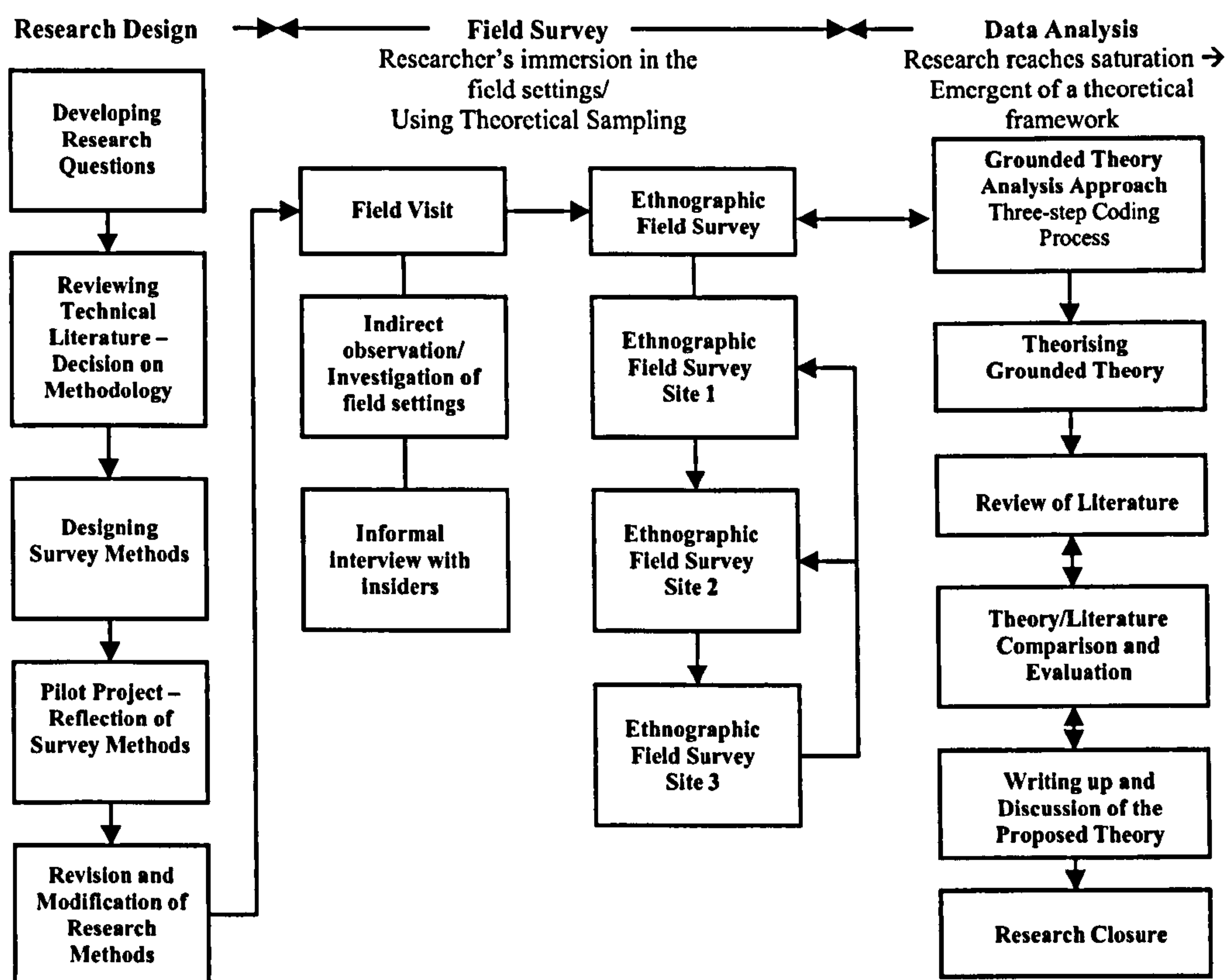


### 3.4.1 The Research Process Design

To use the grounded theory approach in the study, the researcher did not enter the field with a developed theoretical framework from the literature, or predefined relationships to test. The researcher developed a set of research questions guiding the research process (See 3.2). The research design was allowed to evolve to reflect the emerging themes and the changing environment during the fieldwork. Practically, the research design focus a process that reduced irrelevant variation yet increased the external validity of the study. The process was followed by the interactive phases of field survey and data analysis.

The research process designed for modelling the visitor experience in this study is shown in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 the research process for modelling visitor experience



The methodological review was conducted for decision making on methodological choices following with designing survey or data collection methods. The researcher conducted a pilot project at Salisbury Cathedral (UK) for a 2- month period in order to evaluate survey methods and find the strengths and weaknesses of each data collection methods, and consequently, for the

revision and modification of research method to be applicable for cultural heritage sites. Table 3.4 illustrates reflexivity of the pilot study which facilitates the data collection design for the actual study sites.

**Table 3.4 Reflexivity of the pilot study**

The methods/ materials used in the pilot study	Practices	Reflection
<b>Observation</b>	Using photographing and ethnographic field notes and single multiple points of observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The observation at a point of visit each time is more effective than at multiple stops. It provides opportunities to see the multiplicity of visitors' interaction with particular heritage attractions or objects.</li> <li>• Photography is useful for analysing the observation but it does not provide continuity of events. It indicates the needs of VDO recording the chronology of events.</li> <li>• This practice encourages the development of the skill in ethnographic field note writing.</li> </ul>
<b>Un-structured interview/ Semi-structure interview</b>	Interviews with visitors to the cathedral and the volunteered guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The interviews require a quality amount of time. Conversation-like interview assisted the researcher in keeping participants involved with the interviews.</li> <li>• Interviewing visitors after the visitors completed the visitors provides a holistic image of their experiences.</li> <li>• It was found that informal conversations with visitors surprisingly give interesting perspectives of experience because the visitors got familiar with the researcher although it might take time. However, data transcribing and analysis take effort and time.</li> <li>• The visitors felt more relaxing and able to reflect their experience more expressively when the interviews took place within the site.</li> </ul>
<b>Participant Observation</b>	Taking the cathedral tours as a visitor and cathedral staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The practice provides both insight views of visitor experiences and what it means by visitors' particular practices since the conversation could take place immediately.</li> <li>• The changing roles of researcher as a participant provide opportunities to involve in both demand and supply sides. This role reversal provides both visitors and management viewpoints regarding visitor experiences.</li> <li>• A chance to talk to visitors along the heritage visit provides insight knowledge at the real-time.</li> </ul>
<b>Visitor book</b>	Interpret the visiting books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The practice provides extensive expressions about the visits and their perception about the site.</li> <li>• This material is very useful because it reflects the real thoughts of visitors without intervening questions from others. Moreover, visitors feel free to say both good and bad things about their heritage experience.</li> <li>• It indicates the possibility for using visitors' travel journals.</li> </ul>

Consequently, the pilot study provides a piece of thought about the application of each data collection method as well as practical skills. The pilot study also reflects that the researcher should have sufficient knowledge and understanding about the survey sites in order to be able to interpret what visitors say about particular things about the heritage. Hence, it is preferable for the study that researcher investigates the setting of heritage sites and the heritage monuments, objects and



artefacts prior to the field survey. This knowledge assists the researcher in conducting ethnographic interviews and observations. Initial indirect observations are also essential for the researcher to get ideas about what is going on there so that the researcher can justify the scope and the survey methods that are most applicable for the study.

It is the most important for the researcher who uses this approach not pre-identify or conceptualise a theoretical framework prior to the data collection phase to let the theory emerge from the data. For this approach, the theoretical literature review could be essential for the research question development stage but it does not apply for building a conceptual framework. However, the researcher could review literature in order to design the research process and methodological techniques for the study. Further, it is essential for the researcher to immerse in the field setting during the field survey phase.

At the actual survey sites, interviews with insiders were conducted with site management staff, on-site guides, tour guides, tourist information centres and ticketing staff, security guards and gardeners to gain a general insight into the heritage sites and visitor behaviour. Information gained from the interviews with insiders included attractions in the heritage sites, visitors' experience, types of information visitors looked for when they visit the sites and activities the visitors participated when they were engaged in the experiences as well as complaints according to heritage visit made by the visitors. These interviews were not conducted to develop a theoretical framework but to increase familiarity with the research setting, to explore alternative data collection methods and to start to build the research design. In terms of design, the emphasis was on flexible and opportunistic data collection methods which allowed the research to respond to emerging themes.

Data analysis was conducted interactively along with the data gathering. It included a three-step coding process. A proposed model or substantive theory was consequently theorised. In this process, the principles of theoretical sampling (*See 3.4.3.3 and Figure 3.8*) were adopted and the data collection and analysis stages were designed to overlap in order to allow both the sampling and data collection processes to be informed by the emerging data analysis. This process of theoretical sampling ensured that the analysis would reveal opportunities for adjustments to the data collection methods and would identify the stage at which data saturation had been reached. The process was then followed by literature reviews regarding theories and concepts related to the emergent theory. Finally, the literature reviews were used for theoretical comparison and discussion with the theory grounded from this study.

### 3.4.2 Data Collection

Prior to entering the field, developing a rigorous data collection protocol was performed with a focus on increasing reliability, increasing construct validity, strengthening the grounding of theory by triangulation of evidence and enhancing internal validity.

#### 3.4.2.1 *Developing the rigorous data collection protocols: structure of data collection*

The grounded theory approach advocates the use of multiple data sources converging on the same phenomenon and terms these '*slices of data*' (Douglas 2003). The study employed multiple data collection methods to strengthen grounding of theory and enhance reliability and the internal validity by triangulation of evidence. The structure of data collection is shown in Table 3.5.

#### 3.4.2.2 *Entering the field - data collection methods*

The researcher conducted data collection for the following aspects.

- Discover the problem from participants' accounts. The initial research questions were as broad as possible, without a priori constructs or guiding theories. Indeed, the grounded theory approach allowed the researcher to take advantage of emerging themes and unique case features.
- Highlight the iterative nature of the approach. In doing so, the research developed the data collection and analysis process and adjusted the data collection under theoretical sampling concept.
- Employ flexible and opportunistic data collection methods.

The researcher used multiple data collection methods for the field survey over a six-month period (July 2003 – January 2004). The practical uses of data collection methods in this study are discussed as the follows.



**Table 3.5 the Structure of data collection**

Main Data Sources	Unit of Analysis	Methods of Data Collection	Objectives	Activities
<p><b>Insiders</b></p> <p>Management in 1 historical park authorities</p> <p>Administrative persons at the sites, Tour guides (both on-site guides and private guides)</p>	<p>Organizations/ Individuals</p>	<p>Macro study</p> <p>Exploratory Interviews</p> <p>Documentation</p>	<p>To generate the theoretical concept and point of view assisting the formation of new theories</p> <p>To gain deep insights and rich data into practice of visitor management in the area</p> <p>To gain understanding of the institution from ground level</p> <p>To provide management and practical views what, how and why visitors experience at the sites gained from the data</p> <p>To gain richness of data</p>	<p>Interviews at the early stage of the research process (<i>Since the site areas are enormous, this approach assists the researcher to scope the observation points as well as the focused issues about visitor behaviours and the management viewpoints.</i>)</p> <p><b>The survey site visit/ The site study</b> (<i>The researcher needs to be knowledgeable about the sites to be able to encapsulate as many visitor perspectives as possible. The research has to be able to provide visitors information relevant with the sites during the interviews.</i>)</p>
<p><b>Visitors</b></p> <p>(Diverse range of visitors)</p>	<p>Individuals</p>	<p>Micro study:</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>Participant observation</p>	<p>The gain the insight views of visitor experiences and its meaning to the visitors</p> <p>To learn the reality of visitors interacting with the sites at the real-time</p> <p>To demonstrate the basic pattern of the experience</p>	<p><b>Observation</b> particular attractions</p> <p><b>Participant observation</b> <b>As visitors</b> going out with visitors around the sites participating in four groups</p> <p><b>As the site staff</b> working at ticket booths and tourist information centre working as an assistance to the on-site guide</p>
<p><b>Visitors</b></p> <p>(Diverse range of visitors)</p>	<p>Individuals</p>	<p>Micro study</p> <p>Ethnographic Interview</p>	<p>To learn the reality of visitors interacting with the sites from their accounts</p> <p>To gain the explanations regarding behaviour being observed</p> <p>To gain an understanding and rich data of basic visitor experience, interaction and experience to ground the theory</p>	<p><b>Hanging out and chatting with visitors</b> (on a convenient basis)</p> <p><b>On-site interviews</b></p> <p><b>Interview during participant observation</b></p>
<p><b>Visitors</b></p> <p>(Diverse range of visitors)</p>	<p>Individuals</p>	<p>Micro study</p> <p>Supplementary data</p>	<p>To understand the visitor perspectives about heritage through their sights especially perception about the sites</p> <p>To get the reflection of visitors' real thoughts about their experience</p>	<p><b>Analyse visitors' photographs</b> taken while they were visiting the sites</p> <p><b>Analyse travel journals</b> written by visitors to the survey sites</p>

## 1. Observation

### (a) Participant observations – ‘*see and hear what was going on*’

Participant observation is claimed to be the essential ethnographic survey method that yielded exploratory sufficiency for this study. The use of this method is most appropriate for the preferred conditions suggested by Jorgensen (1989). The conditions are (i) concern on insiders’ perspective, interaction and meaning making toward the research questions; (ii) the phenomenon of investigation is observable within everyday life situation or setting; (iii) the researcher’s ability to gain access to an appropriate setting; (iv) the sufficiency of phenomenon to be studied as a case; (v) appropriate research questions for a case study; and (vi) qualitative data gathered by direct observation and other means pertinent to the field setting. The rationale for the choice of participant observation is further encouraged by a range of studies that have successfully used the technique (Arnold and Price, 1993; Penaloza 1994; Bowen, 2002; Goulding, 2000, Slack *et al.*, 2001; Wolcott, 1994).

There were various considerations in employing participant observation in this study. First, the research problem was to be viewed from the perspectives of the visitors. Secondly, the experience was not created or manipulated by the researcher but the visitors. Visitors perform the multiple realities of experience while the researcher has to be aware of the need to forge a balance between a passive and a proactive presence (Bowen 2002). The aim of participant observation was to demonstrate a range of patterns and meaning of visitor interactions to the heritage sites through mobility of visitors.

Thirdly, having considered the setting of heritage sites, the researcher was able to get access to the setting since it was an open environment rather than a closed set. This setting enabled the researcher to gain an insightful view of the interaction of visitors with the cultural heritage and visitors with demonstrators and other visitors. By participating as a member of service staff and on-site guide, the researcher was also able to be involved in conversations with the visitors. The research explored heritage experience of the visitors by experiencing it with them.

Fourthly, the phenomenon is sufficiently limited in size and location to form a convenient case study. The main concerns of this condition are the size of a visiting group and their movement. A setting that involves interaction with a small mobile group can be ideal for sustaining the study through time (Arnould and Price 1993; Bowen 2002; Penaloza 1994; Wolcott 1994). Participant observation can take place in a group of visitors consisting of 2-20 members. In this case, the participant observation may be assisted by using a structure walk through technique. This approach involves the design of a number of walk through frames, which sample the range of different experiences that a visitor might encounter in a complex tour. Slack *et al* (2001) used this technique in leisure management study. This approach allows the researcher to immerse in the setting and experience a range of combinations and



to evaluate a total experience, rather than a series of individual interaction episodes, which may be disaggregated.

Finally, participant observation and observation is most efficient when used along with *interviews* in that asking people why they are doing what they are doing is a necessary component in developing the understanding of their inner-directed interactive experience. Therefore, an ethnographic interview is able to fill in the information gaps.

In the field survey, the researcher was directly involved in site visitation of visitors, observing and talking with people as the researcher learned from their views of reality. To get an insight into the experience of visitors, the researcher was involved in every mode of interaction with visitors including assisting as an on-site guide, working as staff at the tourist information and ticket office, joining organized tours and hanging out with the visitors. A clear objective had to be informed to the historical park authority in regional level to get an access for conducting a field survey. Visitors were informed that the researcher was a part of the tour group. Furthermore, the researcher participated in the group as one of the tour members (as a visitor herself). Indeed, the researcher naturally participated and immersed in the setting. This practice was also applied to private tour agents. The researcher provided sufficient information about the study and the researcher to the trip leaders when the participant observations took part in the trips.

To go out in the historical sites with individual visitors was also relevant to the survey. The method also allowed an opportunity for in-depth interviews. The researcher participated in individual trip and in both big and small groups of a diverse range of visitors. The researcher moved through the sites with the visitors by all modes of transportation, for example, riding a bike, walking with them, riding an elephant and taking a tram. The trips around the survey sites might take as long as an hour to one day from the start until the end. It occasionally took several days when the visitors repeated the visits or visited other survey sites. In this sense, trust was developed among the visitors and the researcher. Hence, the subsequent interviews could be done conveniently. Practically, the researcher was able to find interesting information about the visitors' behaviour prior to encounter at the heritage sites. The field survey for this study was valuable because participants were happy to contribute for interviews and participant observation. Knowledge and understanding about the reality of the visitors' experience evolved throughout the survey process.



### (b) Non-participant observations

Non-participant observation is conducted under the philosophy '*action speaks louder than words*'. Observation yields the overview of physically interactive experience naturally performed by the visitors. The importance of observation as a method of data collection is regarding its use to enhance understanding of the effectiveness of leisure environments and leisure experience (Slack *et al* 2001). It can be used to collect data to which the researcher or intelligent enquirer might not otherwise have access. It can yield direct information about the *nature of* the experience in specific environments. This also applies to participant observation. The units of observation include both individuals and groups; although individuals are more focused, based on '*theoretical sampling*' (see 3.4.4). Observations were conducted across all visitors on a daily basis from opening until closing time for the sites while the researcher was in the field.

The methods used in recording the data included ethnographic field notes and virtual data and photographic and videotaped information. Field notes were written records of visitors' activities on their visit to cultural heritage sites as soon as the event occurred. Practically, these field notes allowed the researcher to record changes in what the researcher sees as significant as the interpretations developed. Virtual data (travel journals and diaries from the internet source) was extremely useful for this study in that it assisted in developing interpretation of visitors' behaviour, including the temporal flow of events, culturally significant moments and meanings of experience, visitor-object interactions, and episode of their experience. The methods also yielded validity and credibility to the study. It is also applicable for visitor books.

Interestingly, a post-hoc structure can be imposed on the process of observation, although it should be emphasised that this is not how the observation is conceptualised by the research at the time. Slack *et al* (2001) also imposed this technique in the study. The research had probed to ask some questions regarding the events observed and recorded. This method was useful but it had a limitation in that the researcher was not able to ask the details about behaviours from the person being observed. However, the observation provided the ideas and questions to be used for further interviews.

The researcher started to observe the environment, the setting, site ambience and experience in the site. Insiders informed this initial interest in an initial stage of field survey. An observation checklist (in general terms) of the features that contributed to the experience was developed. This checklist was roughly ordered into groups or categories and used as an observation guide. It was important to note that the observation guide is not a pre-defined conceptual note but it is used as a rough guide to extend the questions in the interview method and to ensure the saturation of data collection. The list of observation categories were added up throughout the later period of observation. It helped the research to recognise the saturation of data collection. Indeed, the categories needed extension and refinement through the formal data analysis process.



During the participant observation, the researcher had opportunities to listen to and watch others as they participate as she emerged in the setting and environment. Despite a lack of change of conversation, this provides the basis of a wider theoretical approach to issues in the heritage experience. This information offer the researcher insights leading to the learning that informs subsequent activities or decisions, and reflects on the visitor experience related to interactions with the heritage and interactions with others. However, there were some disadvantages of non-participant observation. One of those is the inability to observe cognitive information such as attitudes, beliefs, motivation or perceptions, and ethical consideration. The observation may affect the sense of being watched; therefore, it influences participants' actions.

To overcome the disadvantages, the research used indirect-observation approach to avoid the sense of being watched felt by the visitors. The indirect-observation made data subjective rather than objective because the researcher did not follow any particular persons. The limitation can be overcome by the asking questions, subsequent to the observation (suggested by Slack *et al* 2001). This method provides some interesting information that might be missed by direct observation. Consequently, it provided comprehensive data about the subject studied.

## **2. Ethnographic Interview - 'Hanging out' and 'In-depth interview'**

Ethnographic interview used in this study involved going out around the heritage sites and having conversation with visitors. In the early stage of the survey, '*Informal interview and casual conversation*' was obtained from participants who had visited the sites. The richness of data was centred for ethnographic fieldwork. It can be captured from the whole realm of '*informal talks*' between the researcher (who is now called ethnographer) and participants. This method is called '*hanging out*' by Agar (1996: 58). According to Glaser and Strauss (1998), the researcher should remain open in terms of the structure and direction of the interviews in order to let concepts emerge rather than forcing them into predefined categories.

Despite the main arena that the researcher focused on being an interactive experience, the essence of the informal and unstructured (in-depth) interview was that the researcher did not have a list of structured-interview questions but rather a repertoire of question-asking strategies to select from when the moment seemed appropriate and the questioning may take place in a wide variety of contexts. The objective is to get an insight into visitors' experiences. For this study, the interview was conducted with the visitors who have visited the sites and were willing to share their heritage experience with the researcher. Agar (1998) suggests a supplementary method by asking questions that strongly suggest an answer and are used to check emergent interpretations by leading the participant towards modifying or contradicting a statement.



In the interview context, it is important to understand that the role of the interviewer is to provide a context in which participants freely describe their experiences in details. The interviewer does not begin an interview feeling that she is more powerful or knowledgeable about the topic than participants (Thompson *et al* 1989). An important aspect of the interview is that the interviewer and participants are of equal positions (Kvale 1995). Thus, in the study the questions and conversations used by the interviewer follow the 'course of dialogue' and were aimed at 'bringing about the descriptions of experiences not confirming theoretical hypotheses'.

The researcher (interviewer) employed *descriptive questions*, such as 'what was your experience like?', 'how did you feel when...?', 'can you tell me about the time when you were touring around the site?' and 'how did the site interest you?' (aka 'what made you to come here?'). There would always be some questions that developed follow-up '*structural questions*' for more analytic perspective such as 'can you describe the time when you looked at the statue?' or 'you said that ... is an important attribute that you prefer, are there any other attributes?'. The aim of these questions was to focus on particular actions they referred beforehand. Occasionally, the conversation could be followed up by '*contrast questions*' that emphasised componential analysis (Spradley 1980). The questions could be 'what is the difference between ... and ...?', or 'can you compare ... and ...?' Practically, the researcher emphasised '*what and how*' questions rather than why since 'why' questions, or an equivalent such as 'what caused you to do that?' are often ineffective for generating description of lived experiences since they may cause prejudgment and defensive responses (Thompson *et al* 1989).

The participants would then be seeking a plausible explanation for their actions. To provide a degree of '*validity*' to the study so that a concept could be formed, interviews were taped and transcribed verbatim to ensure that the full interviews could be examined and analysed without any of the language, meaning or phrasing of quests being lost or misinterpreted. Additionally, the interviews can be obtained along with the process of participant observations.

The research has experienced that this conversational style of interview allowed flexibility in research techniques as it maintained a minimal influence on the direction of discussion. It is recommended that the researcher must not give directions at the initial stage of conversation. The researcher must not be critical or judgmental while the conversation with participants continues, whilst still maintaining a critical dialogue for analytical purposes. The limitation of this method is that it is time consuming. Practically, an interview could take as long as whole course of a visit lasts. Hence, the researcher had to make every effort to pay attention to what the participants referred to because the conversations had to be integrated to an informal analysis process related to



the theoretical sampling approach. Indeed, the informal analysis was undertaken as soon as the conversation was conducted.

The researcher used the concept of theoretical sampling during the process of interview for the continual analytic process. It assisted the researcher to recognise when the interview reached the saturation stage as concepts and themes emerged from data. An initial unstructured approach was taken to begin the discussions and allowed themes to be generated from those involved in this study. Practically, the researcher was able to initiate a '*rough guide*' for in-depth interview for the further field surveys (Appendix E). This guide had a list of basic and general questions on the topic involving the visitors' participations for experiencing the heritage. This rough guide assisted the researcher to track down the repetitive issues that were relevant to the study so that it helped prevent an endless interview process. However, the researcher still had to be open-minded to perceive issues that emerged from the data.

### **3. Travel journals and visitors' photographs**

The grounded theory method allows multiple types of data to gain advantage of richness of information. For this study, document from the data such as travel journals written by the visitors who visited the sites and the data published in all kinds of media such as internet, travel magazines, and newspapers were used as a valuable supplementary source of data for exploring the specific interactive experience and the associated experience. Mostly, the travel journals allowed the researcher to investigate the visitors' trip planning and route, motivation, perceived value of place and elements of satisfaction and dissatisfaction towards their visits. The researcher could clearly explore how the visitors emotionally experienced the heritage. A number of visitors were given disposable cameras to take images while on tour. Later, they were asked to explain what kind of photo they took and reasons for taking the images. In doing so, the concept of aspects of sight and photographing (as an activity) emerged from the data. Furthermore, it allowed the researcher to see flow of attractions in their visits. This supplementary data also provided authentic information on the visitors' perceptions towards the heritage sites, especially, from the interpretation of the photographs. Additionally, travel journals helped the researcher to get the visitor insight and perspectives about meanings coinciding certain the visitors' experiences in which they might not be able to express through a conversation.

The research was conducted in three world cultural heritage sites (Appendix A). The sites were chosen based on their characteristics and ideological and historical significances as well as economic significance. All heritage sites fall in the same category of heritage attractions. All of them are registered as Thai historical parks. However, each of them is different in size, proximity to the centre of towns, and the history of the place (despite the close relationship). Although the



grounded theory approach considers a study of '*a case*', the researcher conducted this study in three sites to gain richness of data and to check typicality of result.

The study consisted of three stages. The first stage involved in-depth interviews and observations (participant observations and direct-observations) at Sukhothai Historical Park, a cultural heritage site compounding a complex of ancient temple ruins. The second stage took the researcher to Ayutthaya Historical Park, a cultural heritage site of ancient temple ruins, which included repeated observations as at Sukhothai Historical Park and in-depth interviews. The third stage of the research consisted of repeated observations and in-depth interviews at Sri Satchanalai Historical Parks. Keeping with the concept of theoretical sampling, data collection strategies were aimed at the richness, validity, reliability and ensuring the saturation of data. The interviews and discussions also had to encourage participants to reflect on their experiences. In the further interview process in the second and third survey sites, the research is able to use a rough interview guide to assist in the extensions of issues emerging from the previous data collection phases.

#### 3.4.2.3 *Reflexivity of data collection process*

The emergent theory derived from the survey at the first survey site could provide a generalisation of an initial theoretical framework of heritage experience. Additional (empirical) cases were then selected, one at a time, to assure and extend this framework. Logically, the survey in additional sites provided richness of data and checked typicality of study results (a literal replication – filling theoretical categories to extend the emerging theory and to replicate previous case(s) to assure the emerging theory).

In the data collection stage, the researcher had overlapped data collection and analysis in order to reveal helpful adjustments to data collection as the '*theoretical sampling*' (See Figure 3.8) concept where the data was collected until it reached '*saturation*'; literal and theoretical replication. The rationale of the method confirms, extended, and sharpened the theoretical framework for the study. Meanwhile, the researcher emphasised flexible and opportunistic data collection methods to allow investigators to take advantage of emerging themes and unique case features. To facilitate the data analysis process, the data ordering was essential by arrangement of chronological events. Consequently, the process was followed by a systematic data analysis process consisting of open coding, axial coding and selective coding to develop theory and finalise with review and evaluation of the proposed theory.

During the initial data collection, when the main categories emerged, a full deep coverage of data was necessary. Subsequently, theoretical sampling required only collecting data on categories, for the



development of properties and propositions. The criterion for judging when to stop theoretical sampling is the '*theoretical saturation*', the term in which Glaser and Strauss define:

*...no additional data are being found whereby the researcher can develop properties of the category. As he sees similar instances over and over again, the researcher becomes empirically confident that a category is saturated...when one category is saturated, nothing remains but to go on new groups for data on other categories, and attempt to saturate these categories also (1967, p.65).*

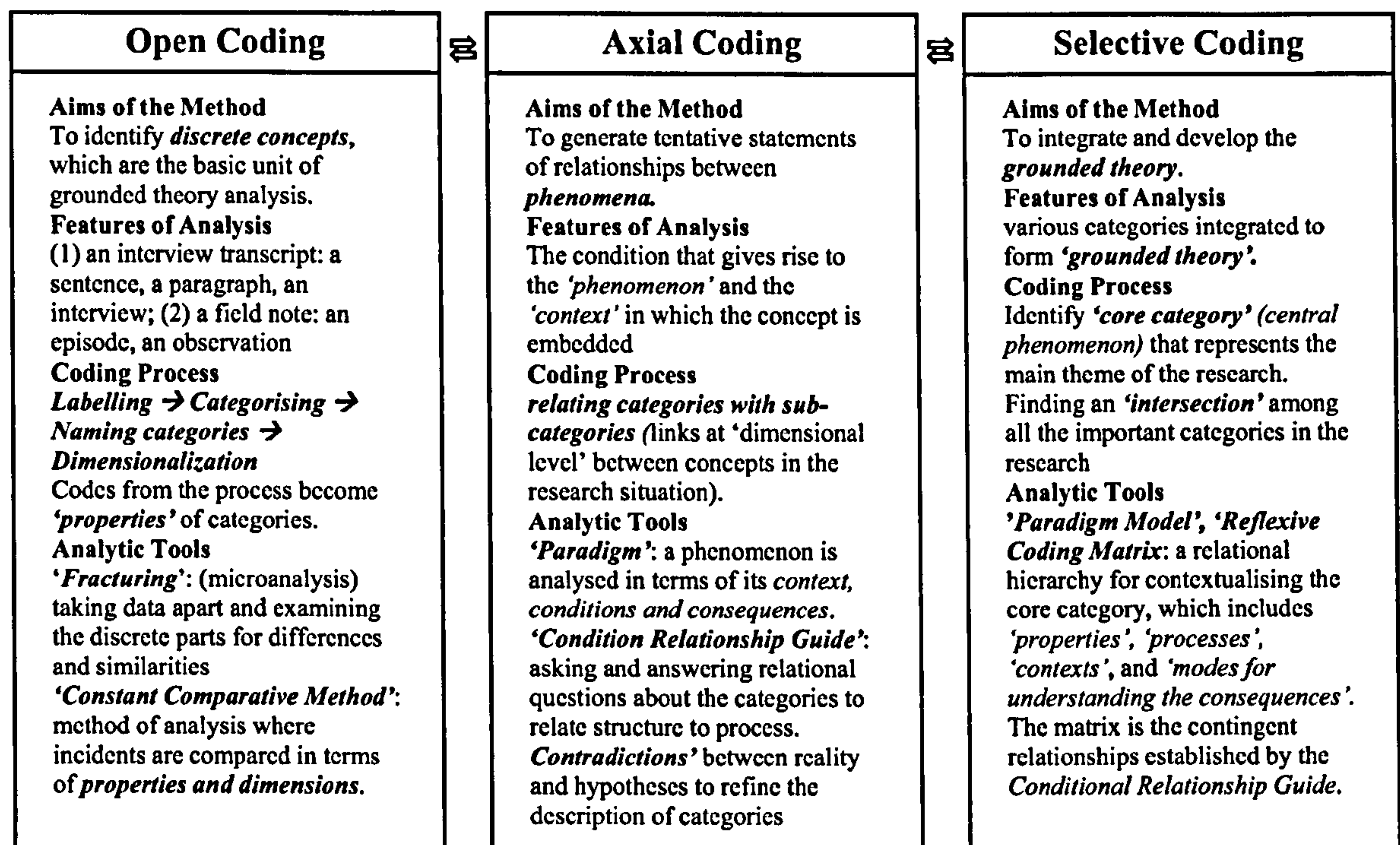
### **3.4.3 Data Ordering**

Data ordering is the arrangement of events into a chronological order in the interview scripts and field notes. It is an initial phase of data analysis that allows the researcher to determine causal events. In this phase, an initial tentative logical structure for phenomenon under study is generated. This structure is attempted to clarify relationships between the categories or variables involved in the phenomenon. This phase involves organising the data into discrete categories according to a selective specified set of properties and their dimensions and then using description to clarify those categories. Tools for this phase are '*theoretical and practical memos*' (See Table 3.4).

### **3.4.4 Data Analysis - Theoretical formulation in the grounded theory**

This section discusses the theoretical formation through a coding procedure: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The aspect of data analysis was to develop concepts, categories and properties related to the subject studied, develop connections between a category and its subcategories, and integrate categories to build a theoretical framework. In order to facilitate the analysis process it was essential to order the data chronologically by events. This method allowed examination of the research processes as well as the raw data. Having ordered the data, the interactive process of the grounded theory continued with a systematic data coding process consisting of open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The data ordering enabled the development of theory and completion of the research process through the review and evaluation of the proposed theory. Figure 3.2 illustrates the coding procedure and analytic tools used for the data analysis process in this study.

Figure 3.2 Coding procedures in the data analysis process

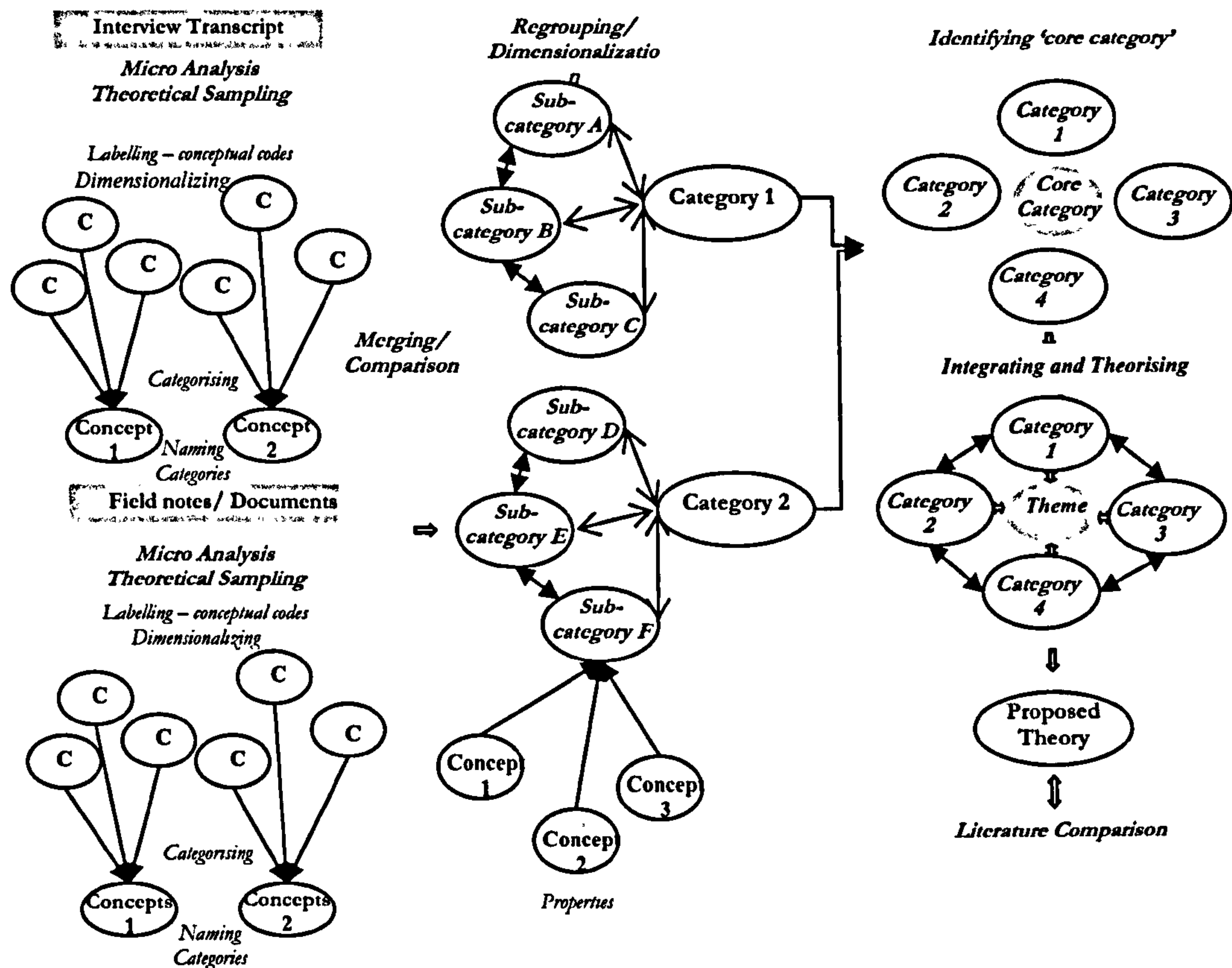


Throughout the data analysis process (Figure 3.2), a grounded theorist seeks to develop analytic interpretations of the data to focus on further data collection, which is then used to inform and refine the theoretical analysis. This stage involves a familiarisation with each conversation by searching for individual perspectives and nuances of language (McCracken 1988). The focus in the data is the form of *words* that come from interviews with participants (Miles and Huberman 1994). These words require processing, and this processing itself is a form of analysis.

Conversation data and ethnographic field notes were then fragmented and coded by an open coding and dimensionalising using a series of questions as suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990), Schatzman (1991) and Goulding (2002). Then, the fragmented codes were reformulated by forming overarching categories, which then required the development of umbrella categories. Afterward, the '*axial coding*' will be used to entail a comparison and find the links among categories. The process was suggested by Riley (1995) and Schatzman (2001). The final analytical procedure, selective coding, is used to search for patterns and themes across all conceptual categories through the development of a conditional matrix (designed for the study). The data analysis process is illustrated in Figure 3.3.



Figure 3.3 Data analysis process



The general goal of the grounded theory is to construct theories that provide an understanding of phenomena. A good grounded theory is one that is (1) inductively derived from data, (2) subjected to theoretical elaboration, and (3) judged adequate to its domain with respect to a number of evaluation criteria (Haig 1995). The focal point of the emergence of theory in the analysis process is the '*constant comparison method*', a qualitative tradition built on compared concepts suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The method involves conceptual labelling and grouping of similar data, categorising the concepts, linking categories by relationship, conditions and dimensions, and finally developing an emerging theory.

The constant comparison is an amalgam of systematic coding, data analysis and theoretical sampling procedures, which enables the researcher to make interpretive sense of the diverse patterning in the data by developing theoretical ideas at a higher level of abstraction than the initial data descriptions. For this study, data collection, data ordering, and data analysis were *interrelated*. The analytical process relating to the observation and participant observation had already started with the writing of memos describing the scenes, events and experiential behaviours of visitors. Meanwhile, the data in the form of interviews were transcribed and analysed. Through this process, the focus and area of interest could change as unexpected aspects emerged from the data. Goulding

(2002) suggests in her study that it is important that the researcher adapt and remain sensitive to the evolving conceptual nature of the emerging theory

It is noted that the researcher used a manual method for data analysis process despite several benefits of the computer-aid methods of qualitative analysis (i.e. NUDIST, NVivo. Similar to the use of analysis software, Kelle (1997) provides potential advantages the manual method as follows:

- No limit to the number of coding categories and subcategories;
- No limit to the number of time given test message can be coded;
- The use of interrelated and of unlimited flexibility.

The computer-aid methods provide a number of artificial intelligence based information structuring and reasoning facilities that can be used to aid the retrieval of qualitative data, especially the mechanisms for creating indexing categories and relating them to the data documents through comprehensive hypermedia-like browsing tools for both document and indexing databases (Richards and Richards 1995). However, it could be argued that it could alienate the researchers from their data and enforce analysis strategies that go against the methodological and theoretical orientations of the qualitative hallmark (Holbrook and Atkinson 1996; Kelly 1997). Glaser (1998: p. 185-186) also argues that the '*technological traps*' of data analysis tools could create unnecessary restrictions, inhibit the researcher's development of skills, and impose time-consuming of the learning curves. It could be an easy way out and as a hindrance rather than an aid to creativity.

The manual method could therefore provide greater potential advantages as follows.

- Logical data retrieval and conceptualization through an in-depth interpretation of data, especially complex and vague interview scripts, visitors' journals and ethnographic field notes;
- Interpretation of similar words visitors mention with various meanings that software program cannot distinguish the variations;
- Allowance of theoretical sensitivity through the constant comparison process

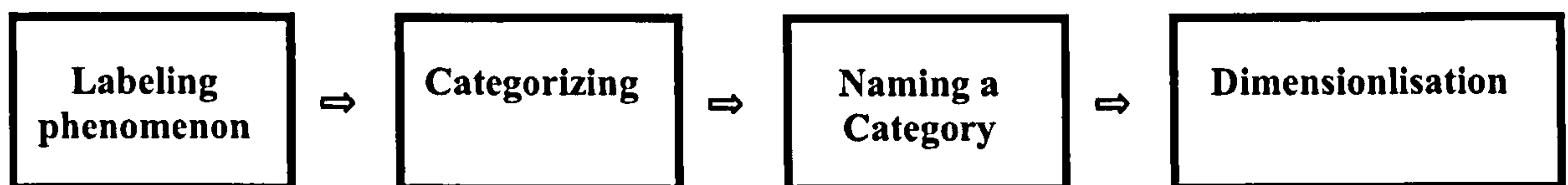
The process of manual method is time consuming; however, it provides the depth of conceptualization and the logic of theory development through the systematic coding process without forcing the data. It is also essential for the researcher to be open to the emerging evidence that may change the way the researcher think about the subject matter, and to act on the new evidence (Glaser 1998, 2001)



### 3.4.4.1 Open coding – categorizing phenomenon

Open coding is a constant comparative method of analysis that uses labelling and categorising phenomenon (codes) followed by dimensionalisation. The main elements of the ongoing process include asking questions and comparison. The codes from this stage become '*properties*' of categories. The process of open coding is depicted in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4 The open coding process



Labelling phenomena involves data conceptualisation. The process takes part in an observation, a sentence, a paragraph, and gives each discrete incident, idea, event, a name or something that stands for or represents the phenomenon. The outcome of labelling and categorising is discrete concepts.

Dimensionalisation is a process of breaking a property down into its dimensions. The properties represent attributes or characteristics pertaining to a category. In the dimensionalsation process, category development, in terms of their '*properties*', can then be '*dimensionalised*' systematically. Dimensional range can be related to the frequency (often – never), extent (more – less), intensity (high – low) or duration (long – short) of properties (Glaser 1998). They form a basis for making the relationship between categories and subcategories and later between major categories. The analytic tools for open coding are presented in Appendix E.

#### Illustration of open coding

Line-by-line analysis of interview transcripts and ethnographic field notes were used initially following an open-coding process (Table 3.6). In addition, as predicted by Strauss and Corbin (1990), an element of axial coding was done informally (linking sub-categories to categories) during the open coding process as codes were generated and refined. The researcher also used an adapted version of the coding to trace higher-level conceptual codes and to develop categories. (See also Appendix E)



Table 3.6 Illustration of open coding in theoretical memos

Message from conversation and labelling	Data Ordering (Notes on categorising and dimensionalising)
<p><b>Message 1</b>  <i>On trip planning</i> "It has been a capital (<b>having been a capital</b>). Once it has been capital. So that interested me. (<b>Interest – status of place</b>) So I see this all the time it was a capital long time ago. (<b>ancient capital</b>) Then it was important. (<b>significance of place</b>) That was interesting for me (<b>perceived value - interesting place</b>). Archaeological thing was interesting. (<b>archaeological attribute - Interest</b>) Also the culture (<b>cultural attribute - Interest</b>), the typical Asian style (<b>represent Asia - architectural attribute</b>)...likes that...urr (thinking about word)... 'The chedi' ... It's not European. (<b>distinctive character</b>) You have the feeling about the architecture (<b>felling about architecture</b>). You have the feeling that you are in Asia. (<b>In Asia - feeling sense of place</b>)We fly over to the continent of Asia. So now we want to see Asia. (<b>to see Asia</b>) And also because of the Buddha images (<b>to see Buddha Image - Buddhism symbol</b>)...statues. I have been to India and Turkey (<b>experienced cultural destinations</b>). And I have seen Hindunistic temples and mosques and churches because we are in Europe...always churches, church and church. I have seen Hindu and mosque but never Buddhist." (<b>In search of experience different religious sites</b>)</p>	<p>Reason to visit the place related</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Archaeological interest</li> <li>- Cultural interest</li> <li>- Architectural representative</li> <li>- Symbolic place – Buddha image</li> <li>- Significance of place as capital city</li> <li>- Distinctive character</li> </ul> <p>Reason to visit associated with aspect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in search of sense of place –in Asia (intense)</li> <li>- in search of new experience : different religious sites (intense)</li> <li>- experiencing Asian culture</li> </ul> <p>Experiential aspect associated with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to see Buddha image (intense)</li> <li>- to see Asia (intense)</li> <li>- to feel sense of place</li> <li>- to feel architecture (intense)</li> </ul> <p>Interaction with place associated with feeling of sense of place</p> <p>Past experience related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- having been to several religious sites</li> </ul> <p>Source of information - literature</p>
<p><b>Message 2</b>  <i>On their motivation to visit</i>                  Well..I want to <b>see the history</b> because I..mm..I mean I friends who had been travelling in Thailand before and I know a little about it. (<b>have been told – words of mouth</b>) I wanted to see...you know I have seen the ruins in the TV and I mean may be not a specific one...it's like Angkor Wat or something. (<b>Interesting historic place is influenced by TV program</b>) Something similar to me. (<b>all ruins are similar</b>) And you know I don't..I'm not gonna go the Cambodia to see something similar. (<b>Imply – this represents a kind of historic ruins – see one, see them all</b>)</p>	<p>Reason to visit related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- seeing history</li> <li>- 'see one, see them all' → representative of all historic ruins</li> </ul> <p>Reason to visit associated with information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- have been told → words of mouth (high influential)</li> <li>- documentary (influential)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Message 3</b>  <i>One visitor's experience:</i>                  I had a chance to touch them (<b>get a chance to touch</b>). I think it's is good (<b>touching is a good experience</b>) because I <b>like to touch things</b>. Touch the rocks you know...it's hundreds years old. It's really nice (<b>to fell the old age of rocks</b>). And in the way I think if those rocks...the weather and the rain will wash them away anyway (<b>Touching is not as harmful as weather</b>). So don't know if we do much harm to them. If they are in a glass house then I understand why you can't touch them. They preserve it for eternity (<b>willing to follow the rules</b>). But here....because of the weather I understand this is falling apart anyway (<b>the ruins will fall apart</b>).</p>	<p>Physical interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- touching (dimension – intense)</li> </ul> <p>Aspect of touching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to feel age of things</li> <li>- not harmful</li> </ul> <p>Attitude of visitor associated with (good understanding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- willingness to follow the rules</li> </ul> <p>ruins will fall apart (very concern)</p>
<p><b>Message 4</b>  <i>On the comparison of experience</i>                  To me the ruins here are <b>more spiritual</b> for example I'm catholic ...but not really religious... (<b>I am not so relligious – perception of themselves</b>) not meant that I am not religious at all...but not very strong. I am not going to the service or the priest...no never...(not practical catholic)last year I go to Italy which is very famous for the church...so I entered the church but that doesn't affect my religious feeling...(religious place doesn't yield religious feeling) but I just <b>appreciate the architecture</b>. It's old and you can smell that it's old from the smell of wood (<b>smell the old age</b>). But this you can breathe it out also(<b>able to 'breath it out' in-vivo</b>) but even more I think. <b>Spiritual!</b></p>	<p>Perception of place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>more</b> spiritual</li> <li>- religious place doesn't yield religious feeling</li> </ul> <p>Perception of themselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not so religious</li> <li>- not a practical religious</li> </ul> <p>Interaction with place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- smell the ages</li> <li>- breath it out (in-vivo)</li> </ul> <p>appreciate architecture</p>

Notes:

- Conceptual names are in bold prints.
- 'In vivo' codes are words or phased used by participants.



- Ethnographic field notes (observation diary) were also analysed line-by-line with the similar process.

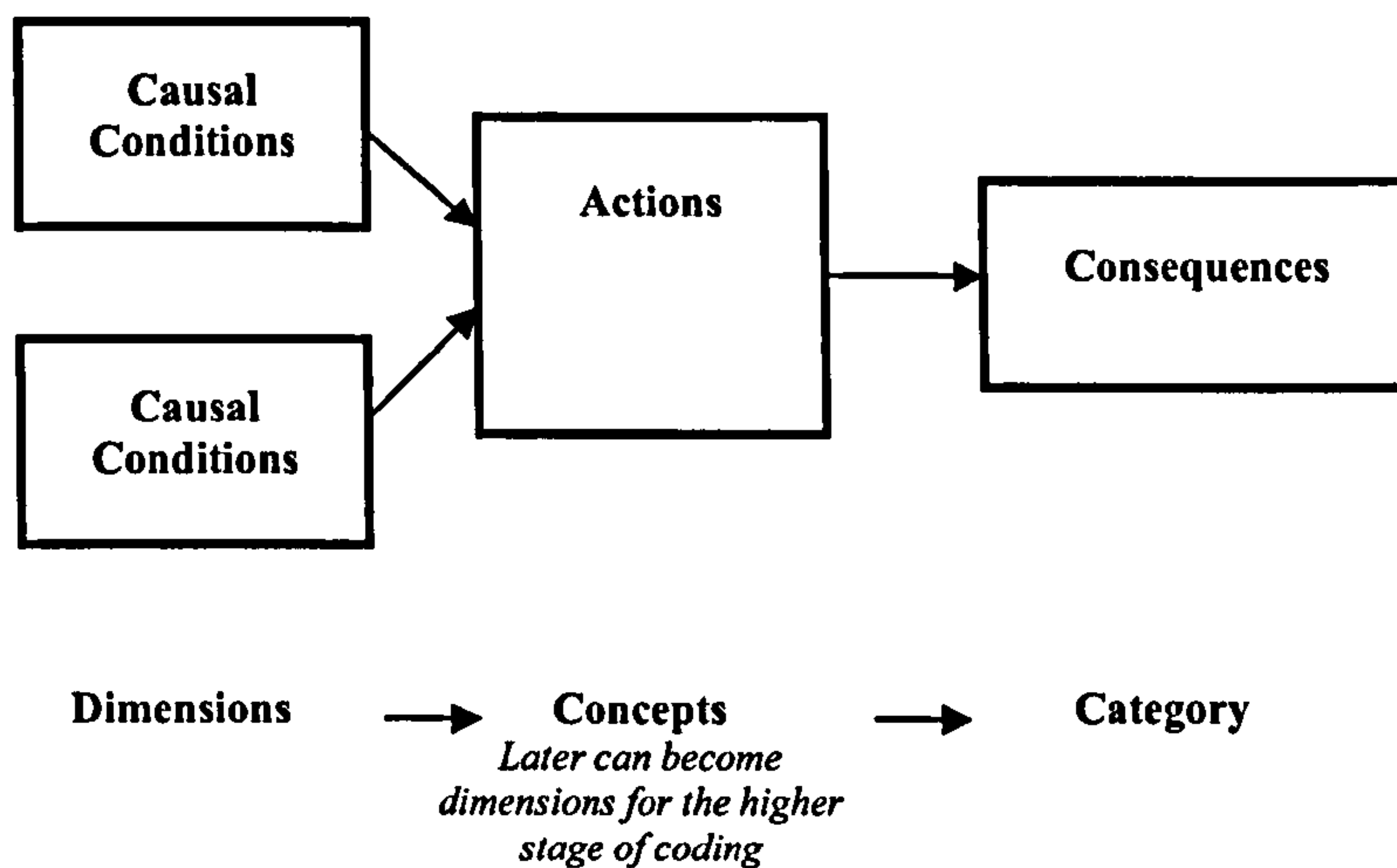
Interactions among concepts were rendered by means of '*scenarios*' that described how concepts occurring at various levels influenced each other. As a consequence, the researcher was able to establish themes and patterns of the visitors' experience. Examples of the research results are discussed briefly in the following sections.

#### 3.4.4.2 *Axial coding – construction of categories*

Axial coding is the process of conceptual categorization involving intense analysis done around '*one category*' at a time by using a paradigm model (Figure 3.5). The outcome of the process is cumulative knowledge about relationships between categories and subcategories. With the increasing dense texture of conceptualization, linkages are also made with the categories that will eventually be chosen as '*core categories*'. It is also the process of relating categories to their subcategories and linking categories at the level of '*properties*' and '*dimensions*'. It is termed 'axial' because coding occurs around the axis of a category. Axial coding consists of '*paradigm*', '*structure*' and '*process*'.

A simplified paradigm model was developed for this study to conceptualise categories and subcategories emerging from the study. To simplify this process, grounded theorists emphasise causal relationships, and fit things into a basic frame of generic relationships. This adapted framework is called a '*paradigm model*' (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5 Simplified paradigm model used for construction of categories



A grounded theory is an action/interaction oriented method of theory building (Strauss and Corbin 1990:104). The term used in the paradigm model is presented as follows.

- Causal conditions are events or incidents that lead to the occurrence or development of a phenomenon.
- Action/interaction strategies represent strategies devised to manage, handle, carry out, and respond to a phenomenon under a specific set of perceived conditions.
- Consequences stand for outcomes or results of action and interaction. What are consequences of action/interaction at one point in time may become part of the conditions in another.

The axial coding process links categories at the dimensional level. The beginning exploration of '*variation in phenomena*' is done by comparing each category and its subcategories in the dimensional level. While doing the analysis, the researcher notes patterns in the data in terms of dimensional locations of events, incidents pertaining to the property of a phenomenon. The outcome provides a foundation for '*selective coding*'.

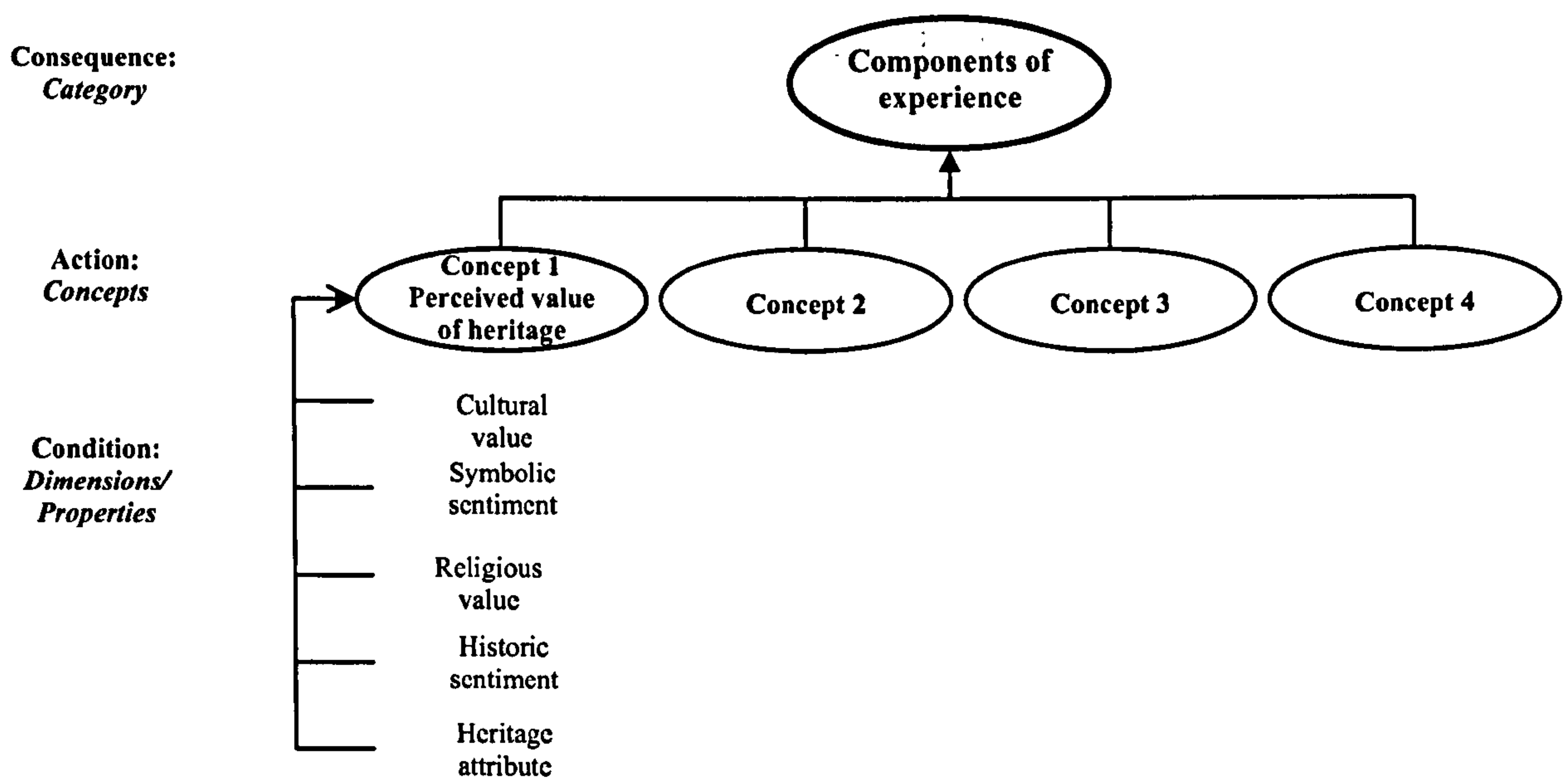
In the grounded theory approach, the researcher must keep moving through the data to see the '*incident*' repeatedly and constantly be comparing and conceptualising into a true pattern (Glaser 2002). To analysing the similarities and differences among the phenomena covered by the category will enhance internal validity. The process is done by asking questions. The researcher can ask questions such as '*what* sort of things are similar to and different from this. In another way, the researcher asks questions such as '*how* are the things which go into this similar to one another?, and *how* are they different?'. In the evaluation for '*being a phenomenon*': a phenomenon must have ability to explain '*what is going on?*' A subcategory answers questions about the phenomenon such as when, where, why, who, what, how, and with what consequences. The distinction between category and subcategory becomes clearer as the axial coding proceeds.



### Illustration of categories of axial coding

It is usual for the grounded approach to reveal more than being expected at the outset of the research. Indeed, the inductive and exploratory nature of the grounded theory is its strength and researchers come to search for the unusual and unexpected. In this study, several interesting themes emerged including '*perceived value of heritage*'. Examples of the way that this category emerged from the axial coding are discussed in this section.

**Figure 3.6** Illustration of categories constructed by the paradigm model



In axial coding the researcher developed the basis for selective coding. The categories were worked out in terms of their salient properties, dimensions, and associated paradigmatic relationships, giving the categories richness and density.

The researcher should begin to note '*possible relationships*' between major categories along the lines of their properties and dimensions and also to formulate some conception of what the research is all about. The discovery and specification of differences and similarities among and within categories are crucially important and at the heart of the grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1998). The analysis then moves towards the selective coding.

#### 3.4.4.3 *Selective Coding – construction of a grounded theory of heritage experience*

Selective coding is the process of selecting a core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement,

development and integration. The main objective of selective coding is to explicate a story by identifying a '*core category*' and linking other categories around the core category. The researcher has to decide on a central idea or a core category that represents central phenomenon that needs to be theorised about the main theme of research and links the different categories to the core category. Throughout the analysis process, integration is the interaction between the analyst and the data. To do this, the researcher adopted a '*paradigm model*' (Figure 3.10) proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1998) and reflexive coding matrix to facilitate the linkage among categories by developing a story line to undertake the selective coding. The researcher looks for the conditions, interactions, strategies and consequences that relate to core category and develop a network of conceptual relationship. This is the process of theorising to achieve the integration of theories. At this stage, integration is not much different from axial coding; however, it is done at a higher level of analysis.

The methodological aspects concerned with the selective coding are as follows.

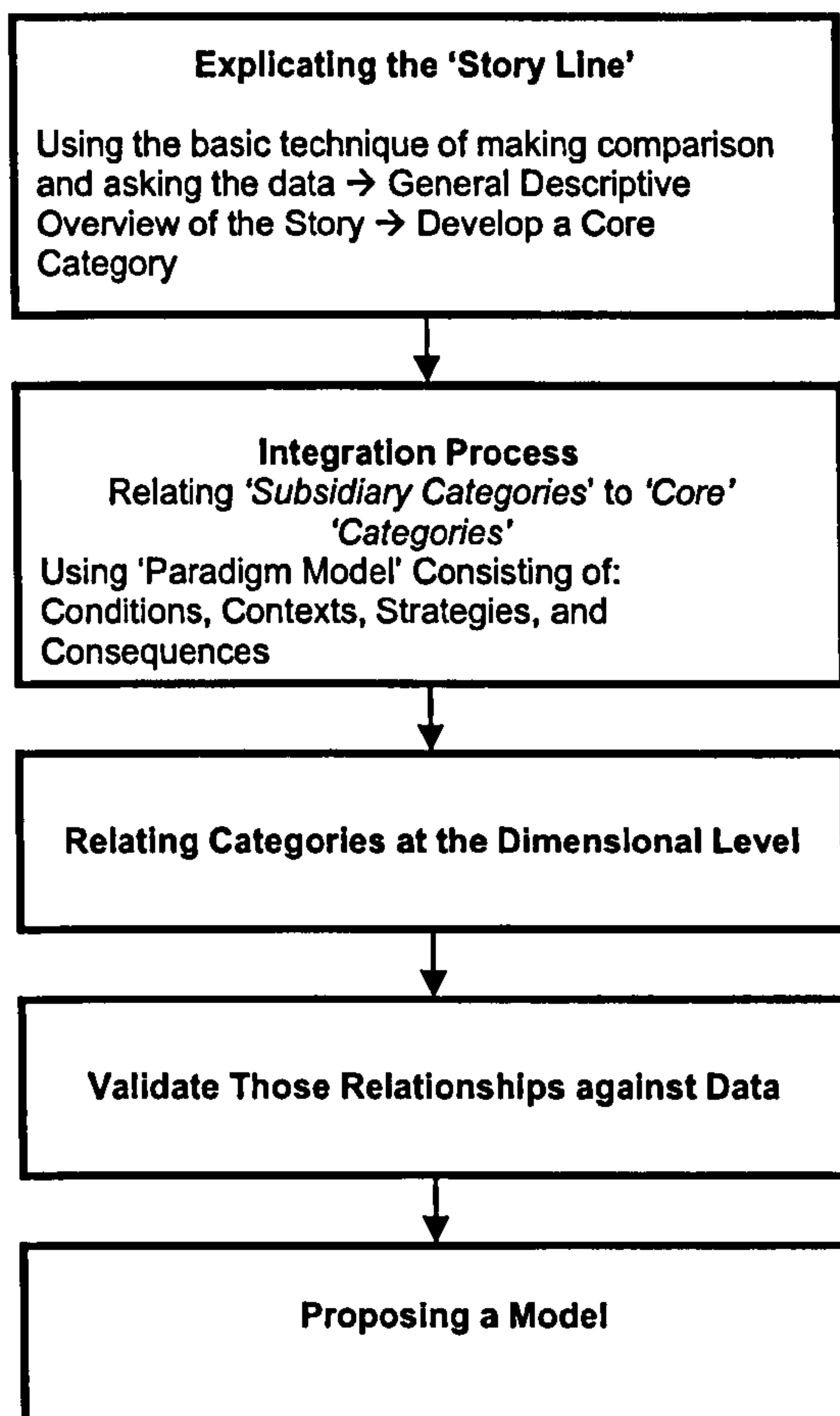
### **1. The coding process**

Selective coding involves the integration of the categories that have been developed to form the initial theoretical framework.

The coding process is illustrated in Figure 3.7



Figure 3.7 The Illustration of selective coding process



The selective coding process consists of five coding procedures:

**(1) Explicating the '*story line*'.**

The basic techniques was making constant comparison and asking for data to find out what it was all about. Practically, the researcher had to repeat the transcripts and memos for a constant comparison with categories constructed in the axial coding process. In this study, the researcher adopted a '*conditional relationship guide*' (Table 3.9) and a '*reflective coding matrix*' (Table 3.10) as an analytical tool for conceptualising the story lines according to the subject studied. The researcher had to look through the list of categories to see if they were related into one story. This category became a '*core category*'. It was the main theme that summed up a pattern of behaviour to which the researcher then gave it a name that indicated its theme. The core category was a substance of what was going on in the data and had to be developed in terms of its properties which the story indicated. It became the heart of the integration process. The core category must explain the behaviour under the study. It had theoretical significance, and its development should be traceable back through the data.

The core category was based on the assumption that a full integration of data had been conducted, and negative cases, where found, had been identified and accounted for. It must be a central theme that was related to as many other categories and their properties as possible. Through an ongoing process of theoretical sampling, this process involved staying in the field until no new evidence emerged from the data collected. A core category should be saturated as much as possible for its explanatory power and should be based on full theoretical sampling in order to maximise differences in the data. For this study, the core category was '*heritage interactive experience*'. The following section discusses the development of categories emerged from the data.

## **(2) Integration process**

The researcher related subsidiary categories around the core categories by means of the *paradigm model* (Figure 3.9) and the *integration process*. The paradigm consisted of conditions, contexts, strategies, and consequences. The researcher had to find something like *conditions* that led to a *phenomenon*. This phenomenon led to *context*, which consequently led to *action/interaction*. The action/ interaction then led to *consequences*. In addition, the researcher had to keep the *intervening conditions* in mind.

## **(3) Relating categories at the dimensional level**

Subsidiary categories were related to the core category according to the paradigm model (Figure 3.9). The basic purpose of the model was to enable the researcher to think systematically about data and relate them in a complex way.

## **(4) Validating the relationship against the data**

Within the integrating process, the researcher related the categories at the dimensional level by arranging the categories in terms of paradigm until they seem to fit the story. The process provided the analytic version of the story. Consequently, the researcher could see the development of a hypothesis regarding the relationship among the categories. The Figure 3.10 shows that the categories emerging through the analysis process consist of components of experience, external environment, experiential aspect, experience consumption practice, and evaluation of experience. The researchers could validate those relationships against the data by reading the data and constantly comparing them to the hypothesis or conceptualised categories.

## **(5) Proposing a model**

Once the core category was defined as a phenomenon, other categories were then related to this core category according to the theme. Causal conditions are the events that lead to the development of the phenomenon. Context refers to the particular set of conditions and intervening conditions,



the broader set of conditions, in which the phenomenon is couched. Action/interaction strategies refer to the actions and responses that occur as an outcome of the phenomenon, both intended and unintended. The actions and responses are referred as consequences.

It is noted that an important activity during coding is the writing of memos. It is integral part of a grounded theory that assists the researcher to keep track of all categories, properties, and hypotheses that evolve from the analytical process. These elements are involved in the formulation and revision of theory during the research process (Corbin and Strauss 1990). Practically, at least three types of memo may be distinguished: code memos, theoretical memos and operational memos.

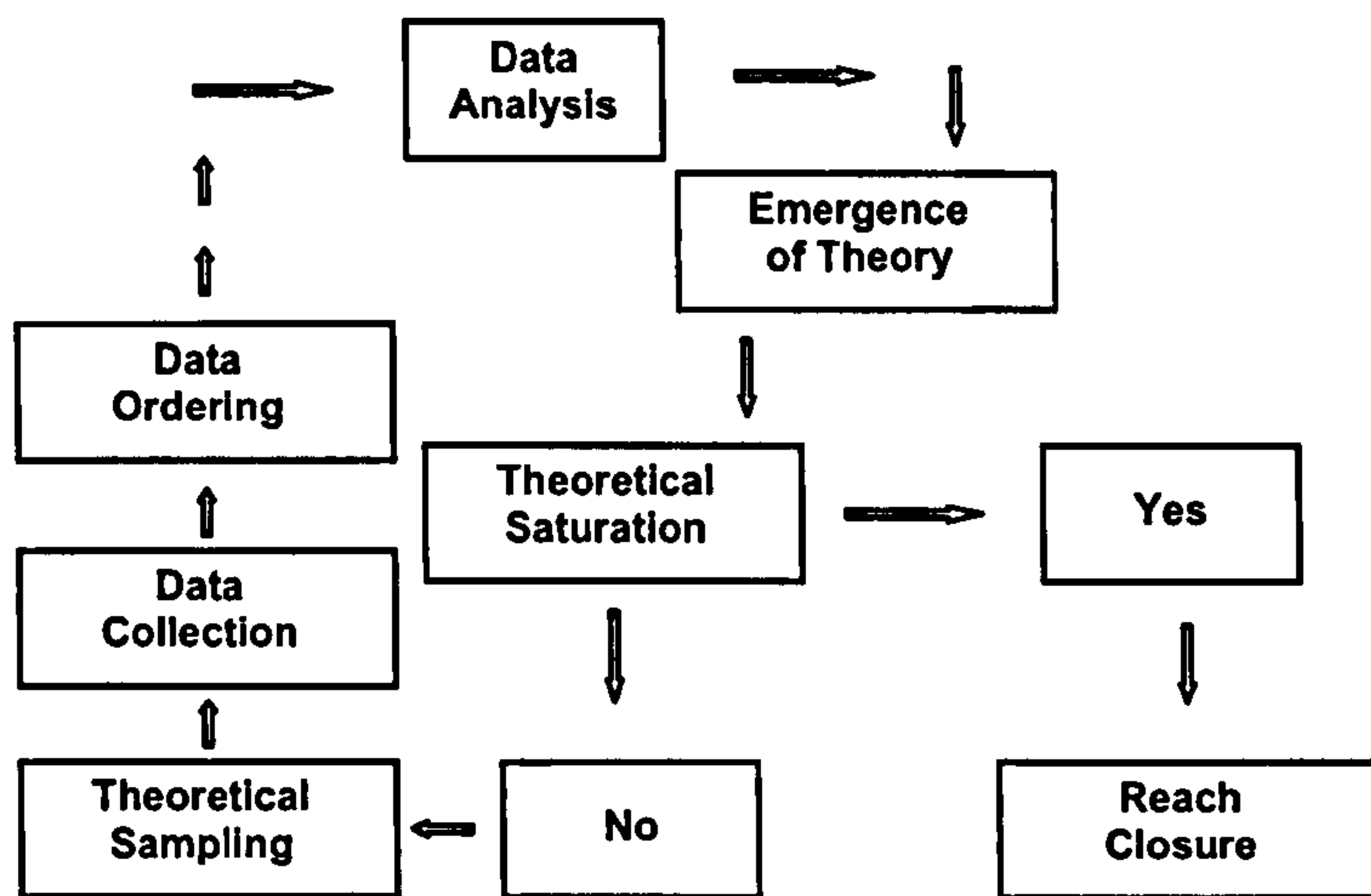
The code memos are related to open coding and thus focus on conceptual labelling. The theoretical memos are related to axial and selective coding and thus focus on paradigm features and indications of process. Finally, the operational memos contain directions related to the evolving research design (Pandit, 1999). Identifying these patterns and groups is what gives the theory specificity. It is then able to say; *“under these conditions, this happens; whereas under these conditions, this is occurs”*. Once a theoretical framework has been generated, the next step is to develop this framework by selecting additional cases according to the principle of theoretical sampling with the aim to extend and/or sharpen the emerging theory. It could be done by filling in categories that may need further refinement and/or development. When the marginal value of the new data is minimal, the analysis proceeds to reaching the research closure. Finally, the proposed model is conceptualised.

## **2. Analytic Tools for Theorising the Grounded Theory**

### **(a) Theoretical Sampling**

The theoretical sampling (Figure 3.8) is a sampling on the basis of emerging concepts, with the aim to explore the dimensional range or varied conditions along with properties of concepts (Strauss and Corbin 1998). It is used to uncover as many potentially relevant categories as possible. Practically, it is an ongoing part of the data collection and data analysis processes, which in turn directs the researcher to further samples. As suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998), the initial data gathering were followed immediately by an analytic session in which the researcher examined the data. The interviews or observations were also followed by the analysis as quickly as possible. The participants were encouraged to elaborate on themes that they felt integral to their expectations and actual experiences. To allow sufficient space for other potentially relevant concepts to emerge, it was better not to structure observations, interview, or document too strictly. The interrelated process in theoretical sampling is shown in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8 The interrelated processes of data collection, data ordering, and data analysis in the grounded theory



Adopted from Pandit (1999)

In this stage, some concepts the researcher used in the field proved to be irrelevant, and therefore were discarded, modified, or replaced by those that arose during the research. According to Flick (1998), the feature and extension of basic population are not known in advance and the repeated drawing of sampling elements with criteria would define again in each step. Hence, the sample size should not be pre-defined and the sampling will be finished when theoretical saturation has been reached.

**(b) Reflective Coding Matrix**

The technique applied to this coding process is reflective coding matrix adapted from Miles and Huberman (1994), McCaslin (1993) and Scott (2004). It is a method of discovering the patterns contextualized in a central phenomenon and the relationships among categories.

Scott (2004) suggests the conditional relationship guide (Table 3.8) for developing categories by reflective coding matrix, which starts the process by asking relational questions (Table 3.7) about the category:

**Table 3.7 Rational questions used for coding**

What is (the category)?	(Using a participant's words helps avoid bias.)
What does (the category) occur?	(Using 'during...' helps from the answer.)
Where does (the category) occur?	(Using 'in...' helps from the answer.)
Why does (the category) occur?	(Using 'because...' helps from the answer.)
How does (the category) occur?	(Using 'by...' helps from the answer.)



**Table 3.8 Illustration of conditional relationship guide**

Category	What	When	Where	Why	How	Consequence
A						
B						
C						

These answers led the researcher to a ‘story line’ of emergent theory. It is graphically depicted in a reflective coding matrix (Table 3.9).

**Table 3.9 Illustration of reflective coding matrix**

Reflective Coding Matrix					
Core Category	Name				
Properties					
Process					
Dimensions					
Contexts					
Modes for Understanding the Consequences					

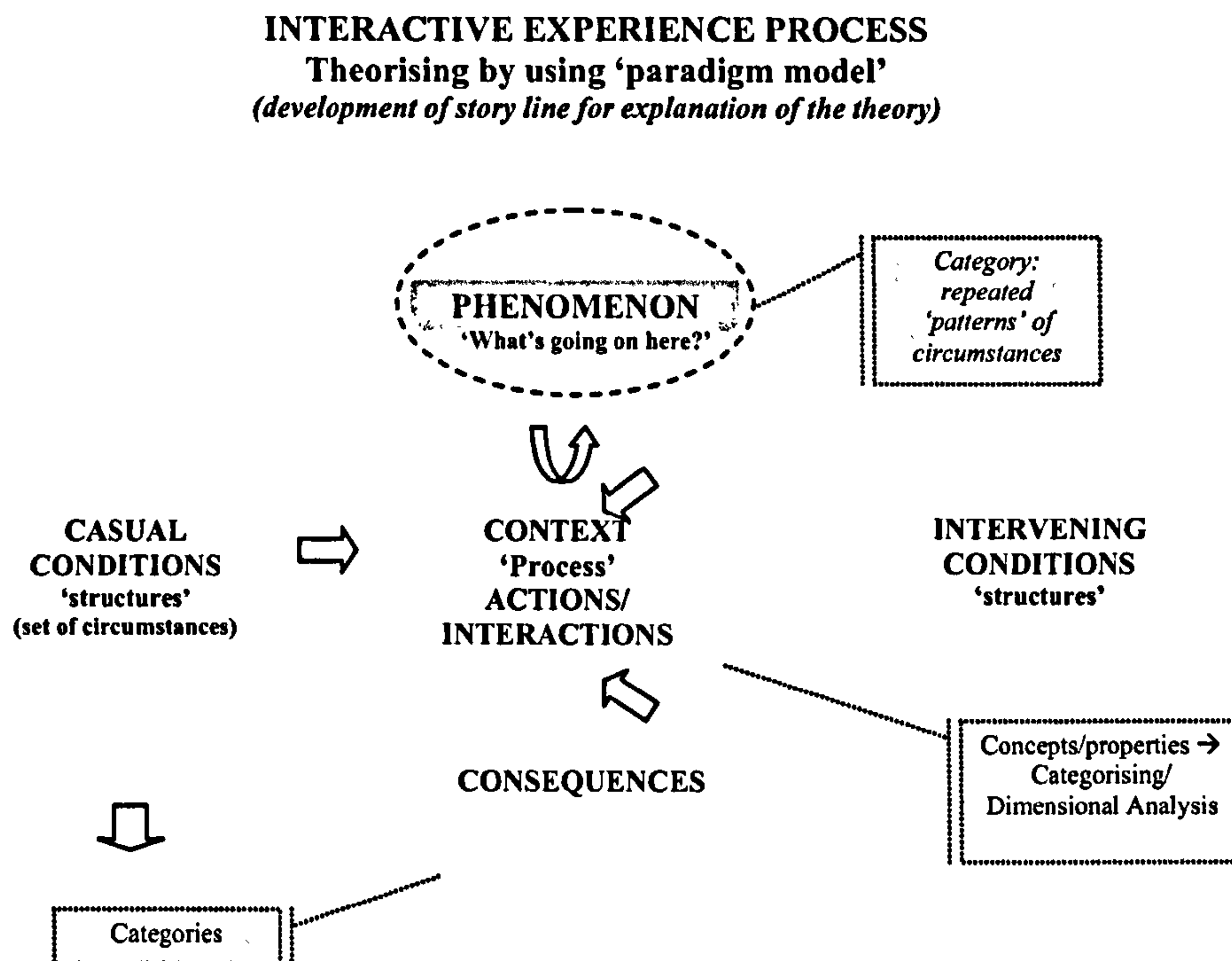
According to Scott (2004), the conditional relationship guide provided the researcher with an understanding of relationships among categories necessary to complete the second tool, the reflective coding matrix. The conditional relationship guide contextualized the central phenomenon and related the structure with the process by answering the investigative questions. In the grounded theory approach, the reflective coding matrix helped capture the higher level of abstraction necessary to move to the final phase of the grounded theory analysis, interpretation of theory in a story line and a graphic representation of the story line, a causal relationship matrix as illustrated in Figure 3.9.

**Figure 3.9 Illustration of causal relationship matrix used in theorizing the core categories**

Phenomenon – Core Category					
Context	Structure	Process	Actions/ Interactions		Consequence
Concepts	Context (what/ when/ where)	Casual Conditions (why) (Casual/ Intervening)	Actions/ (how)	Interactions	
What participants say/ act'	(Properties and Dimension)  <i>INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE PROCESS</i>	(Properties and Dimensions)  CATEGORIES  <i>COMPONENTS OF EXPERIENCE</i>  INTERVENING FACTORS	(Properties and Dimensions)  CATEGORIES  EXPERIENTIAL ASPECTS EXPERIENCE CONSUMPTION PRACTICE EVALUATION EXPERIENCE	and    →  → OF	VISITOR HERITAGE INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE

## (c) Categorized by using the paradigm model (condition relationship guide)

Figure 3.10 The Paradigm model used in selective coding



The elements of the paradigm model consist of the followings.

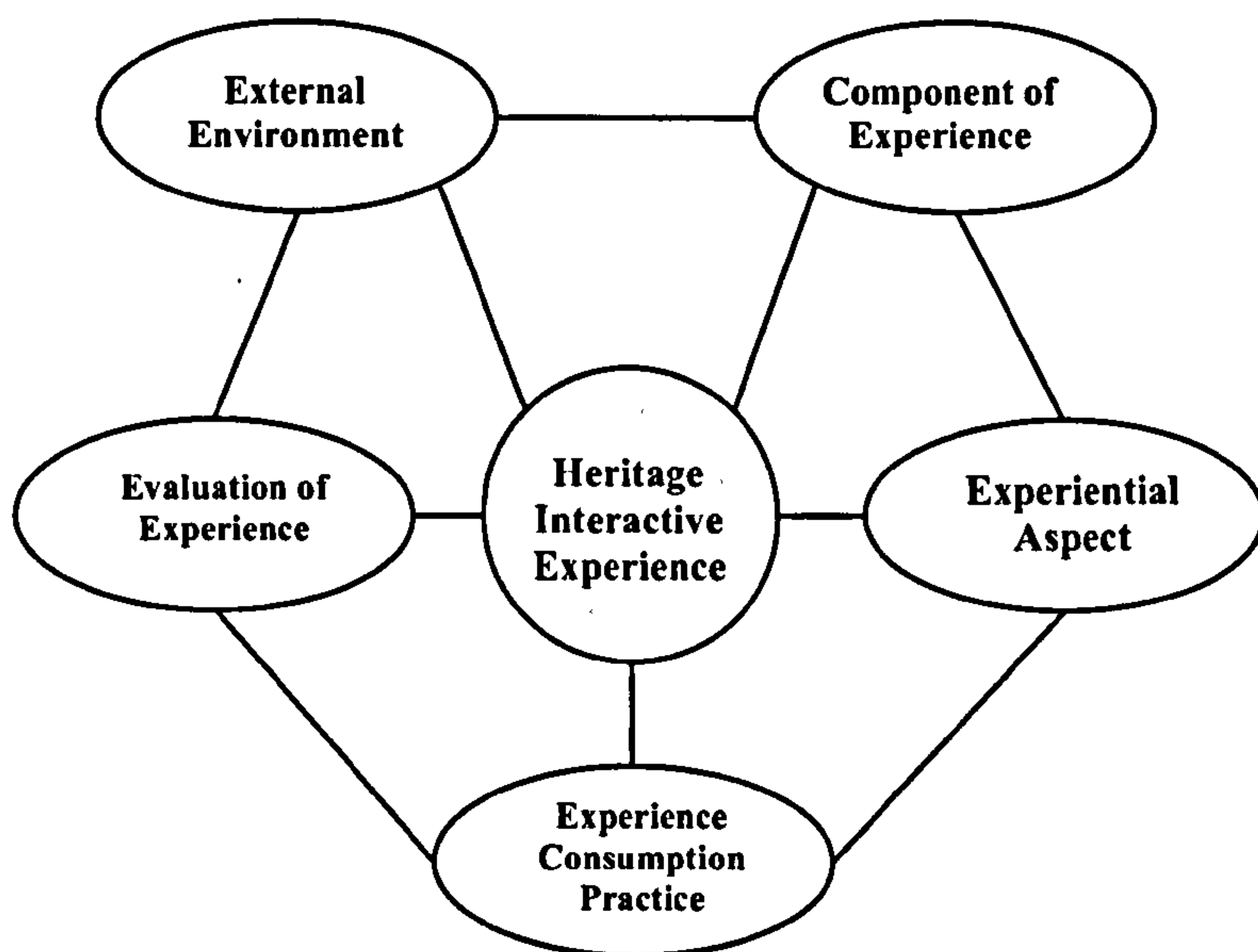
- Casual conditions are events or incidents that lead to an occurrence or development of a phenomenon. A phenomenon is a central idea, event, and happening which a set of actions/ interactions is directed to which the set is related. It is identified by asking the question: What is the data referring to? What are the actions/ interactions all about?
- Context refers to the specific set of properties that pertain to a phenomenon/ the particular set of conditions within which the action/ interaction strategies are taken.
- Intervening conditions are structural conditions bearing on action/interaction strategies that pertain to a phenomenon. These conditions act to either facilitate or constraint the action/interaction strategies taken in a specific context. Action/interaction strategies represent strategies devised to manage, handle, carry out, and respond to a phenomenon under a specific set of perceived conditions. Grounded theory is an action/interaction oriented method of theory building (Strauss and Corbin, 1990:104). Consequences stand for outcome or results of action and interaction. What are consequences of action/interaction at one point in time may become part of the conditions in another.



### 3. Construction of Theoretical Framework of Visitor Experience of Heritage

At the selective coding stage, several categories emerged. However, by using the conditional relationship guide one of them became a core category whilst the rest have interrelationships that explain the phenomenon of the visitor experience at heritage sites. The *'heritage interactive experience'* emerged as the core category, as shown in Figure 3.11, which depicts the core category and the categories that emerged from the analysis.

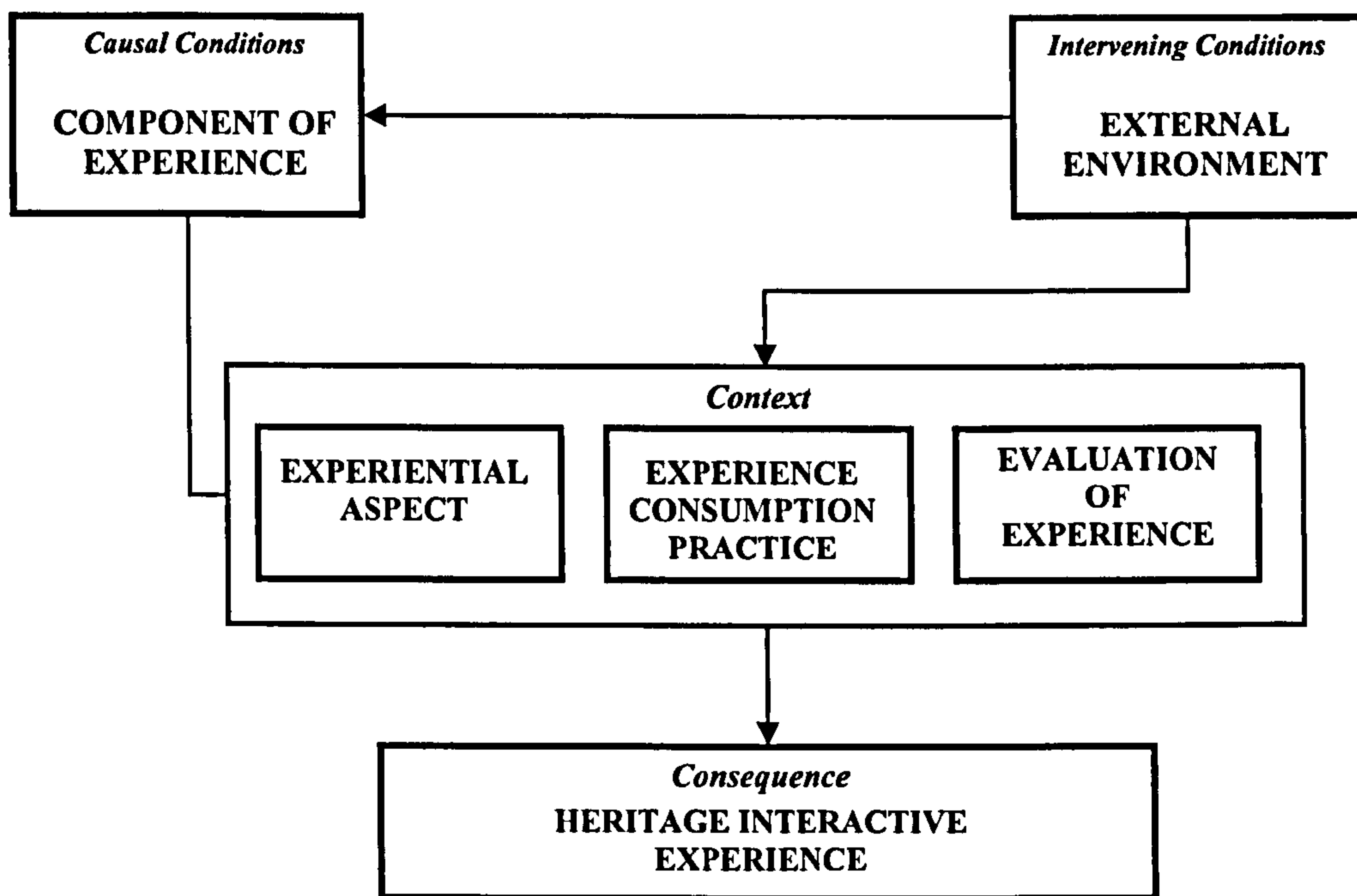
**Figure 3.11 Core category and categories developed in selective coding**



#### The Proposed Model – Emerging Theory from the Grounded Theory Approach

The challenge of theory building through selective building is to interpret the data to develop an understanding of concept meanings, to juxtapose them against each other, and consequently to identify the relationships and interactions between them (Galal 2001). Interactions among categories are rendered by means of ‘scenarios’ that describe how they occur at various levels and how they influence each other. In this study, the paradigm model as shown in Figure 3.9 was used. The potential for the integration of categories lay in the exploration of action/interaction dimensions and meanings, and as a consequence of this approach it was possible to establish the themes and patterns of visitors’ interactive experience shown in Figure 3.12.

Figure 3.12 The development of proposed model by the grounded theory approach



The patterns identified described how the visitors experienced and interacted with the heritage sites and how they developed the integrative aspects of the categories identified in Figure 3.11. The analysis reveals the theoretical framework of the visitors' heritage interactive experience consisting of the interplay between the components of experience and the external environment as 'structures' or conditions. In this sense, the proposed model became the substantive theory grounded from the analysis process. Consequently, it explains how the visitors interacted with heritage sites and seeks to answer the research questions identified at the outset.

### 3.4.5 Literature Comparison

The final stage is to compare the emerging theory with the existing literature and examine what is similar, what is different, and why. Eisenhardt (1989: 545) states:

*Overall, tying the emergent theory to existing literature enhances the internal validity, generalisability, and theoretical level of the theory building from case study research ... because the findings often rest on a very limited number of case.*

It is noted that the approach of reading literatures first with the objective of identifying gaps and relevant theories is opposite to the role that the literature has in the grounded theory as Glaser specifies this regard:



*“Grounded theory’s very strong dicta are a) do not do the literature review in the substantive area and related areas where the research is done, and b) when the grounded theory is nearly completed during the sorting and writing up, then the literature search in the substantive area can be accomplished and woven into the theory as more data for constant comparison.” (Glaser 1998: 67)*

The purpose of this approach is to keep the researcher as free as possible of influences that could restrict the independence required for an emerging theory, not to neglect extant and relevant theories and knowledge.

There are two important roles of literature in the grounded theory approach: literature as emergent and literature as data.

### **1. Literature as emergent**

In an emergent or inductive study the researcher can begin collecting data as soon as she/he has a research situation. They can then access literature as it becomes relevant. Glaser (1994) states that making much of the prior background reading provides sense making of data. It is recommended to read widely while avoiding the literature most closely to the study’s interest, which can otherwise constraint coding and memoing.

Whilst reviewing the literature after developing the theory makes sense to access literature as it becomes relevant (Dick 2005). The researcher can also reach a wider sample, in effect, by refining her findings in the light of the literature in slightly different but related fields. In short, a progressive accessing and reading of relevant literature can become a part of data collection procedure.

### **2. Literature as data**

While a constant comparison remains as the core process, reading is to compare literature to the emerging theory in the same way that the researcher compares data to the emerging theory. At this phase, the researcher seeks to extend the theory so that it makes sense of both the data from the study and the literature. There is the concern throughout with its fit to the data and its ability to make sense of actual experience. The key issue raised by Dick (2005) is how the researcher treats apparent disagreement between the emerging theory and the literature. In short, the researcher does not assume that the emergent theory is wrong.

Therefore, roles of literature review in this phase are to validate the emergent theory and stimulate theoretical sensitivity. The process will improve construct definitions, and internal and external validity by establishing the domain to which the study's findings can be generated.

Practically, the use of the grounded theory approach commits the researcher to a rigorous and constant literature review process in two levels:

- the researcher must constantly read in other substantive areas to increase the theoretical sensitivity, and
- conceptual emergence forces the researcher to review convergent and divergent literature on the field related to the developing concept

The emerging theory, in this case, influences the literature review. Therefore, the extant literature is incorporated to this study as data for theoretical comparison with the substantive theory. To avoid the confusion, the literature review for this study is presented in Chapter 6 and the theoretical comparison is fully discussed in Chapter 7.

### 3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It was essential to consider the moral implication of social science research and the political context that may have influenced its design, implementation and outcomes (Minichiello *et al* 1990). The first major concern of this study was that participants were protected from physical and psychological harm including loss of dignity, autonomy and self-esteem. Secondly, the subjects' confidentiality and privacy are protected. Finally, the subjects are protected against unjustifiable deception as suggested by Erlandson *et al* (1993).

Before the research took place, the participants gave their consent to participate. Confidentiality and anonymity for people in this study and other information were ensured by the completion of an informed consent form which covered research aspects including the aim of the research, the storage of discussion information, a statement of complete confidentiality and anonymity, contact details, any concerns arising through participation in this study, and constraints to involvement to this survey. Moreover, the conversations and interviews were conducted with or without a recorder depending on individuals' preference.

An emotional risk could be identified for people who were being observed. Although the visitors were not told about the study because there was no conversation involved, the researcher did not follow or observe any particular visitor. This ethical risk was minimised because the observation on the visitors' experience was randomly conducted at particular points so that the researcher only



recorded ways the visitors participated when they were engaged in the heritage experience by 'whoever' and 'whatever happens' without any prejudice. The information regarding data from observations was used as a guide for in-depth interview and participant observation.

The study was possible because participants were willing to participate and provide information about their experience at the sites. Interestingly, they were interested in sharing their opinion regarding site management. The confidential profiles of the participants were not being rendered in the study unless they are allowed. In doing ethnographic observations, the researcher was permitted to work as a part of service staff; therefore, the observation was carried out naturally at the sites. With the ethical consideration, the subjects were informed about the researcher's status so that they can make decision if they would be willing to allow the researcher in the tour process. People were willing to participate in this survey because they recognised that something needed to be done with the historical sites for an improvement of the qualities of the visitor experience.

### 3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter described and explored the use of the grounded theory in researching the visitors' experiences at heritage attractions. Underpinned by the interpretive paradigm, the grounded theory approach provided an apparatus for inductive theory formulation. The approach draws on the strengths of the interpretive paradigm in terms of the use of qualitative and unstructured data that represents the subjective understanding of the participants.

The grounded theory approach is rooted in the interpretive social-science paradigm in which reality is assumed to be socially constructed and this reality does not exist independently but is given subjective meaning by actors in a social setting. The approach was applied to characteristics of visitor behaviour consisting of the integration of acts, performances, processes, interaction between people and tourism products (Gilmore and Carson 1996). Hence, there is a need to look at what Belk *et al* (1989) calls '*interpretive contexts*' of the consumption phenomenon. The focus of the grounded theory approach is clearly on the visitor experience through a dialectical rationality that aims to obtain an understanding of the consumption/experience process and its meaning.

As a shift from traditional tourism research, the study offers practical and useful guidance for similar investigations of tourist experiences that seek the emergence of new knowledge in the tourism consumption arena. The practical issues addressed in this study provides an implementation guide for future research both in similar and other different fields where an insight, understanding and new knowledge about phenomena is needed. The heuristic strategies of the grounded theory can be modified over time by an individual grounded theorist (Glaser 1992;

Strauss and Corbin 1998) to yield flexibility for practice. This study employed adapted methods of data collection to fulfil the requirement for richness of data as well as an adapted data analysis method to enable the broadening of the conceptual codes and categories. The approach enhanced the opportunity for unexpected theoretical concepts to emerge and future tourism research may find this approach useful for exploratory inductive research.

The study also identifies the challenges that need to be taken into account in attempts to increase the quality of visitor experiences and their interaction with heritage sites. The result of this study would provide implications for visitor management where the experience of visitors and the sustainability of the sites are placed at the heart of the process. Issues identified were related to enhancing the process of efficiency of product development in heritage destinations and improving visitors' enjoyment and satisfaction through effective visitor management and product development strategies for not only archaeological heritage sites but also other types of heritage and tourism attractions.

A limitation of the approach is that it is very resource intensive throughout the whole process. In addition, the quality of this type of research relies on the analyst's skills and experience in the analysis and interpretation of qualitative data. The pilot testing of data collection methods and preliminary familiarisation with the research sites are critical to the development of the researcher's experience and skills in the practice of the methodology. The researcher has to be very open and responsive to the data as it emerges, avoiding any temptation (conscious or sub-conscious) to influence or shape issues, either through personal bias or in response to the preliminary stages of data analysis. The evaluation of this research is fully discussed in chapter 7.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **THE VISITOR HERITAGE EXPERIENCE MODEL**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

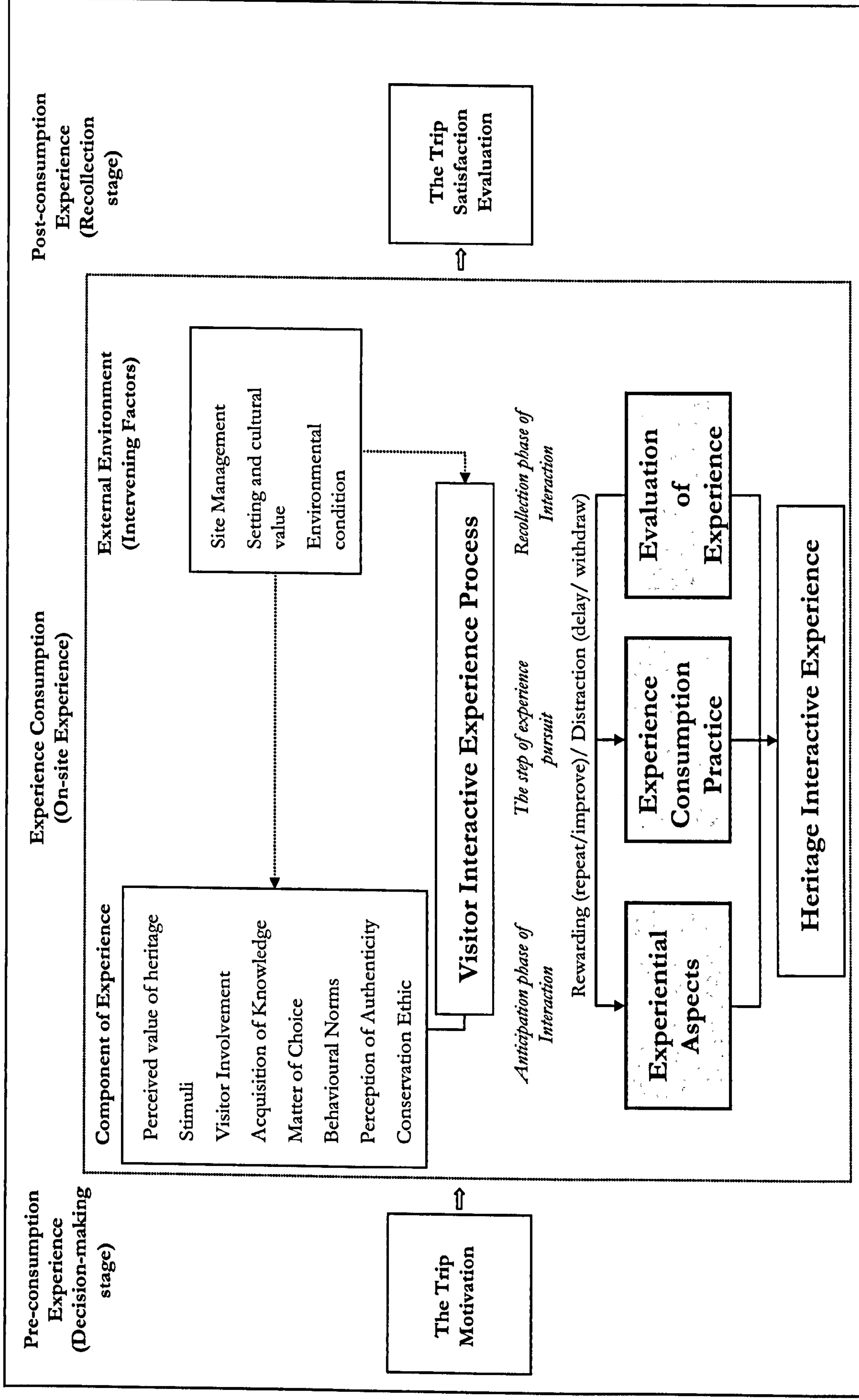
The aim of this chapter is to conceptualise the model of visitor heritage experience and to explain its framework grounded from visitors' perspectives. This chapter describes the proposed model including the "*visitor heritage experience model*", and the components of experience. This model portrays the construction of experience by the moment they interact with the heritage. The components of experience are factors constructing the experience process. The model reveals dynamic nature and complexity of the heritage interactive experience process, of which the heritage experience is an outcome.

This chapter is structured under two headings: the visitor heritage experience model and the interactive experience process (section 4.2) and components of experience as the factors constructing the process (section 4.3). It is a part of an emerging substantive theory that clearly responds to the research question one. The discussion of the research finding in this chapter is also presented to provide an introduction and a background for the explanations of the findings on visitor interactive experience presented in Chapter 5.

#### **4.2 VISITOR HERITAGE EXPERIENCE MODEL**

This section discusses the overview of the proposed model and the construction process of heritage experience. The grounded framework of visitor heritage experience is presented in Figure 4.1 as '*Visitor Heritage Experience Model*'.

Figure 4.1 the Visitor Heritage Experience Model





The tourism consumption process consists of three main parts: the pre-consumption experience (decision-making phase), the consumption experience (on-site experience phase), and post-consumption experience (post-visit phase). The main theme of this study is the consumption experience located in the second part of the Visitor Heritage Experience Model: On-site experience. This study found that the heritage experience was an outcome of the dynamic and complex interactive experience of heritage. The model also represented a relationship among multiple propositions that provided a framework of visitor heritage experience. The propositions consist of two main elements: factors constructing experience (components of experience and external environment) and the visitor interactive experience process.

#### 4.2.1 The Visitor Interactive Experience Process

One of the key pieces of this study is to understand the meaning that individuals made for their heritage experiences. The interactive experience of heritage emerged as a consequence of this process. The study conceptualised visitor heritage experience as a process of interaction between individual visitors and heritage objects. The significant theme emerging from the integrated data was proposed as visitor interactive experience process. It is a three-phase process: early stage of interaction, step of experience pursuit and late stage of interaction or the recollection phase (Figure 4.1).

At the first phase of the interactive experience process, individual visitors developed various experiential aspects that indicated “*what the experience is for*”. Indeed, experience consumption practice was grounded from a certain experiential aspect constructed by a visitor when he or she interacted with the heritage and defined what he/she wanted to achieve. The definition of goals simultaneously or separately emphasised six main experiential forces or experiential aspects (described in 5.2).

At the second phase, the visitors were engaged in the experience consumption practices led by experiential aspects. The visitors individually organised and interpreted the components of experience (personal factors) in a coherent way in order to pursue a meaningful heritage experience. The findings of this study identified a typology of heritage experience through multiple patterns of interaction as well as the process that characterises them. This concept presented an analysis of the practices or activities that individual visitors undertook while they interacted with cultural heritage sites or attractions which is comprehensively discussed in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3). Similar to the experiential aspects, the experience consumption practices were not mutually exclusive for an individual. A visitor may consume heritage experience by various experience consumption

practices. Hence, the study suggested the multiplicity of heritage experience and description was treated as categories of consumption experience rather than the tourist typology.

At the third phase, the experience recollection, the visitors evaluated their consumption experience by determining the criteria of enjoyment and distraction while they were engaged in heritage experience consumption. The continuing process also determined strategies the visitors used to manage the results of evaluation. This process identified that experience consumption practice could be influenced not only by the components of experience and the intervening or environmental factors. The visitors who initially subscribed to a certain experience consumption practice might end up trading it off for another practice in order to obtain a preferable experiential result in arriving at the beginning of interactive experience process. This depended on specific conditions at the moment individuals being engaged in an interactive experience and those conditions reflected that the visitors were faced with a series of preferable or un-preferable options.

This framework explored and described a variety of ways in which the visitors used to consume heritage experience in order to understand how these differences varied across situations and to explain the conditions that structured how individuals consumed and the unintended consequences of experience consumption patterning.

#### **4.2.2 Factors Constructing Visitor Heritage Experience**

This section describes the factors constructing visitor heritage experience and the visitor interactive experience process. The model reveals complexity of visitor experience. It represents a phenomenon specifying the elements and nature of the heritage experience consumed by visitors with which the components of experience compose and link into the visitor interactive experience process whereas a set of external environment acts as intervening factors influencing the experience construction. Indeed, the interrelation of these elements is unique to every individual.

There are ten critical interrelated components clustered into two main contexts: components of experience or personal context and external environment or physical / environmental context. The content of Table 4.1 responds to the components of experience and external environment in the visitor heritage experience model.



**Table 4.1 The concepts related to visitor experience at heritage site****Components of Experience (personal context)**

1. Perceived value of heritage
2. Stimuli
3. Visitor Involvement
4. Acquisition of knowledge
5. Matter of choice
6. Perceptions of authenticity
7. Behavioural norms
8. Conservation moral

**External Environment (physical/environmental context)**

9. The setting and cultural value
10. Site management
11. Environmental conditions

In this study, the properties and the dimensional ranges of each component were identified to have a relationship that helped to explain the interactive experience of the visitors. Visitors constructed the experiential aspects at the first stage by making meaning about what their heritage experience aimed for. An experiential aspect directed a pattern of heritage experience consumption. However, the interactive experience process could be moderated by external environment, called intervening factors in the model.

### 4.3 COMPONENTS OF EXPERIENCE

This section explains attributes involving the construction of visitor heritage experience engaged by individual visitors, namely components of experience. It includes personal factors or a set of circumstances that visitors brought into their consumption of heritage experience. The components of experience consist of perceived value of heritage, stimuli, visitor involvement, and acquisition of knowledge, matter of choice, perception of authenticity, behavioural norms, and conservation moral. External environment was a set of intervening conditions either favourable or unfavourable to the visitor experience. These factors included the setting and cultural value of the site (i.e., site ambience and atmosphere and local culture and culture associated with the site), site management (i.e., traffic, information and the ticketing system), and environmental condition (i.e., climate and weather) (discussed in *Chapter 5*). Each context was part of an integrated heritage experience which was unique to individual visitors. It was the presence of these factors influencing what and how visitor experienced the heritage.

The visitor interactive experience process is characterized by complexity and diversity in respect of following components of experience, which was mainly discussed in the following section.

### 4.3.1 Perceived Value of Heritage

Perceived value of heritage indicates perception and perspective of individual visitors towards a heritage attraction and object they are interacting with. The visitors view the heritage and provide their own meaning to it. The value of heritage assigned by a visitor is a source of identification and affiliation that leads to the aspect of experience. The perceived value of heritage is one of the most important components that construct visitor heritage experience. They manifest themselves in remarks about tangible and substantial aspect of attractions as well as intangible social context with personal signifiers of these values associated with heritage experience. Although the heritage sites are generally defined as '*cultural heritage*', the visitors perceive the value in various ways which can be conceptualised into five main concepts with various dimensional ranges (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2 The perceived value of heritage and its dimensional range and properties**

The Perceived Value of Heritage	Dimensions and Properties
<b>Cultural Value</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cultural treasure</b> – a place where Thai culture rooted, a place to experience and learn culture</li> <li>• <b>Cultural Icon</b> – an iconic place to get a glimpse of Thai culture</li> </ul>
<b>Symbolic Sentiment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The setting of scene</b> – movie/literature trails</li> <li>• <b>A place to be</b> – atmospheric setting</li> <li>• <b>Exotic Ruins</b> – identity of others, something new to life</li> <li>• <b>Ancient Ruins</b> – the symbol of the age value</li> </ul>
<b>Religious Value</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sacred site</b> – spiritual centre where superstition, faith and admiration visitors' existence/ a place for religious practice from the past to present</li> <li>• <b>Religious symbol</b> – representative of Buddhism</li> </ul>
<b>Historic Sentiment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Remain of Glory</b> – historic remembrance of glory, peace, love and war</li> <li>• <b>Ideological Value</b> - historical significance/a place of national pride or indicate the identity of self</li> </ul>
<b>Heritage Attributes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Historic Scenery</b> – mysterious sense of place emerging at the sight/scenic historical park</li> <li>• <b>Awe-Inspiration</b> – extraordinary feature of heritage site</li> <li>• <b>Tourist Attraction</b> – an ordinary tourism attraction</li> </ul>

#### 1. Cultural Value

Visitors interact with the given value of heritage. Heritage ruins impart a place related to cultures and traditions. The cultural value represents an intangible value of heritage. It is associated with two dimensions: cultural treasure and cultural icon.

*Cultural treasure* indicates the heritage value by which visitors perceive the site as a place where Thai culture is rooted and a place to have a real experience of the Thai culture. Indeed, the heritage represents high cultural status to visitors as quoted:



*“Images of the Lord Buddha sculptures during the Sukhothai era are some of Thailand’s greatest cultural treasures; perhaps the greatest achievement of Ramkhamhang’s rule, the most important strides crafting the modern Thai nation.”*

and

*“This is it....it’s Thailand and her great culture. If you want to experience the Thai culture...you will experience it here.”*

The heritage is also perceived as a place to learn about Thai culture, art, and tradition as often quoted by visitors *‘the heritage is a remaining of Thai art of Thailand in the past’*. This perceived value usually influence the visitors to develop the quest for cultural assimilation.

**Cultural icon** indicates the value by which visitors perceive the site as an iconic place to get a glimpse of Thai and Southeast Asian cultures. The heritage is seen as representative of the country or the region as quoted; *“this is an image of Thailand”* or *“this is what it is like in Thailand”*. Because of the recognition and reputation of the heritage sites, they become *‘a must see place’* to visitors as they are registered as world heritage sites as often quoted.

*“The giant, beautifully preserved Buddha is the iconic face of Sukhothai. Some 15 metres tall, the Buddha is known as Phra Achana – One who is not frightened!*

and

*“This is the main reason why tourists visit Sukhothai. The park has been designated by UNESCO as a world heritage site.”*

The cultural icon usually derives the quest for cultural observation.

## **2. Symbolic Sentiment**

The symbolic sentiment represents a thought or an attitude based on both feelings and rationales. Thai heritage incarnates the scene of a long lost era, a place to be for a pleasant time, an identity of the ancestors and a symbol of the age. It is associated with four sub meanings: the setting of scenes, a place to be, exotic ruins, and ancient ruins.

**The setting of scenes** represents the meaning of the heritage as a place appeared on scenes of movies, literature, and writers’ trails. It determines the moment visitors interact with the real scenes. Indeed, the heritage offers romantic notion prevalent in the Thai history and the long lost time.

*“It was a place of my dream. I have read the book for many years...the monument...the moats and the temples. A great story happened there.”*

The site incarnates the dream of the long lost town because the place is full of history and stories and it is brought back by motion images and historic literatures. The quest for historic trails usually derives from this perceived value.

*A place to be* indicates the value of heritage by which visitors perceive it as a place to spend leisure times or a place to get away and be on their own. This perceived value is associated with atmospheric environment of the heritage attractions.

*“It’s a nice place to get away...There are numerous other sites round the city...some of them to my mind more interesting than the central ruins, and the city is surprisingly specious and green. It’s easily worth spending sometimes there.”*

and

*“The Buddha is enclosed in a high wall and can be seen through a large narrow doorway. It was quiet, cool, and peaceful... It’s a place that I can bring with me my favourite book and read it away.”*

Visitors interact with the site’s calmness, pureness and peaceful atmosphere. It could be a place where the visitors can do things they do in everyday life. These attributes are seen as opposites to congestion, crowds and pollution. The heritage site offers a perfect contrast for visitors’ suffering from temporal and spatial constraints in the hectic world they face. A heritage site, hence, is a place for soothing and restoring both physical and mental well-being. This perceived value usually derives the quest pleasure.

*Exotic ruins* represent the heritage value by which visitors perceive it as an identity of others. The heritage is a place which visitors find different from their daily experience. The visitors see the exotic attributes of Thai heritage in contrast with what they see in everyday life. The heritage is perceived as *something strange* which amazes the visitors as quoted.

*“All these monuments are strange and new to me.”*

and



*“It’s really different from what we have in England...different styles and atmosphere with the big...huge statute and beautiful temples... We have lots of old castle and churches but it’s just different style. I want to see something like Buddhist temples...Good to see this once in a life time.”*

This perceived value is normally associated with the features of the heritage attractions and their representation to different architectures and arts and offers something new to a visitor’s life. The heritage is also valued as a unique place for experience once in a lifetime as it offers an opportunity for a discovery of the *‘the other side of the hill’*. An aspect for exploration and new knowledge usually derives from this perceived value.

*Ancient ruins* represent the value by which the visitors perceive the heritage for its heritage attributes related to the old age and the existence in an ancient time. The valuable ancient ruins are perceived for *‘being old’*. This perceived value is associated with the age-value of the heritage as quoted.

*“Of course, the only reason I can think of to visit Sukhothai is the ancient ruins what they call old city... Ruins here really are ruins. The former splendour is not easy to recognise, though the new red stone has their charm”.*

and

*“Here you will find the splendid ruins of royal palaces, Buddhist temples, the old city gates, walls, moats, dams, ditches, ponds, canals, and the remains of the kingdom’s impressive irrigation system.”*

Age and ruined condition of the ruins provide an element of value to visitors when they interact with the place. The quest for sense of place usually derives from this perceived value.

### **3. Religious Value**

The religious value represents a notion spirituality, sacredness and symbolism related to Buddhism of heritage, both in the past and present. There are two main dimensions conceptualised to the religious value: sacred site and religious symbol.

*Sacred Site* represents the spirituality and sacredness of the heritage from the past to present. It is a religious sanctuary and the place that visitors believe in the superstition. This perceived value is related to visitors’ faith, strong beliefs and admiration towards the heritage as often quoted:

*“This is the most sacred and spiritual Buddha statue in Thailand. There are some spirits around here.”*

and

*“(The ruins of royal palace, walls, moats, dams, ditch, ponds, canals and dyke...you see...the town was the magical spiritual centre of kingdom in the past...until today.”*

The perception of superstition is also involved in this concept, based on a belief that there have been sacred spirits residing around the place time after time as mentioned, ‘*temple of the great relics*’. The place used to be a sacred and religious sanctuary and its religious significance still exists today. This perceived value usually derives the quest for a sacred journey and religious activities.

The heritage is perceived as a place for religious activities from the past to present. This sacred value also relates to the heritage’s legend and mythology. These legendary myths (i.e., the speaking Buddha; the stone Khmer) have been passed from generation to generation. There are some superstitious beliefs and legends about religious monuments and Buddha images which the local people believe to be true. To visitors, historic ruins still hold up their legends and myth to date. Most importantly, the heritage holds its religious significance for visitors.

**Religious Symbol** represents the heritage value that relates to the features of the heritage for the Buddhist philosophies and practices as quoted:

*The religious symbolism of Thai heritage remains valid today. The pilgrim’s route to the historic monument is still followed by pilgrims Buddhists from all over the country and elsewhere.”*

and

*“The lotus bud-shaped spires tell us why the Buddhists use lotus flowers for their religious activities. The Chedi is a symbol of Buddhism in Thailand.”*

This conceptual value is based on the heritage’s symbolic significance. It also serves as a place where visitors can get a glimpse of Buddhism.



#### 4. Historic Sentiment

This perceived value confronts inter-cultural, romantic notion of the Thai heritage and it is derived from nostalgia towards the past splendour. The historic sentiment is based on a difference between contemporary and bygone glory. The idealised connotations of the heritage sentiment include remains of glory and ideological value.

*Remains of glory* represent an important element of the Thai cultural heritage. The element is related to its history (i.e. the sack by the Burmese, the victory over enemies) and the historical significances (i.e. being the prosperous ancient capital and the settlement of the Thais) as quoted.

*“This place was really amazing. It was the capital of Siam for several hundred years, and the Burmese attacked and successfully ransacked the city. Many were killed, others tortured. Many of the Buddha images were destroyed, all of them were damaged. The destruction was quite amazing... but it also was rather amazing to think that the people of Siam suffered such great losses, yet managed to regroup, build a new capital, and succeed as a nation. This place is remains of glory where Buddha holds his head up. Old Siam’s glorious past lives on the ruins. More than just an outdoor museum – Ayutthaya is a meander through time.”*

and

*“Modern Ayutthaya is just an “ordinary” Thai town..... HOWEVER ... you breathe the air of a glorious past where ever you look. There is hardly a view without one of the ruins of the many old temples that originate from the time when the name Ayutthaya stood for a kingdom that was one of the most splendid ones of its time, not only in Asia, but worldwide... Ayutthaya was the Siamese capital for more than 400 years. The ‘Golden City’ had 3 palaces, 29 fortresses and more than 350 pagodas and temples. There was a big wall with 94 gates, which could not hold back a Burmese army, though... Even today you can imagine the former glory of Ayutthaya. Most ruins of the temples can still be seen and they are to be found all over the place, giving the town a very special touch and a predominant colour: terracotta.”*

The sight of the heritage reminds the visitors of a glorious story of place. A timeless value, communicated through romantic image of the ruins. The heritage provides a historic remembrance of glory, peace, love and war.

This impression has often been evoked prior to departure by tangible cues depicted in visual images. Heritage, hence, offers a virtual journey back into the glorious past, associated with fantasies of experiencing the place where time stopped, leaving value of its heyday intact.

*Ideological Value* represents the heritage value perceived as a place of the national pride by visitors. Visitors across nationalities possessed a particular mentality of 'Thai-ness'. It is often derived from a notion of its status in the past (the ancient capital of Thailand). This status is still perceived as it was nowadays. The value of place as an ancient capital at which the Thai nation (today) has emerged is very important to people since the heritage has fostered national unity as quoted.

*"Sukhothai represents the first attempt of gathering the Thai people into unified statute. In addition, the style of art and architecture with Sukhothai pioneered-styles that continue to be influential to this day – the ancient capital is seen as the first step towards modern Thai nationhood."*

and

*'the central plains stretching northward from Bangkok are historic heartland of Thai people. The impressive ruined city of Ayutthaya stands as a fascinating link with Thailand's past'.*

The heritage is remarkable and the ideological significant attraction represents the national pride. Further, the heritage become visitors' 'must see' place as often mentioned *"this place is really tops to spend a day at"*.

## 5. Heritage Attributes

Visitors specify the value of heritage by adding a personal interpretation through the interaction with its tangible features and personal signification. This perceived value consists of three main concepts: historic scenery, awe-inspiration and tourist attractions.

*Historic Scenery* represents the heritage value perceived for its historic features. It involves the site atmosphere that provides a 'historic sense of place'. The value is also irrelevant with the Buddhism, belief and myth. It is just *'the look'* of ruins in heritage environment (mysterious and historic) as quoted.



*“Sukhothai is famous for one main thing, the collection of impressive ruins in Old Sukhothai Historical Park. The images of Lord Buddha impart a sense of peace and tranquillity to the modern day visitors. The site at Sukhothai is a stylish park, where you can explore the ruins by cycling from one monument to the other. The statues and temples are much better preserved ...though several centuries older... than the ones in Ayutthaya, or is that just my imagination?”*

and

*“The ruins were beautiful and the setting they were in made the day great...An idyllic park with ancient ruins that remind you of Greek or Roman ruins. I visit Ayutthaya after seeing only a small photograph in a guidebook. I want to get a feel of old Siam and was not in any way disappointed. Sure the splendour is gone, but this sprawling complex was most certainly real deal.”*

The heritage value is perceived by using cues from tangible features of which the historic significance is regardless. Visitors perceive the heritage site as a ‘historical park’ of which ruins are seen as ‘collection of artwork’ or as a beautiful park containing beautiful ruins. The perceived value usually leads to the quest for sense of place.

*Awe-inspiration* represents the heritage value by which visitors perceived for its extraordinary features such as its size and beauty. This value is also a response of the sight that amazes and thrills the visitors at the moment they interact with the heritage.

*“This is the sight that should not be missed...it is awe-inspiring. This is the most incredible sight in Thailand. It’s incredible...I’m thrilled...”* (A sculptured Buddha head within a tree trunk)

and

*“Impressive huge sitting Buddha image...just WOW...The ruins at Sukhothai were stunning...I rode a bicycle for a while and then I went to the temple...the one on the outskirts. I like it a lot. It was AMAZING! The ruins are very impressive because the size of the Buddha image. Just to think people had craved that 1000 years or 7-800 years ago...I don’t know...just to think that they had that ability to make something like that. It is amazing I think. It was very impressive.”*

The awe-inspiration often influences visitors to develop the quest for pleasure experience.

*Tourist Attraction* represents the heritage value by which visitors perceived for its functional attribute – a place for tourism. Indeed, the heritage contains the ordinary tourist attraction function and features. It is the place for visitors to participate in recreation activities as quoted.

*“The park is just nice. It’s a photographer’s wet dream!”*

and

*“This is a really nice tourist attraction.”*

The heritage (the historical parks, heritage objects) is seen as ‘*a nice park*’. This perceived value of heritage is irrelevant with the historical, religious and cultural significances. It usually leads to the quest for pleasure experience.

#### 4.3.2 Stimuli

Stimuli are related to different types of factors influencing the intensity of the visitors’ involvement and interaction with the heritage. Stimuli can be classified as interpreted and un-interpreted ones.

##### *Interpreted Stimuli*

The interpreted stimuli involve factors that individual visitors could recognise and interpret when they give a value to the heritage. There could be existing knowledge and acquired knowledge about the heritage. The interpreted stimuli also involve the learning experience about the heritage prior to the visit. These factors stimulate a high level of self-involvement. Interpreted stimuli drive the visitor’s immersion and engagement in the heritage and its surrounding. It influences the various aspects of experience.

##### *Un-interpreted Stimuli*

The un-interpreted stimuli are related to a driving force that the visitors have not recognised before they interact with the heritage. This factor is related to the response of a sight of heritage or the feeling appearing at a moment they are engaged in the heritage experience. The un-interpreted stimuli makes the heritage experience become serendipity since they are involved in the interactive process when the visitors have no or less expectation about the heritage experience as quoted.

*“Sukhothai was a pleasant surprise”,* a visitor said at the first sight of the historical town.



and

*“This is the sight that should not be missed. This is an awe-inspiring.”*, when a visitor stood in front of a complex of temple ruins.

This type of stimuli leads the visitors to engage in an emotional interaction with the heritage. These stimuli usually drive an inspiration that blows visitors’ mind or imagination of an unreal event.

### 4.3.3 Visitor Involvement

A precise explanation of the interactive experience process can be given by the concept of involvement. It defines a relationship between individuals and heritage attractions. The visitor involvement consists of two main concepts: intra-personal involvement and inter-personal involvement.

#### 1. Intra-personal Involvement

The intra-personal involvement represents the relationship of the individuals with the heritage experience engaged. In this study, it is generally classified into three levels: enduring engagement, low involvement and withdrawal.

*The enduring involvement* represents the high level of interaction influenced by interpreted stimuli such as faith, belief, and acquired knowledge about the site. It also involves personal background (i.e., special interest, daily routine, hobbies) or own identity which visitors bring when they interact with the heritage. For instance, visitors whose hobby is painting and reading bring along painting equipment and their favourite books when visiting the site. These enduring involvements facilitate an interaction with a more specific aspect for a heritage experience. This kind of involvement makes visitors create a strong connection with particular heritage attractions or objects in order to learn about what they are interacting with. With an enduring involvement, the visitors also seek to acquire good knowledge related to the significance of heritage. They are involved with a conservation ethic and a sense of belonging. Restoration and maintenance issues are among their major concerns. The heritage is believed to belong to everyone. The involvement has a link to behavioural norms in that visitors with a high involvement will be well aware of the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ when they are engaged in heritage experience.

With *low self-involvement*, the visitors may not seek to extend own identity to the heritage experience. They may have limited knowledge or little interest in the heritage. They are unfamiliar

with it and more concerned with novelty, entertainment and a present surprise. New knowledge that affords the truth finding is preferable. Indeed, the interpreted stimuli facilitated by the acquisition of knowledge could stimulate a higher level of involvement.

The '*withdrawal*' is related to visitors' physical or emotional seclusion from the interaction. It relates to the lack of motivation for the visit and disability to achieve satisfactory experience consumption. Withdrawal is often caused by the forced visitation or boredom. The evidence shows what the visitors often express '*see one, see them all*'. Moreover, the visitors may confront the boredom when they complete interacting with a series of heritage attractions as often quoted '*not another ruins*' or '*I have seen enough of such ruins*'. The withdrawal usually drives an activity of killing time, secluding self and missed behaviour.

## 2. Inter-personal involvement

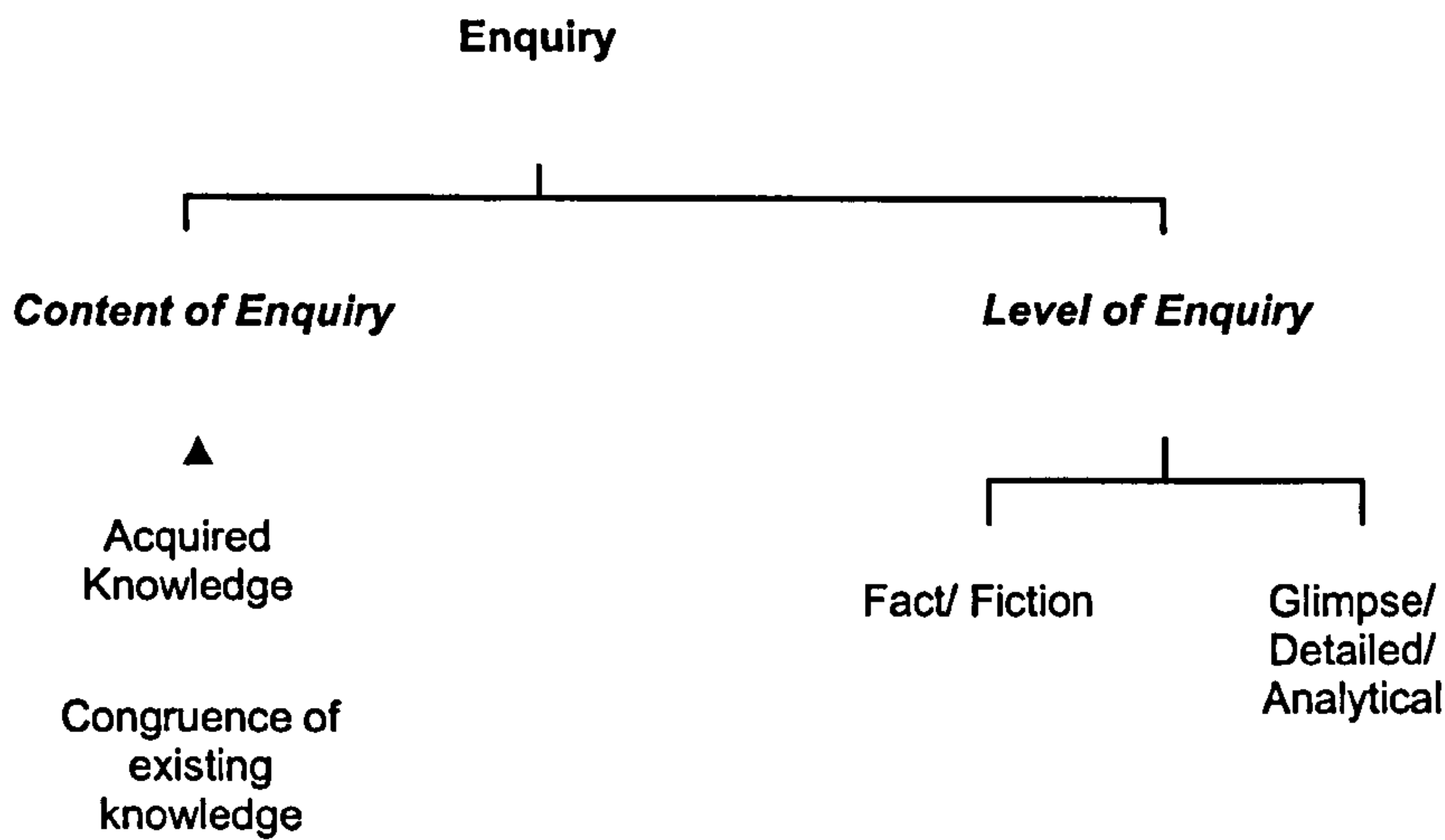
The inter-personal involvement is related to visitor's inter-subjective act that consists of *social-oriented involvements*. Social-oriented involvement is a social interaction between the visitors and other individuals or communal contact. The visitors immerse or engage themselves in a peer group. They also interact with other visitors they meet during the heritage visit. They interact with other individuals for the sake of entertainment or withdraw themselves from interacting with the heritage. The involvement with others could be for the search of information which can be both active by asking questions or opening up to all sources of information and passive when the visitors only take what they are provided by the demonstrators or tour guides. It can also be an interpersonal acquisition of knowledge by participating in discussion and sharing knowledge.

### 4.3.4 Acquisition of Knowledge

This component represents the practice visitors use to gain information about the heritage in order to facilitate the heritage experience. It consists of two related elements: *content* and *level of enquiry* (Figure 4.3).



Figure 4.2 Framework of the acquisition of knowledge



### 1. Content of Enquiry

The content of enquiry refers to the elements of knowledge contained in the enquiry. There are two dimensions of content of enquiry emerged.

*Acquired knowledge* is the new information which visitors acquire when they interact with the heritage. Information could be provided by the site, the demonstrators, guide books or other visitors. The acquired knowledge can be both in contextual and non-contextual forms. Contextual enquiries serve both cognitive and emotional interactions. They may be organised with the physical setting such as facts and figures, and socio-cultural factors (i.e., history, ways of life, religion and rite). Non-contextual enquiries include knowledge told by others, which can be both fact and fiction.

*Congruence of existing knowledge* is the knowledge that is related to what visitors have already known about the heritage. The existing knowledge usually becomes interpreted stimuli for the visitors. Hence, the knowledge they acquire is related to their particular or special interests. This type of knowledge is also related to the previous experience of the visitors as they repeat the heritage visit. The visitors acquire this type of knowledge to sharpen and deepen an understanding about the objects of which they consume experience. The visitors pre-conceptualise information with background knowledge to orientate themselves for heritage experience consumption. This pre-conceptualised knowledge could be provided by the demonstration, documentary, orientation and self-education. Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge is direct when the visitors know what they want to learn from the heritage visit. However, the visitors may also take whatever enquiry given when the information is not a major concern for the heritage experience.

## 2. Level of Enquiry

There are several levels of enquiry which visitors acquire ranging from fact/fiction, to glimpse, detailed and analytical dimensions.

### *Fact/Fiction*

Fact or factual enquiry is related to what visitors quote 'visual information' about heritage such as age and figure of ruin features. The following statements illustrate examples of factual information which the visitors acquire.

*A sanctuary lies to the west behind the Royal Palace compound. It is Sukhothai's largest Wat and a customary main chedi, in lotus-bud shape, and a ruined viharn. At the base of the Chedi stand Buddhist disciples in adoration, and on the pedestal seated Buddha images. In front of this reliquary is large viharn formerly containing a remarkable seated bronze Buddha image of Sukhothai style, which was cast and installed by King Lithai of Sukhothai in 1362.*

and

*Wat Phra Si Ratanamahathat is located to the southeast of Si Satchanalai. It was founded before the Sukhothai era. The main shrine, an imposing Prang type monument probably dates from Ayutthaya period, but it was built over another pre-Sukhothai stupa or Chedi. It was probably built during the reign of King Javavarman VII (1181-1217).*

The fiction is related to fantasy and mythology of heritage such as historic legends, tales or legendary literature, folklore tales, and historical epics of the heritage sites, i.e., so-called folklore and legendary narratives include Legend of the Speaking Buddha at Wat Sri Chum, Legend of Suriyothai (of Ayutthaya), Legend of Phra Ruaong (Sukhothai and Sri Satchanalai), and Lilit Taleng Pai (Legend of Victory of the king of Sri Satchanalai).

### *Glimpse/ Detailed/ Analytical*

Enquiries range from basic level or precise information, detailed information to analytical knowledge such as research or study on history.



'Glimpse' often quoted by visitors '*having a glimpse of the history*' represents a basic level of knowledge that the visitors acquire. It includes what is called 'visible information' such as what or how old it is and when it was built which could be visually seen. The following statements illustrate basic information of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Historical Park and Wat Logayasutha, a ruined temple in the park for a glimpse of Thai heritage used by the visitors.

*Pra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya or Ayutthaya is an ancient city, founded by King U-Thong or Ramathibodi I in 1350. It was the capital city of Thailand for 417 years during the reign of 33 kings covering five dynasties (excluding Khun Worawongsa). Ayutthaya is situated about 76 kilometres north of Bangkok. Since 1977, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee has recognised Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Historical Park, which occupies a part of central Ayutthaya as a World Heritage Site until its official listing in December 13, 1991 at Carthage, Tunisia.*

and

*Wat Logayasutha is situated near the Phra Sri Suriyothai pagoda about slightly more than one kilometre heading toward the rear side. The temple is next to Worachetaram temple in the west of the city. If travelling by cars, the road inside the liquor plant compound will lead to the temple, including the back road of Plubpratreeemook in the ancient palace compound – passing through Po and Worachetaram temples, leading to the temple's large recline Buddha statue made of brick and covered with plaster, approximately 29 metres long. There are remains of Phra Viharn hexagon pillars next to the Buddha statue, probably remnants of Phra Ubosot (the main chapel).*

Detailed enquiry represents the same content of enquiry but in a greater text and amount of information than that of glimpse usually taken from texts and used for learning aspects.

*Sukhothai was Thailand's first capital, after several Thai principalities in the Mekhong valley united in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. They took Haripunchchai (presently Lamphun) from the Mons and the lower north from the Khmers to form Lanna Thai or the million Thai rice field kingdom: on the former Khmer territories, the 'Rising of Happiness' (Sukhothai) city was founded as their capital. They declared independence in 1238 and were annexed by Ayutthaya in 1376. This period consolidated the Thai scripture and the Theravada Buddhism, brought by the Sri Lankan Sinhalese. Nowadays the capital site is referred to as Old Sukhothai, while the modern city got the prefix 'New'.*

and

*“Wat Mahathat at the very centre of old Sukhothai was the spiritual heart of the city and was continually added to by successive rulers to create a sprawling, multi-generational monument. It dominates the surrounding wats, separated by its own moat. There are over forty different temples to explore within Old Sukhothai’s city walls, with the island temple of Wat Sra Sri and the Hindu-influenced prangs of Wat Sri Sawai being particular highlights. The importance of Sukhothai not just to Thai culture but also to world history is reflected in its UNESCO World Heritage Status, which provides valuable foreign support and exposure for the historical park.*

Analytical enquiry represents the level of enquiry that the visitors use to provide a comprehensive and intellectual heritage experience. The following statement contains analytical knowledge by which the visitors acquire for consuming heritage experience. It provides the visitors with knowledge about culture, politics, architecture and religion. The examples of analytical enquiry include how people lived in the ancient times, how the monuments were built, the transition of other religions to Buddhism, what happened in the ancient era, what influenced architectures of historical buildings and how politics in history shaped politics in the present days. The followings are a note on Walking Buddha which visitors use for understanding the differences and significances of Buddha images with various postures and a note on the establishment of the Kingdom which the visitors use to understand life style of Thais’ ancestors and the reason for Buddhism to become an influence of architectures and cultures.

*“An important new development in iconographic art was introduced during the Sukhothai period. Images of walking Buddhas refer to a scene in the life of the Buddha when he returned from the Tavatimsa heaven after he preached there to his mother who had died seven days after his birth. He was descending to earth by stairs accompanied by the god Brahma and Indra. In combination with vitarka or dhammachakka mudra this form refers to peripatetic instruction.”*

and

*While there were other Thai Kingdoms (like Lanna, Phayao and Chaing Sean) at the same time, the establishment of the Kingdom of Sukhothai in 1238 is often considered the state of Thai history prosperity. Sukhothai gained independence from a declining Khmer Empire. Monuments in the city show influence from prior Khmer rule. The history of Sukhothai as a kingdom lasted for about two centuries. Interestingly, there were only 9 kings in that*



*period, suggesting some stability. Theravada Buddhism became the common religion. At the peak of its power, the kingdom of Sukhothai exerted control and/or influence over an area that is actually greater than present day Thailand. Control supposedly stretched to Martaban (now in Myanmar), Luang Prabang (Laos) and down the Malay Peninsula. Sukhothai's prosperity was greatest at the time of its third King, Ramkhamheang the Great.*

#### 4.3.5 Matter of Choice

The matter of choice emerged as an experience component that explains how visitors make a choice of attraction for their heritage experiences. The choices of heritage attractions include desired destination, interesting attractions, and worth-a-visit attractions, as quoted by the visitors.

Table 4.3 illustrates the properties of the matter of choice or choices of attractions in heritage sites the visitors interact when consuming heritage experience.

**Table 4.3 Concepts of the matter of choice**

Aspect of Choice	Definition
Desired destination	A place visitors long for a visit
Interesting attraction	A place with awe-inspiration and spectacular features
Worth-a-visit attraction	A place with historical, iconic and symbolic significances

#### *Desired destinations*

A desired destination is an attraction choice inspired by interpreted stimuli that derive from faith, admiration, pride, perception of uniqueness and nostalgia toward the heritage. The significance and representation of attraction are remarkable in the perception of the visitors. The desired destination is an attraction where the visitors have been longing to a 'once in a visit' *'once in life time'*. For example, the visitors provide reasons to visit ruins of a temple in one of the survey sites:

*"My determination to visit this temple and this historic city was not about to be defeated by any constraints. So, I got to see my desired destination."*

and

*"I left the hotel as soon as I got there. I wanted to see this temple because they said there was a nice view from the hill. So, I biked to see this view."*

The desired destination fulfils an achievement of an ambition that yields pleasure, appreciation, knowledge and apprehension to visitors. The visitors usually put an effort on an acquisition of knowledge and intense involvement when they are experiencing their own desired destinations.

### *Interesting Attractions*

Visitors define attractions of interest based on many key perceptions such as universal significance of places or spectacular characteristics. The perceived value of heritage is related to its importance, reputation, out-of-ordinary features and cultural and religious symbolism. It is also related to visitors' existence as well as un-interpreted stimuli. A visitor provided a reason why he headed to this temple as quoted.

*“Wat Chang Lom is the famous shrine that The Great King Ramkamheang wrote about on the famous Ramkamhang stone inscription on which he may have first described Thai alphabet. Those elephants encircle the Sri Lanka style chedi show the state of most advanced decay.”*

An interesting attraction could be the visitors' particular choice. The visitors located themselves in some particular attractions, which serve various purposes of their experiences. They may choose an interesting attraction based on its properties or words of mouth for pleasure as often mentioned: *‘I just went to this temple to listen to bird songs and breathe some fresh air’*. Some visitors directly allocate themselves an attraction assigned as ‘a footstep’ for example, some Japanese visitors stick themselves on ‘royal trails’ where the emperor stepped on, and some Thai visitors direct themselves to the attraction they claim *‘They said that the princess had come to this temple’*. Some visitors carrying a basket of flowers and things to make offering directs themselves to a place they call *‘the most sacred Buddha’*. The attraction is universally perceived as a *‘must see’* and *‘all in one’* or *‘one stop ruins’*. This aspect of choice is also based on convenience due to time constraint, accessibility and physical limitation.

### *Worth-a-visit attractions*

Visitors define a worth-a-visit attraction as a place for a trip fulfilment. When they acquire more knowledge, this class of attraction is appealing to visitors as quoted.

*“This must be most important temple in the park. We should see.”*

and



*“...Home of Thailand’s most impressive World Heritage Site, Old Sukhothai is best discovered by bike. I visited Sukhothai Historical Park during the day which was a pity as it would have been nicer to see in morning or evening light. I did it from 11 am to 4 pm which was of course the hottest time of the day. Here I quote my Lonely Planet: ‘The park includes remains of 21 historical sites and four large ponds within the old walls, with an additional 70 sites within a 5 km radius.’ Needless to say, I only managed about a quarter of the whole thing but I think I saw most of the best bits.*

Typically, this applies to spectacular or iconic ruins as visitors mentioned. The visitors tend to rely on provided information and aesthetic aspect of experience. Worth-a-visit attraction could be an attraction visitors visit *‘just when time allows’*. It may be chosen to fill the gap time so that it can be defined as an impulsive choice. The visitors sometimes appear in some circumstance to make this choice such as while they are waiting to leave or withdraw from a main attraction. This attraction may be a minor choice but it mostly provides the visitors with a pleasant aspect of experience when they aim to *‘see as much as possible’* or *‘sample as many places as can be clammed’*. The choice aspect is ‘one for all’, which represent combination of site with various kinds of monument, museum and local community chosen for orientation, learning culture, comprehensive understanding or viewing the total perspective of the heritage site.

Moreover, off-the-beaten tracks are usually perceived as interesting attractions. Visitors may crave for more ruins, disclosure novelty, seeking isolation and ‘purity’, and to explore *‘one of a kind’* by experiencing off-the-beaten attractions which are *‘worth checking’* that provide them with a pleasant surprise. This choice aspect provides convenience and ability to adjust activities with time constraints when the visitors are on excursions, has limited knowledge, and do not want to take risks.

#### **4.3.6 Perception of Authenticity**

The perception of authenticity explains how visitors define the elements of heritage that contribute to the *‘authentic experience’* ranging from *‘hedonic spectacle’*, *‘now and then’* and *‘pure ruins’*, quoted by visitors.

##### **1. Hedonic Spectacle**

The visitors may perceive ‘live experience’ at heritage ruins as authenticity. What makes ruins of the heritage place live and real experience for them is life around the ruins such as performance,



show, event and exhibition associated to the scene. The visitors perceive riding an elephant for sightseeing at ancient temple ruins or having dinner while watching a classical dance at the front of ancient temple complex as a real experience for them. They may crave for illuminated temple ruins of which are perceived as spectacular sense of an ‘ancient’ town. The visitors may feel that the scene of Buddhist monks walking around the ruins is real. This perceived authentic heritage experience usually generates a pleasurable experience. The examples of hedonic spectacles which make visitor experience authentic are as follows:



**Image 4.1 The image of a staged performance – light and sound performance**

This image represents a living showcase that illustrates the history of the historic town of Ayutthaya. Visitors perceive that the event brings life to the ruins and makes the heritage experience authentic.



**Image 4.2 Illuminated Ruins**



This image illustrates the perception of visitors towards the past splendour. This scene gives the visitors an impression of how the temple should have looked like in the past.



**Image 4.3 Buddhist monks wandering around the ruins**

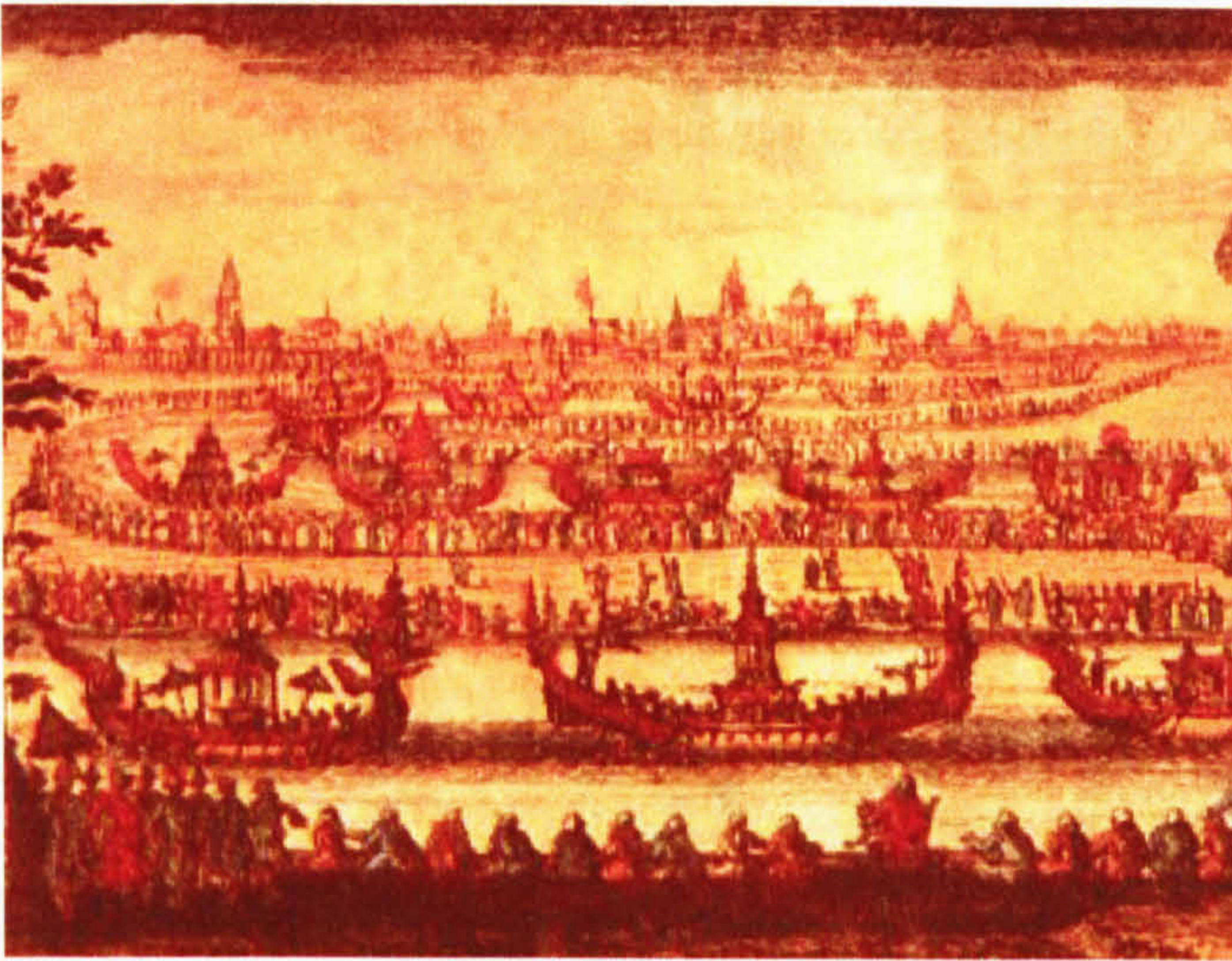
The image is the scene that gives visitors an impression of Buddhist temples in the past. The scene makes the ruins look real to the visitors.

## **2. Now and Then**

The visitors' authentic experience of heritage is related to an ability to realize what ruins could have been in the past. The visitors find the visual aids such as transparency photos of what might have been in the past compared to how it looks at the present days yield a real sight of heritage ruins. Partly restored ruins sometimes provide the visitors with a real experience as they impart what ruins could have been and then compare them with what they are now.

The following images illustrate the way visitors perceive the heritage experience to be authentic.





**Image 4.4 The heritage 'Then'**



**Image 4.5 The heritage 'Now'**

The comparison and synchronicity of the image of the heritage in the present days and that of the heritage in 400 hundred years ago provide the visitors with an ability to idealize the real images of the past.

## **2. Pure Ruins**

The visitors' authentic experience can be related to experience of pureness as the way ruins are at the present. The visitors prefer the sight of completed broken ruins as well as their immersion in the atmosphere as they inspire their imagination of the past.

*Great trees, green grass, small lakes and ponds surrounded the temple ruins. The atmosphere was stunning! Maybe it was the great history that was reflected over the whole*



*place. Grey-white-blue looking stone Buddha statues exerted a much different and much more intense energy than any golden Buddha.”*

and

*“This was once the capital of Siam, like the cats, now Thailand. These ruins were impressive..... well at first at least. After a while we saw more Buddha than we thought existed, thousands. We noticed that the larger and more expensive Buddha seemed to draw more of a crowd than the small or older Buddha did. We prefer the less flashy statues.”*

They refuse live showcase so that they can experience the heritage ruin in the way it is broken. Thus, the pore ruins are perceived to facilitate the authentic heritage experience.

#### **4.3.7 Behavioural Norms**

This experience component explains how visitors respond to the cultural norms related with cultural heritage. There are three dimensions of behavioural norms emerging from this study: the norm adoption, the norm recognition, and the norm ignorance.

##### **1. The Norm Adoption**

The visitors are knowledgeable about the culture so that they respect the norms and adopt the behavioural norms to their own value and practice them.

*“I rode my bike to the area outside this city wall...after all the temple ruins visit, I rode by a group of local farmers. They said hello to me. I was actually quite thirsty and tired...so I decided to drop by. I greeted them politely. The same greeting and politeness were returned. I sat among them for a little while. Before I left, they did the ‘Wai’ and said goodbye to me. I always see the Thais greet Buddhist monks this way on the street...everywhere. It is the way people pay respect to each other, isn’t it? So, I did the Wai to the monks I met at the temple ruins.”*

and

*“I saw people dress up politely when they visit the temples which are in used. So, this is a place that used to be religious building, I think that we should do the same way. It is also*

*said in the book about the social custom. You should always be respectful about Buddhism. Dress correctly in temples...wear sleeves and no short pants. Don't sit on the Buddha images. I think you will insult Thai people deeply if you offend Buddhism this way. So look what we wear."*

The visitors become more practical when they open up their minds to learn and accept cultural values. The norm adoption results in a preferable consumption practice; for instance, the visitors are concerned with the way they should dress up to enter the heritage site because they learn that the heritage is associated with an important religion, and they learn to respect Buddha images (although they are ruins) because these images represent the Buddha, and they learn to respect Buddhist monks who practice the Buddhist teaching. The visitors assimilate the cultural practices to their own practice and become practitioners.

## **2. The Norm Recognition**

The norm recognition reflects an awareness of cultural practices but visitors are not necessarily practitioners. The visitors recognise the 'dos' and 'don'ts' as well as respect and practice preferable behavioural norm. They are willing to learn as well as practice as required. They are also aware when they practice any unacceptable behaviour. Hence, they avoid doing the 'don'ts'.

## **3. The Norm Ignorance**

The norm ignorance represents an unawareness of appropriate behavioural norms. It is caused by either the lack of knowledge about culture or the visitors' personal ignorance and faults attitudes. It usually causes inappropriate practice that may dilute the perceived value. The visitors do not pay attention to the restrictions. The climbing of monuments, which is prohibited, is often observed as quoted on an experience of heritage by visitors (Image 4.7). Moreover, an imitation of Buddha postures represents the norm ignorance (Image 4.8).





**Image 4.6 Visitors climbing a ruined monument without realizing its religious value**



**Image 4.7 A visitor imitating Buddha posture**

#### **4.3.7 Conservation Ethic**

This category is constructed from visitors' perspective regarding the conservation, maintenance, restoration and sustainable management issues of heritage. The way in which the visitors experience heritage also shows their conservation ethic. Conservation ethic also relates to the perception of authenticity, perceived value of heritage and acquisition of enquiry. The visitors possess varying degrees of conservation ethic towards the heritage. This study conceptualises the conservation ethic into two discrete levels: conservation anxiety and conservation unawareness.



**Conservation anxiety**

With a conservation anxiety, visitors perceive the heritage conservation to be a crucial practice in the heritage experience and heritage management. Those who develop a conservative ethic usually disagree with the restoration and the change of the historic ruins as quoted.

*“The ruins in this area are much more enjoyable. Here the ruins remain in ruins. In many cases they are overgrown by plants so there is a feel of a lost city buried in the jungle rather than the lost city with neatly manicured lawn.”*

and

*“We are so worried about the way they put pesticides to kill weeds growing around the ruins. I don’t know whether this chemical stuff would damage the condition of the ruins...and see that all the noise, smoke...from those cars and motorbikes. I think the site is polluted.”*

The ‘pure’ ruins and local cultures are a major concern when individuals are engaged in a heritage experience. The more appreciation visitors have towards the heritage, the more conservative ethic they perceive.

*The historical park looks like an outdoor museum. The way ruins are broken makes the ancient town looks so real to me. I didn’t even want to touch. If I would, I’d touch it tenderly. I am so concerned...if these beautiful ruins will be eroded because of the wind and the rain...and even because you let such big animal like elephants taking tourists around this venerable ruined temple. I think it is better just to put some restrictions...like how far this animal and vehicles can get close to the ruins.*

and

*“These stuccos are beautiful and so valuable. I think it is not a good way to leave them out in the damp. They should have found some ways to save this stuff. ... and this fence doesn’t protect them from being touched by the tourists at all. It would be destroyed by both human and erosion.”*

Visitors perceive that the heritage well-being is a major concern. They try to provide practical suggestions for heritage conservation. The visitors accept that the conservation ethic should be practiced.



### *Conservation unawareness*

The conservation unawareness is normally found when visitors perceive the heritage site as a tourist attraction. Unlike the conservation anxiety, the heritage conservation is usually ignored when conservation moral is not in the visitors' mind. It influences visitors to practice unpleasant behaviours, to cause noise pollution, and to destroy ruined monuments.

## **4.4 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discusses the framework of the proposed model emerging from the study. The issues discussed include the Visitor Heritage Interactive Experience Model, the elements of the Interactive Experience process and the components of experience. The model illustrates the complexity of heritage experience as it is constructed and composed by an individual. The study shows that the visitors individually participate in experience consumption with their own set of experience components. Indeed, various components of experience are composed of the visitor interactive experience through its process, which deliver the heritage experience. The proposed model also illustrates the dynamic nature of the visitors' heritage experience through the ongoing of 'interaction' between the visitors and the settings (physical and environmental). The dynamic heritage experience consists of three cyclic interactive phases: experiential aspects, experience consumption practices, and evaluation of experience. The explanation of the Visitor Heritage Experience model, the overview of the Visitor Interactive Experience Process, and the components of experience provides a background of further discussion on the element of the process in Chapter 5.



## CHAPTER 5

### THE VISITOR HERITAGE EXPERIENCE

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 provides an explanation of the visitor heritage experience model to facilitate an understanding of the conceptualization of the visitor interactive experience process and its elements, which will be thoroughly described in this chapter. The goal of this chapter is to describe heritage experience consumption through the experiential aspects (antecedent of the experience), the experience consumption practices (patterns of the experience pursuits), and the evaluation of experience (the ways in which visitors handle the outcomes of experience consumption practices). The chapter is based on individual experience constructions through each phase of the visitor interactive experience process: the experiential aspects, the experience consumption practices, and the evaluation of the experience. The definition of heritage consumed by visitors in this study is illustrated in table 5.1. The table explains meanings of the term ‘heritage’ used by the participants in this study.

**Table 5.1 Definition of heritage used by visitors**

Category of heritage consumption	Object of experience consumption
Heritage attraction	Historic temples ( <i>ruins of temples</i> ), Historic monuments ( <i>ruins of stupa, Buddha image</i> )
Heritage object	Artefacts ( <i>Stucco, mural painting</i> )
Heritage setting	Scenery, Site ambience, Physical environment ( <i>nature, trees</i> )
Heritage related event	Religious rituals ( <i>Buddha worship, merit making</i> ) Cultural performance
Live experience	Community lifestyle, Local activities

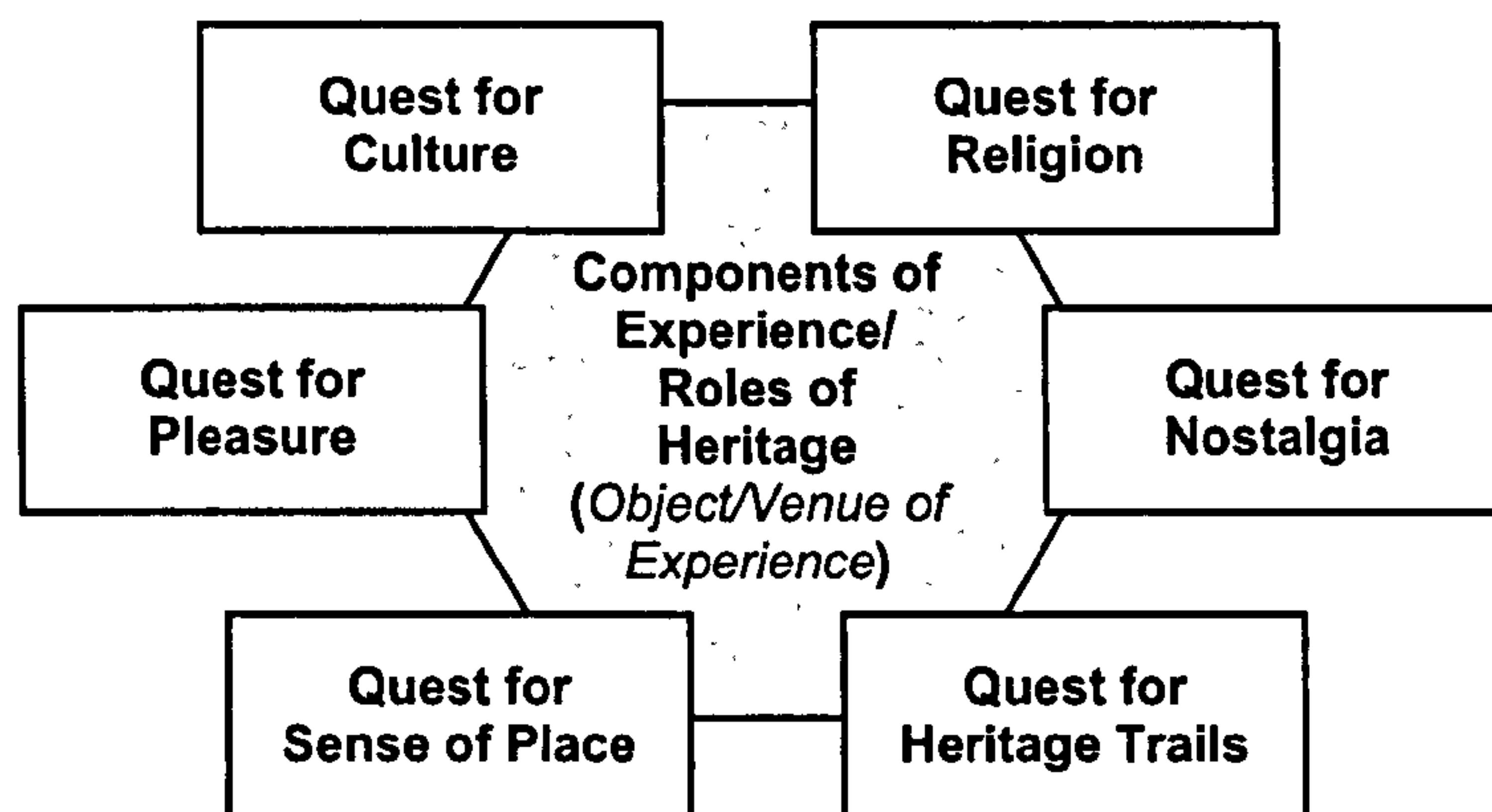
This chapter structures the research findings under three main headings: experiential aspects, experience consumption practices and evaluation of experience. The first section (5.2), the experiential aspects, describes how visitors define the essence of heritage experience and the goals leading to the experience consumption practices. The second section (5.3), the experience consumption practices, focuses on the patterns of practice that visitors use to consume the heritage experience. The third section (5.4), evaluation of experience, explores the factors visitors use for the evaluation of the experience and the strategies they use for handling the outcomes.



## 5.2 EXPERIENTIAL ASPECTS

At the first phase of the visitor interactive experience process, visitors construct the objectives or goals that they seek to achieve from experiencing the heritage when they interact with the heritage. For this study, the goals anticipated by visitors are termed '*experiential aspects*'. It describes the rationales and meanings visitors make for their heritage experience. These experiential aspects indicate '*what experience is for and why*'. Each experiential aspect leads to a particular pattern of experience consumption. Indeed, visitor experience is characterized by the pursuit of different perspectives, personal activities and meanings. This study conceptualises six experiential aspects prevalent among visitors in their personal interactions with the heritage.

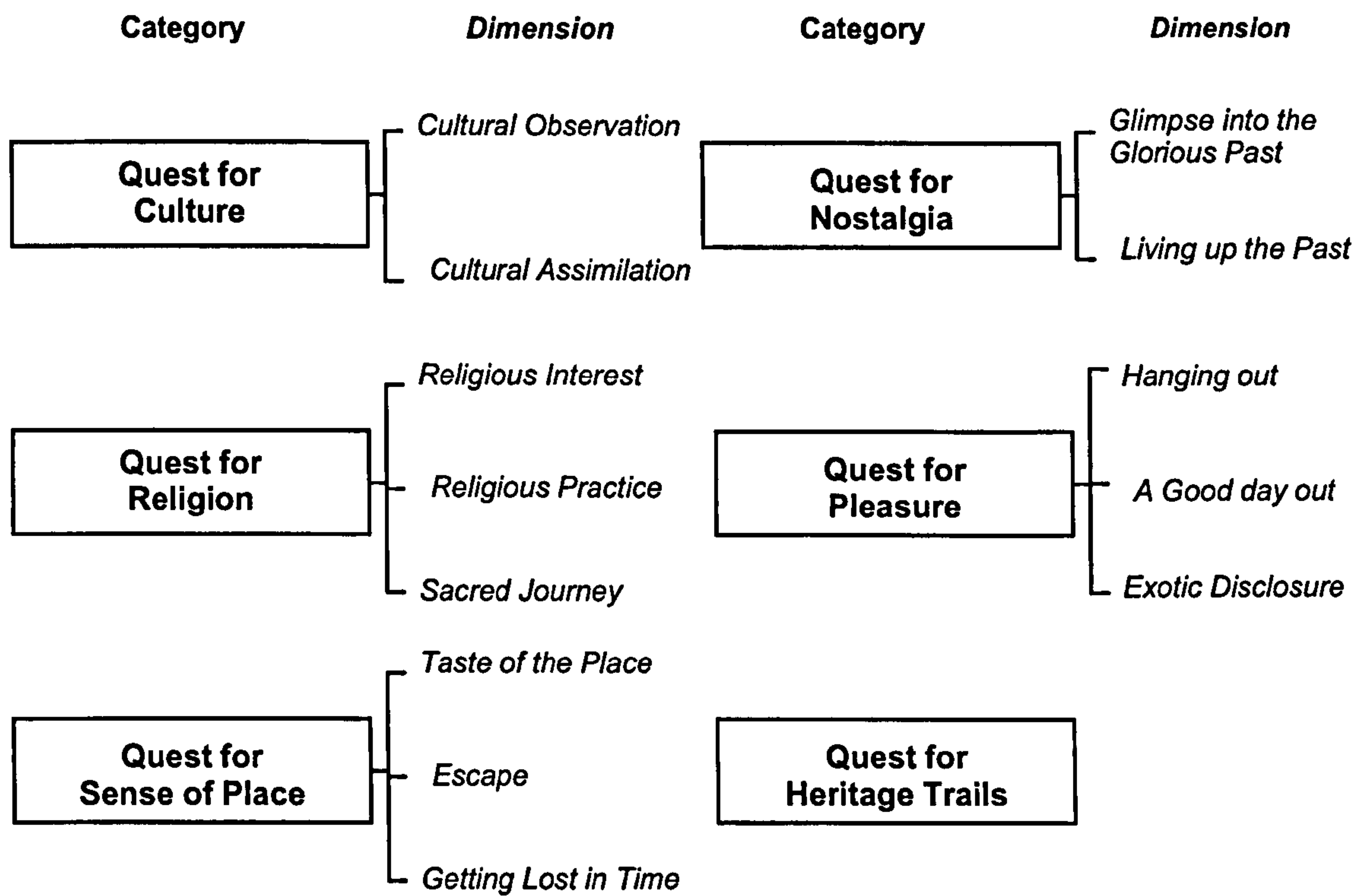
**Figure 5.1 Experiential aspects in visitor perspectives**



There are various dimensions involving the experiential aspects individually anticipated by visitors. In turn, different visitors could anticipate different experiential aspects of the same object. The overview of experiential aspects conceptualised in this study is depicted in Figure 5.2.



Figure 5.2 the categories and dimensions of experiential aspects



### 5.2.1 Quest for Culture

The quest for culture involves the heritage cultural value perceived by visitors. For example, the visitors may seek to experience the Thai culture through their interactions with the cultural heritage. The quest for culture is led by the cultural interest related to both interpreted stimuli (the culture is known before) and un-interpreted stimuli (the culture is not known before). The cultural events and practices are seen as the elements of authentic experience. In the quest for culture, visitors seek to pursue two main schemes of cultural experience ranging from cultural observation to cultural assimilation. Table 5.2 summarises the concept of the quest for culture in terms of its characteristics (properties) and dimensional range.

**Table 5.2 Quest for culture: dimensions and characteristics**

Cultural observation	Cultural assimilation
<p>Seek to see culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value - cultural icon</li> <li>• Low-self involvement</li> <li>• Un-interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceived authenticity for the hedonic spectacles</li> <li>• Local community contact</li> <li>• Attracted to interesting attractions and events</li> <li>• Basic enquiry</li> <li>• Awareness of behavioural norms</li> </ul>	<p>Seek to understand culture and participate in the cultural events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value – cultural treasure</li> <li>• High-self involvement</li> <li>• Interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Occasionally impulsive</li> <li>• Real cultural practice authenticates experience</li> <li>• Local community contact</li> <li>• Factual/Detailed enquiry</li> <li>• Attracted to particular attractions and events</li> <li>• Respect – Adoption of behavioural norms</li> <li>• Lead an involving experience</li> </ul>
Heritage site – venue of experience	Heritage site – venue/ object of experience

***Cultural Observation - to see culture***

Because a visitor perceives heritage as the representation of Thai culture (cultural icon), he or she develops a quest for cultural observation as state in something along the lines of, *‘this is a wakeup call for observing the Thai culture’* and *‘this site is where to see Thailand.’* The visitor views the heritage experience as *‘a glimpse of the culture’* in order *‘to see what the lifestyle and Thai culture are like’*. They also seek to experience the heritage or cultural-related objects whose meanings are associated with Thai culture including local communities, cultural events and other living cultures. Heritage in this case is considered a venue for visitor’s cultural experience. The experience is perceived as both something new to them and something that enriches their existing knowledge about the Thai culture. In his quest for cultural observation, a visitor stated:

*“Sukhothai is not only an incredible sight; it is one of the most important historical sites in Thailand, the very original fact of Thai culture and society...where we can get an image of where the Thai culture in the present comes from.”*

Another visitor mentioned his perception towards the heritage value leading to the quest for cultural observation by *‘going there’* and *‘having a look’* at the cultural events that take place at the heritage attractions:

*“It’s observable that in the core of Wat Chai Wattanaram is a full service Buddhist temple and here is image of one of the entrance to of Golden Leaf Buddha. People come here, buy a sheet of golden leaf and put it on the statue to bring them luck and prosperity. People do*



*this way when they go to a temple. This makes historic things look so real to me. It is interesting”*

The heritage attractions in cultural heritage sites are ruins of ancient temples, some of which are still used by Buddhists and pilgrims. Moreover, Buddhist worship activities could attract some visitors as *‘a cultural spectacle’*. The religious practices provide visitors with the sight of culture and tradition of the local people in Thailand. Visitors are usually drawn towards spectacular attractions that are representative of Thailand and Thai local culture.

Visitors also perceive the hedonic spectacle as a component of authentic and enjoyable heritage experience. The hedonic spectacle is an un-interpreted stimuli attributed to the quest for cultural observation. Therefore, they seek to observe the lifestyle of local people, cultural activities around the sites and cultural events related to the heritage sight. The examples of the cultural related objects that visitors observe include Buddhist monks and people worshipping the ruins of Buddha statues as in the following quotations:

*“It was nice to see life going on around these ancient monuments. In one temple, nuns cleared up after some kind of small ceremony. Dogs slept beneath Buddha's feet and cows chewed the cud outside. The nuns swept and tidied beneath the sky as the roof of the temple had long gone.”*

and

*“We did, however, manage to visit some markets, take images with elephants, and tour the city by boat. The boat ride was very interesting, we witnessed Thai bathing practices. While on the boat tour we noticed many people bathing in the river, this seems like a common activity. Many children were playing in the water and adults were washing themselves on the shore.”*

Visitors seek to observe the cultures attached to the heritage sites and to have a better understanding of the ruins. They perceived such cultural spectacles as a way to bring life to the *‘sleeping ruins’*.

The quest for cultural observation could be serendipity. A visitor may not know anything about the local culture before they visit the sites but they could become interested in the culture when they are engaged in the experience. In this case, a visitor experiential aspect is influenced by the un-

interpreted stimuli in that the exotic culture becomes known when visitors engage in the on-site experience. For instance, the visitors may find that the Buddha worship or local fishing usually seen around heritage sites are interesting so they feel the need to observe this cultural practice. Moreover, the quest for culture is not necessarily related to the motivation of the visit. The quest for culture is often anticipated when visitors interact with the heritage site. Although the enquiry of knowledge seems to be unessential for visitors, the basic knowledge could be searched for. This experiential aspect leads to a low-involvement interaction, i.e., a series of brief encounters or sightseeing.

### *Cultural Assimilation – to learn and practice the culture*

A visitor develops a quest for cultural assimilation because he or she seeks to understand the culture related to the heritage. They perceive the value of the heritage based on its cultural significance and representation. The quest for cultural assimilation is stimulated by interpreted stimuli such as the existing knowledge about culture and story of the heritage or the interpretation of information related to the heritage. The visitor could connect the heritage he or she interacts with personal background, interests and past experience. Cultural assimilation is a more involving experiential aspect than cultural observation as quoted below:

*“I have learned in the school that the Thai culture rooted from Sukhothai period. I saw this stuff...chedi, temples, Buddha statute everywhere in Thailand. So, I’ve become so interested in Thai culture. Visiting this historical park makes me want to learn more about this culture.”*

and

*“I have been interested in the way they make Sangkalok pottery. I have known that the Japanese imported pottery used in tea ceremony from here. It thought there might be something similar...I mean...the cultures. It makes me interested in this culture. When I visit the Tao Tureang (Cline), I wanted to learn the ancient traditional skill...”*

Similar to the quest for cultural observation, this experiential aspect is occasionally impulsive since it may be developed by chance. The visitor may initially seek to observe the culture; however, he/she could be more interested in the culture (i.e., meaning of the culture and tradition, meaning of the religious practice) after he/she interacts and interprets the knowledge about the heritage and its related culture. The visitor also assimilates the culture to his/her own values and seek to understand the practices and local culture better as quoted below:



*“...I saw people put flowers and foods for the Buddha (ruined statue). I didn't know what it means by doing that but I think that it was very interesting. Then I read in the book. They say something about Buddhism and the religious practices. I was trying to understand why people still worship these temple ruins. I thought that people don't use the temple anymore...”*

Many visitors are suggested to do particular activities when they visited heritage attraction saying *‘my friend said it's very peaceful in the park then I can just loose myself in the atmosphere’* and *‘they told me to touch Buddha's hand for a blessing’*. In this case, the visitor adopted the traditional practice to his/her own value.

A visitor also embrace the *‘cultural meaning’* of heritage objects such as seeking to learn the language and local culture as he or she perceives the heritage to be representative of the culture and providing cultural knowledge. Consequently, the visitor show appreciation on cultural value of the heritage as it provides the opportunity for cultural learning by practicing. They also seek an opportunity to interact with local community within the sites. This aspect of experience may also lead the visitor to be engaged in further exploration of heritage. Later, the visitor literally adopts the aspect of tradition and culture in to his/her own value as quoted below:

*“We always see people taking off their shoes when they go to the temple...Why did they do that? We thought that they respect the place a lot because it is a religious place. So, I think that is what we should do.”*

This anticipation is often influenced by the acquisition of knowledge. The visitor respects and tries to understand the norms and cultural or traditional practices. In this case, the visitor interprets the information and develops a learning experience of heritage and its culture. The acquisition of knowledge plays a more significant role for the quest for cultural assimilation than it does for the quest for cultural observation.

With this experiential aspect, a visitor engages in the cultural *‘live and learn’* heritage experience. The more visitors learn about the heritage, the more they appreciate its significance. Hence, the individuals seek to be more involved with the cultural participation. They take part in the practice as something going through life experience or as practitioners themselves. A visitor also anticipates this experiential aspect whether the culture relates or does not relate to their personal background (i.e. religion, nationality) or daily life.

### 5.2.2 Quest for Religion

A visitor seeks a sensual interaction and religious experience with religion regardless of their personal religion or belief. The visitor’s perception towards the heritage is based on its religious values ranging from its symbolic significance (religious symbols) to sacred status (e.g., the sacred Buddhist temples). Hence, this experiential aspect is led by beliefs, admiration, faith and religious interest. These perceived values of heritage lead the visitor to be aware and respect the behavioural norms practiced in the heritage sites and communities. He/She seeks to experience particular attractions that are related to certain religion or certain belief. The heritage attractions, in this case, could be both a desired destination and an interesting attraction for a visitor. The heritage attractions could be both the objects and venues of visitor experience. For the quest for religion, visitors seek to pursue three main schemes of heritage experience ranging from quest for religious interest, religious practices to sacred ceremonies. Table 5.3 summarises the concept of the quest for religion in terms of its characteristics (properties) and dimensional range.

**Table 5.3 Quest for religion: characteristics and dimensions**

Religious Interest	Religious Practice	Sacred Journey
Seek to see something related to religion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value - religious symbol</li> <li>• Low intrapersonal involvement</li> <li>• Interpreted stimuli driven/ Occasionally impulsive (un-interpreted stimuli)</li> <li>• Community contact</li> <li>• Perceived authenticity for the hedonic spectacles</li> <li>• Attracted to interesting attractions and events</li> <li>• Basic enquiry</li> <li>• Awareness of behavioural norms</li> </ul> Heritage site – object of pleasure/ learning experience	Seek worshipping and paying tribute to Buddha <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value – Sacred sites</li> <li>• High self-involvement (related to faith and admiration)</li> <li>• Interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Real religious practice authenticates experience</li> <li>• Attracted to particular attractions with a religious significance</li> <li>• Seek immersion</li> <li>• Recognition and adoption of behavioural norms</li> </ul> Heritage site – venue for existential experience	Seek to participate in spiritual rites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value – Sacred sites</li> <li>• Enduring involvement (faith/ admiration/ superstitious beliefs)</li> <li>• Interpreted stimuli</li> <li>• Real religious practice</li> <li>• Attracted to desired heritage objects</li> <li>• Seek immersion and emotionally withdraw from the environment</li> </ul> Heritage sites - venue for existential experience

***Religious Interest – to see something related to religion***

The heritage, in this case, is perceived as religious symbolic values that interest a visitor. To the visitor, the heritage site represents Buddhism in Thailand. They are seen as places that host religious activities in the past (but that are no longer used in the present) or as a centre of impressive Buddhist arts and as what he/she calls ‘temple ruins’:



*“It is nice to see a place that tells you about Buddhism. It’s a very interesting place. I am not a Buddhist...but I think that it’s good to see something like this when you are in a Buddhist country.”*

and

*“We want to see all these Buddha statues and the stupas. We have always known about the Sukhothai...and the heart of these temples. We took this trip from Utaradit...just to see all those temple ruins. Once in a lifetime, you have to get to see our ancient temples. These are the symbols of Buddhism.”*

A visitor understands a quest for religious interest at heritage sites related to Buddhism regardless of the religion he or she belongs to. Thus, this experiential aspect is less intrapersonal involvement.

In a quest for religious interest, visitors seek to experience the religious heritage for the answer to question its meaning or as often mentioned ‘*what Buddhism is like*’ as well as basic religious precepts and practices. They also seek to see *something going on* in the perceived religious sites as quoted below:

*“It is interesting to see all these ornaments people offer to the Buddha. They must be sacred. We have stopped to see people making worship. I thought that I should find the meaning why they were doing that.”*

A visitor normally develops a religious interest based on the interpreted stimuli such as their prior knowledge of Buddhism or the religious significance of the heritage. Not only do visitors who are Buddhists anticipate the quest for religious interest but visitors who belong to other religions may also seek to fulfil their personal knowledge and interest about religions associated with the heritage attractions. He/She could ‘*get a glimpse of Buddhism*’ from the sight of religious ruins and practices. The quest for religious interest is what a visitor calls ‘*seeing what it is like about Buddhism*’. Therefore, a visitor may seek a community contact because they can observe the religious practices. The religious interest could be of both the existence of the visitor personal background and impulsive experiential aspect developed during the process of interaction as quoted below:

*“I did not know about the Buddhism before I came here. I saw all these temples, Buddha statues and stupas. They are beautiful. People are still making the offers to those ruins. I found this all over the place. So, I become more interested in Buddhism and this place. I*

*thought... oh...this stuff must have had some strong religious meaning to people. And it makes me interested.”*

The quest for religious interest could be impulsive when a visitor is attracted to an attraction or event he/she perceives to be interesting. The event and attraction can be hedonic spectacles that drive a visitor to develop this experiential aspect. Indeed, the religion becomes more interesting to the visitor as he/she becomes more familiar with the sight of religious ruins and religious related activities. The religious interest is driven by the un-interpreted stimuli such as the spiritual ambience, the sights of other visitors’ religious practices, and the religious stories told during the visit. Further, the religious interest could influence a visitor to be engaged in a more self-involved experiential aspect, the quest for religious practice, once a visitor acquires information ranging from basic to conceptual knowledge to enrich an understanding about the religions.

### ***Religious Practice – worshipping/ paying tribute to the Buddha***

A visitor seeks an authentic heritage experience through the religious practices including making offers and worshipping the heritage ruins (Buddhism) to particular heritage attraction related to religious beliefs. He/She usually interacts with a particular heritage attraction perceived to have religious significance and religious and spiritual or sacred values (i.e. religious relics, holy ancient sanctuary, and a ‘*must go*’ place to pay tributes to the Buddha). Heritage attraction especially the Buddha images, stupas (pagodas) and Bo tree (a Buddhist sacred tree) are dotted around the sites. The religious practices represent visitors’ faith and admiration of Buddhism. The heritage setting becomes a venue of religious rituals; whilst heritage attractions or artefacts become the objects of faith and adoration:

*“We know this Buddha image very well...This one is the most famous and sacred. We come here just to worship him.”*

and

*“The most important object in this temple is the Buddha image inside the building. This Buddha is believed to be Pra Atcham which means the unmovable or the strength of Buddha. There are so many superstitions about him. We all come here and worship him for a blessing of good life...life without obstacles.”*

With the quest for religious practices, a visitor develops a high respect to the behavioural norms and local traditions. A good understanding about the religion enables a visitor to become involved



in the pursuit of the heritage experience by participating in familiar religious practices including worshipping, making offer, praying and blessing as well as the well-being of mind. In other words, the authentic heritage experience is a *religious retreat*. Worship and blessing are aimed to enhance the visitor's hope and faith.

Although a visitor self-involvement plays a major role in the quest for religious practices, physical factors, especially the setting ambience and enquiries, could also drive the visitor to anticipate this experiential aspect as when he/she understands and immerses himself/herself in the religious environment of the heritage sites:

*"The more I see these religious ruins, the more I become interested in Buddhism. It's pure...beautiful and peaceful. The Buddhism is a way of practice, isn't it? I just went to the temple on the hill and meditated. It was such a good feeling"*

and

*You see the Thais pay respect to the Buddha (statues) everywhere. Then you become interested. I went back to the hotel and read a book about Buddha's life. The book tells us about the Buddhist precepts. I think it's a really good way of practice....then I thought why not!"*

Although the quest for religious practices is generally driven by the visitor's personal background, it could be developed during the interactive experience process. The visitors may initially anticipate a quest for religious interest and later undertakes a quest for religious practices because they have learned about the religious meaning and significance of the heritage by the interpreted stimulation (acquisition of contextual knowledge):

*"...then you have also learned to respect the tradition, the culture and the local norms. I saw people took off the shoes when they worship the Buddha. We should do that as well. They pay respect every time the Buddhist monks are passing by. I think that this is a place related to religion...so, people should be concerned even with what you wear when you visit the site. It's like you are entering a temple in present days."*

With the quest for religious practices, visitors are involved with appropriate knowledge about the religion and the religious significance of the heritage. They seek to understand the behavioural norms and respect the 'dos' and 'don'ts' when they visit heritage sites.

*Sacred Journey – to participate in spiritual rites*

As a visitor perceives heritage for its holy, superstitious, divine and legendary sacred value, he/she seeks to participate in sacred rituals at the heritage site. This experiential aspect involves the visitor's enduring involvement that is the visitor is highly involved in the heritage and in his own self. A visitor usually develops the quest for a sacred journey when he/she interacts with a particular heritage attraction seen as a desired destination associated with personal religious beliefs (e.g. a stupa housing the most sacred Buddha's relics or the place where principle sacred rituals were held in the past). This experiential aspect is driven by interpreted stimuli, especially deep existing knowledge about a particular heritage attraction or an object drawn from fiction, folklore and Buddhist mythology as well as sanctified desires and blessings which could be related to and even beyond the Buddhist precepts:

*“It has been a long dream for us to come here. We always know this place. It is very spiritual. It took us ten hours to come here to make this sacred ritual. We were looking for the oldest stupa. The place was in my dream.”*

and

*“This is very superstitious. I believe that the main Stupa at Wat Chang Lom stores the great relics. It was incredible when we made a sacred rite. You see some special ray around the spire... Today we came here to repeat the sacred journey.”*

A visitor seeks the heritage experience that fulfils a dream, strong faith and beliefs about the sacred sites. In this case, the heritage site becomes both an object and a venue of a sacred journey through interaction with heritage. The visitor's participation in a sacred ritual is for self-indulgence such as *'fulfilling the dream'* and *'blessing the good life'*. He/she usually does not need any contextual information about the heritage and does not require orientation for the attraction. Despite the crowded atmosphere, a visitor could create his/her own sanctuary and sanity as they eventually seek to withdraw their mind from the world outside.

### 5.2.3 Quest for a Sense of Place

A visitor develops a quest for a sense of place when he/she perceives the value of a heritage in its historic sentiments and attributes. He/She searches for a historic ambience, peace and serenity in the heritage site. The heritage setting plays a crucial role in the visitor's anticipation of the quest for a sense of place. It is considered a venue for visitor experience. Acquisition of knowledge is not



significant for a visitor. Visitors seek to pursue three main aspects of the heritage experience ranging from quests for taste of the place to escape and getting lost in the space. Table 5.4 summarises the concept of the quest for sense of place in terms of its characteristics (properties) and dimensional range.

**Table 5.4 Quest for sense of place: characteristics and dimensions**

Taste of the Place	Escape	Getting lost in the space
<p>Seek to see and feel the historic atmosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value - ancient ruins (symbolic sentiment) – historic scenery (heritage attribute)</li> <li>• Low intra-personal involvement</li> <li>• Un-interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceived authenticity for pure ruins/ historic ambience</li> <li>• Attracted to well-known attractions (worth-a-visit)</li> <li>• Disregard enquiry</li> </ul>	<p>Seek physical isolation and secluded mind/ Engage oneself in a peaceful atmosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value – a place to be (symbolic sentiment)</li> <li>• High intra-personal involvement</li> <li>• Un-interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceived authenticity for pure ruins/ historic ambience</li> <li>• Attracted to attractions with a high sense of place and serenity (i.e. off-the beaten track)</li> <li>• Seek immersion in the setting</li> </ul>	<p>Emotionally sent back in the historic atmosphere/ Withdraw from the world outside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value – symbolic and historic sentiment</li> <li>• High intrapersonal involvement</li> <li>• Un-interpreted stimuli</li> <li>• Perceived authenticity for pure ruins/ historic ambience</li> <li>• Attracted to attractions with a high sense of place and serenity (i.e. off-the beaten track)</li> <li>• Seek immersion and emotionally withdraw from the environment</li> </ul>
Heritage site – object of pleasure experience	Heritage site – venue for affection and pleasure	Heritage sites - venue and object of affection and pleasure

*Taste of the place – feeling the historic atmosphere*

A visitor seeks to *feel* the ancient atmosphere of the place; ‘*what it was like*’ several hundred years ago. He/She seeks to consume an authentic heritage experience from the interaction with what is perceived as both pure ruins and hedonic spectacles (i.e. Buddhist monks walking around the ruins, Buddhists paying tribute to the Buddha). Heritage for this experiential aspect becomes an object of visitor experience. A visitor interacts with the well-known magnificent historic monastery ruins and places as quoted below:

*“Getting some of the thoughts and general feels, my sense of place...the history books and architectural critiques leave out... Ayutthaya is after all, a feeling and connecting with sort of zone...a feeling where Thais live in and around their heritage...and they do it marvellously.”*

and

*“The rivers, ancient capital – with palatial and spiritual adornments to match, birthplace of a key bloke in modern Thai democracy, expansive parklands and archaeological digging,*

*art museums, contemporary sculptures and some pretty floodlighting. And the elephantine equivalent to Hickstead...There's more to Ayutthaya than a whistle stop one day trip out from Bangkok...A breadth of stuff to see and feel."*

The beauty of the ruins and the atmospheric heritage sites provide visitors with an opportunity to see and *feel* the sense of place, regardless of the significance. This experiential aspect involves high intrapersonal involvement. Additionally, to a visitor the living things around the ruins enrich the sense of place. The quest for a taste of the place could include sensory experience in the line of '*smelling the past*' as quoted.

*"As I roll along the paths through the rising Stella and spires, I suddenly inhale a rich and exotic fragrance that excites my complete being. I know this perfume. It's a blossom or an aromatic wood. I've sensed it before but never this pure and fresh. I also know that nature always intensifies in early morning and that this scent will soon be consumed by the chaotic rush of the day. I focus my search. I breathe deeply, relax and let it fill my entire body. But where is it coming from? ...The subtle fragrance is elusive but all pervading. Just when I think I've named it, it floats off to somewhere else. Here in the remnants of this once great civilization, I wonder if it isn't an essence of Siam."*

A visitor could be attracted to the spiritual or historic attributes of the heritage. Hence, the purpose of an experience pursuit is indicated by the search for an atmospheric place such as '*sitting in the place of plenty of great ruins and old Buddha*':

*Most of the ruins were built using dark brown laterites, which were a nice contrast against the green grass and trees. It was quite pleasant to stroll in the shade and admire the old remains of once brilliant kingdom.*

To get a taste of the place, a visitor seeks to watch ruins at sunset and sunrise or to which illuminated ruins.

*Ayutthaya is the former capital of Thailand, ruling from 1351-1767, and withstood 27 attacks from the neighbouring Burmese. However, in 1767 the streak was broken and the city was sacked. After this, the king decided to move a bit further from his rowdy neighbours and retreated to the current capital of Bangkok. So, Ayutthaya is famous for its ruins of a once enormous city. I arrived in time to make it to the ruins for sunset and woke up early to catch them at sunrise.*



and

*“Ayutthaya became the second Siamese capital after Sukhothai. The ancient city is characterized by the prang (reliquary towers) and gigantic monasteries which give an idea of its past splendour. It remained the capital from 1350 until 1867 when the invading Burmese destroyed it. Earlier I was reviewing photos and thinking. I need more opportunities for colourful shots.” I need more people images. The historical site is supposedly lit up at night.... Maybe I can get a few good night photos.”*

The beauty, characteristics and imposing size of the ruins are crucial elements that provide an opportunity for visitors to taste a sense of place. Its history or significance is a major concern for the heritage experience.

#### *Escape – seclusion from the crowds*

A visitor develops a quest for escape when they perceive the heritage for its sentiment or as ‘*a place to be*’. He/She is attracted to the ancient attributes of the heritage and seeks to seclude himself/herself from a chaotic heritage setting and to escape from the dynamic and fast moving environment as often mentioned as ‘*being on my own*’. The heritage site becomes a venue for a visitor to experience serenity from the peaceful ambience at the heritage site. The visitor can be engaged and immersed in an experience of the atmospheric site (i.e., temple ruins set on a secluded hill and temples ruins at the dusk and dawn). In order to escape, the visitor seeks out physical isolation and secluded mind. He/she usually quests for escape while interacting with the heritage attraction where there are smaller crowds such as off-the-beaten tracks. Indeed, the purpose of experience is clearly indicated by the search for peace and serenity:

*“The next morning, we were back early, as the mists were raining ahead of the tour groups. It was a clam morning and the air was cool and sweet. We essentially had the park to ourselves.”*

and

*“I loved this place, it was so peaceful and I had it all to myself”*

A visitor also seeks to refresh the body and mind in an ‘*ancient retreat*’:

*“Eventually I head out in search of another site 4 km west of here. Apparently it is on a hill with a great view of the old city. The ride has been great. I think partly why I’ve always loved biking and cross country skiing is because of the rolling landscape and pure independence. Another reason is the spiritual and meditative nature of independent travel. It’s a place to find an inner peace.”*

With this aspect, the visitor seeks to immerse himself in the ‘pure’ and peaceful ruins ‘to soak up the atmosphere’. Moreover, a visitor could choose to stay private and interact with only a few friends:

*Going to the outskirts, outside the city walls to small woods connecting to little village houses, you could find an even calmer atmosphere, and greater space for yourself to linger around. These parts were very little visited and many quite worn down.*

A visitor could expect to experience a tranquil ruined Buddhism sanctuary to absorb the site ambience. He/She seeks physical isolation and secludes his/her mind from the communal interaction. The aspect of time spent at the attraction is related to the tranquillity of the site since the visitor pays more attention to the physical withdrawal from crowds and when the crowds or what visitors often call ‘coach party’ arrive in the place, the visitors could move around without direction and without specific aims or a focus on any particular objects or attractions

#### ***Getting lost in the space – back to the history***

A visitor seeks to be secluded from the world outside or the present in order to experience ‘the turning back of time’ to the ancient ambience and ancient ruins. Heritage in this case is defined as both an object and a venue of visitor experience. The perceived value of the heritage is associated with its historic sentiments:

*“We were both taken back by how beautiful the ruins were...This place was so spiritual...it was old and I just felt like walking through time...I just wanted to feel the past.”*

and

*“Sometimes...you can’t explain. You see this...it’s an old thing...historic then you just feel connected with it. And you go back to the history.”*



This experiential aspect involves high intra-personal involvement. The visitor looks for a spiritual heritage experience. Then, he/she immerses himself/herself in the heritage setting and connects him/her mind to the past while interacting with the ruins. The chaotic and fast moving world around them may not compromise this experiential aspect because the visitor sees the ruins as another world set back in the past. Visitors are attracted to the pureness of the ruins and they usually respect the behavioural norms. The experience of the heritage will send them back to the remote time:

*“I felt it was very busy outside ...but when I entered the temple I felt like it was another world. Then you feel like walking through the ancient time.”*

and

*“I was quite upset about the place I stay but once I saw the temple in front of me...It was beautiful and looked so real to me. It was like...you got back into the past. It was a living place long ago. I wanted to just get lost in the space.”*

The heritage site could become ‘*a centre of wellness*’ where a visitor could achieve *mind* healing and enhancement. A visitor was seeking to experience the purity and beauty of the heritage attraction and setting, regardless of what happens outside. He/she seeks to create a mental interaction with the heritage site and it does not necessarily relate to the history or the significance of the heritage. This experiential aspect, hence, leads an impressive and appreciative experience of heritage.

#### 5.2.4 Quest for Nostalgia

The quest for nostalgia represents a visitor’s ‘*longing for the past*’, which is often imaginary, idealized and unrealistic. However, the contextual information and interpreted stimuli have a significant role in the visitor’s anticipation of this experiential aspect. The quest for nostalgia is different from the quest for the sense of place in terms of the perceived values of the heritage and the acquisition of knowledge in relation to the history. To develop the quest for nostalgia, the visitor perceives the heritage (especially the attraction associated with the history) for its nostalgic sentiment, often referred to as “*the remains of its glorious days*”. Heritage is, therefore, a place for the remembrance whereby the visitor seeks to experience the feeling of the ‘*hey days*’ in the history. The admiration for the historic ruins influences the visitor’s anticipation. The visitor is sympathetic towards the heritage and the effects of time as well as the way that the heritage manifests itself in the erosion of buildings and monuments. He/She seeks to bring the glorious history back on.

Factual and fictional information is used to facilitate the heritage experience. Visitors usually develop this experiential aspect when they interact with a heritage that is rich with history. The quest for nostalgia usually influences the imagination of the past for the visitor. Visitors seek to pursue two main schemes of heritage experience ranging from a quest for a glimpse of the past and that of living the past. Table 5.5 summarises the concept of the quest for nostalgia in terms of its characteristics (properties) and dimensional range.

**Table 5.5 Quest for nostalgia: dimensions and characteristics**

Glimpse into the Glorious Past	Living up the Past
<p>Nostalgic sight of ruins (exploring and feeling the past)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value - remains of glory (historic sentiment)</li> <li>• High self-involvement</li> <li>• Low social contact</li> <li>• Imagery</li> <li>• Interpreted / un-interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceive authenticity – ruins 'now and then'</li> <li>• Attracted to interesting attractions</li> <li>• None contextual/Basic knowledge</li> <li>• Involves the basic interpretation of heritage</li> </ul>	<p>Bringing back the image of the glorious past</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value – cultural treasure, ideological symbol (historic sentiment)/ the set on scene (nostalgic sentiment)</li> <li>• Enduring involvement</li> <li>• Involving with the heritage (high sense of belonging)</li> <li>• Imagery and Escape</li> <li>• Interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceive authenticity – pure ruins/ ruins 'now and then'</li> <li>• Factual/contextual/Detailed enquiry</li> <li>• Involves the interpretation of heritage</li> <li>• Attracted to particular attractions- desired attraction</li> <li>• Leads to an involving experience</li> </ul>
Heritage site – object of affective experience	Heritage site – venue/ object of affective/existential experience

*Glimpse into the glorious past*

A visitor interprets the significance of heritage and develops a quest for a nostalgic sight of ruins. The visitor not only interacts with the history of the ruin but also its aesthetic beauty. The heritage for this quest is an object of visitor experience. It is perceived to be a place packed with history; hence, visitors interpret the history and anticipate the quest for the glimpse into the past as quoted below:

*“Ayutthaya is filled with amazing ruined temples, many of which were destroyed by Burmese invaders. This used to be the capital city and the Emerald Buddha which is now in Bangkok used to be here...so it’s packed with history. Despite being a major tourist place, it’s not actually very touristy at all. It’s a very low key kind of place which makes it nice to walk round and just explore the place of great history...to feel it.”*

and



*“...What remains, after having been reduced to a fraction of the splendour that once was and left to the ravages of the jungle for many years, is an area covered with numerous large ruined temples and palaces. I spent one day on a bicycle, exploring some of the important ruined temples; Wat Phra Mahathat (famous for its Buddha head around which the roots of a tree have grown over hundreds of years) and Wat Ratburana, where you can climb down into a small crypt, long robbed of its treasures. The Royal Palace, with its three huge chedis (tower-dome structures), was particularly impressive...just miss the long gone history”*

This experiential aspect involves the visitor's interpretation of place and the recognition of historic significance influences the visitor's connection with the heritage. When a visitor interacts with the heritage, he/she perceives the heritage as something related to the long-gone history of which its splendour is still present and *'packed with history'*. A glimpse of the ruins is referred to as a quest to explore the place of history and to feel the past. Visitors seek the authentic experience from the image of what the ruins could have been in the past (the ruins *'then and now'*). Hence, this aspect leads the visitors to experience the heritage in an imaginary manner as quoted below:

*“It was the ancient capital of Siam, until it was completely sacked after a 2 year battle to gain the city in 1765. The population of Ayutthaya before the battle was over a million people (which were more than the capitals of Europe during the same time-frame., After the battle there were less than 10,000 inhabitants remaining. The Burmese completely sacked the city; their goal was to make the city uninhabitable. It's a truly amazing and beautiful place. I could spend days here exploring the ruins. It truly must have been one of the great cities of the world before it was destroyed. I just want to see and feel how it would have been in the ancient time”*

and

*“Say what you will about the Burmese, but when they sacked Ayutthaya, the 400+ year old capital of Thailand in the late 1700's, they knew what they were doing. I'd consider the Burmese the sack masters of Southeast Asia. Never mind that the Burmese and Thais are both Buddhists – statues were smashed, everyone of them, gold was shipped back to Burma, and anything that could be burned down was turned to ashes. It's kind of sad walking around the once glorious Thai capital, so much destruction thanks to their neighbours. I hear to this day Thai people are still sensitive about the matter... I visited (via Bicycle) all the wats that had a Khmer – style prang...to see the past splendour. I love the prang!”*



and

*“Sukhothai is basically a town of ancient ruins, the remnants of a capital abandoned in the thirteenth century. From Sukhothai, Thailand was first united as one nation as it is today and the written Thai language was born. As you can see from the images, the ruins were awe-inspiring and we can't understand why on earth they were abandoned. It's sad. The ruins were beautiful and the setting they were in made the day great...An idyllic park with ancient ruins that remind you of Greek or Roman ruins. Until you realize they are only 800 years old. But still older than what you will find in the states. We just need to see the highlights of the wat (temple) ruins.”*

Un-interpreted stimuli such as the awe-inspiring beauty and history of historic ruins provide the visitors with a nostalgic expression of the glorious past. They value the heritage for its historic sentiment that embodies the remains of glory. Consequently, this perceived value of heritage leads the visitors to explore the ruins through a nostalgic sight of the ruins. The visitors seek basic information about the history and use it to make sense about the place. Historic atmosphere of the heritage site also leads the visitors to avoid social contact and to lead a high self-involving experience. This experiential aspect involves a basic interpretation of the heritage because visitors enquire precise knowledge about its history in order to experience the highlights of the historic ruins. Knowledge about the history of the heritage site stimulates the interpretation of the heritage and leads the visitors to seek to learn, as well as to enjoy a pleasurable experience. Visitors seek to see and imagine the place as ‘then and now’. This quest for nostalgia also involves the sight of the nostalgic ruins associated with deeper acquisition of knowledge which could encourage visitors to anticipate a more involving experiential aspect, especially that of living the past.

### ***Living up the past***

A visitor perceives heritage as a place representing the remains of the glorious past or a place of remembrance. The place has its legend and history as a cultural treasure. Moreover, heritage is often perceived as an ideological symbol. This experiential aspect is more involving for visitors than the quest for a glimpse into the glorious past since visitors interpret a higher level of knowledge regarding the heritage usage as the history and of the ruins in the past. Particular heritage attractions usually become something a visitor longs to visit. The heritage becomes an object of visitor experience. A visitor also develops a sense of belonging towards the heritage because he/she feels related to the history. Visitors appreciate the history and the story of the place. They have a nostalgic feeling towards the glorious past that has gone through time and left the present in the ruins. They are emotionally involved with the sight of the heritage as they wish it



could have had stayed until this day. Hence, they seek to live up the past in their minds as quoted below:

*“Having experienced the glorious excesses of wat Phra Kaew and the Grand Palace, the ruins of Ayutthaya provided the chance to see what’s underneath all that gilt and gold paint! Needless to say, when the Burmese sacked the city, much of the precious stones and gold statuary become booty, leaving behind on the ruins of the majestic buildings. The old town is like a lost city...where you would want to bring all this stuff back to experience what life could have been ...just like in the history.”*

and

*“Attached are a few images from Ayutthaya. This place was really amazing. It was the capital of Siam for several hundred years, and the Burmese attacked and successfully ransacked the city. Many were killed, others tortured. Many of the Buddha images were destroyed, all of them were damaged. The destruction was quite amazing... but it also was rather amazing to think that the people of Siam suffered such great losses, yet managed to regroup, build a new capital, and succeed as a nation...I’d try to imagine this magnificent place.”*

The appreciation of the glorious past encourages visitors to seek to consume an experience from some particular heritage attractions that are historically significant. For example, they *‘feel’* the place that used to be a prosperous city and *idealise* the scene of the glorious past. They look for something the golden era left for people today. They seek the sight of *‘pure ruins’* and experience it as it looks. They could think about what happen in history and what have left from the past. Hence, this experiential aspect leads to the heritage experience involving an immense imagination and impression of the past. Visitors also immerse themselves in the historic setting through the interpretation of knowledge about history and legendary tales. In their perception, since is well worth being preserved for the next generation, the conservation of moral and behavioural norms is very important. Heritage, consequently, becomes an influence of a deeper cultural and historical interest.

The interpreted stimuli, especially the narrative and history of the heritage site, influence a visitor to develop the quest for living up the past. The heritage itself is defined as an object of experience. This experiential aspect involves a visitor’s personal background (interest and desire) and the interpretation of the story related to the heritage site. A visitor also perceives the value of heritage in terms of its nostalgic sentiment – the set on scene. This perceived value is related to romanticism,

remembrance and myth whose narrative, history and drama take place at the heritage sites or attractions. Indeed, the fictional and legendary context of heritage influences the search for heritage experience as quoted below:

*“This gigantic city, the River Yom, the mountain...the town actually existed. The town was described in Trai Bhume Pra Ruang (Legend of the great king). It was magnificent. I’d discover the place of this story.”*

and

*“I could imagine...it was a ceremony to worship the moon. The book said...there was a big parade; the king proceeded on a beautiful decorated white elephant. There was a parade of elephants, ancient people...walking up the hill temple in a fool moon night.”*

Visitors seek to visualize the reality of the scene in literature and to interpret the story that related to the place. Therefore, they aim to ‘*be there*’ experiencing the moment of truth. The objects they seek for a heritage experience are consistent with the history-related literature or folklore. The heritage visit can fulfil a lone dream or desire. Indeed, the sense of accomplishment of desire completion intensifies the visitor’s interaction with heritage. It reflects a level of self-involvement, and a level and content of the acquisition of knowledge and the heritage interpretation. Visitors expressed their enjoyment through the impression of history-related literatures or dramas so that they seek to experience the heritage through imagining the place.

### 5.2.5 Quest of Pleasure

A visitor develops a quest for pleasure when he/she perceives the heritage for its aesthetic features or the hedonic spectacles. The heritage site is seen as a beautiful park or a tourist attraction where they can experience pleasure, novelty and fun. The acquisitions of knowledge, behavioural norms and interpreted-stimuli have the least influences on visitor anticipation of experiential aspect. Regardless of the historical, cultural or religious significance of the heritage, the visitor seeks socializing, having a good day out and exploring the novelty. The heritage becomes an object for the visitor to experience novelty and a venue for the visitor to experience fun and a pleasant day. Table 5.6 summarises the concept of the quest for pleasure in terms of its characteristics (properties) and dimensional range.



**Table 5.6 Quest for pleasure: characteristics and dimensions**

<b>Hanging out</b>	<b>A good day out</b>	<b>Exotic disclosure</b>
Seek socializing and fun	Seek leisure time	Explore novelty and adventure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value - a tourist destination (heritage attribute)</li> <li>• High interpersonal involvement (communal contact)</li> <li>• Un-interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceive authenticity – hedonic spectacle</li> <li>• Attracted to well-known attractions (worth-a-visit)</li> <li>• Regardless of acquisition of knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value – Scenic park/ awe-inspiring (heritage attribute)</li> <li>• adoption of everyday routine and hobbies)</li> <li>• interpersonal involvement (group cohesion)</li> <li>• Un-interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceive authenticity – hedonic spectacle</li> <li>• Attracted to the scenic attractions (worth-a-visit)</li> <li>• Minimal acquisition of knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value – exotic ruins (symbolic sentiment)/ awe-inspiring (heritage attribute)</li> <li>• Interpersonal involvement (communal contact/ fun and fantasy)</li> <li>• Un-interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceive authenticity – pure ruins - hedonic spectacle</li> <li>• Attracted to interesting attractions</li> <li>• Basic/fiction information</li> </ul>
Heritage site – venue for pleasure experience	Heritage site – venue for pleasure experience	Heritage sites - object of pleasure experience

### *Hanging out*

This experiential aspect is driven by the pleasurable experience derived from interacting with others. The heritage site is considered a venue for socializing where a visitor seeks a chance to meet other people and share good times with them (i.e., fellow visitors, friends, and family). Activities might include a family day out, a friendship reunion, a meet and greet with other tourists (e.g. foreigners or local visitors). The hedonic spectacles involve aesthetic features (scenic and beautiful ruins) as often mentioned as ‘*a nice park*’ as quoted below:

*We spent a good few days hanging out with some friends in Ayutthaya, which, for a Thai city, is a fairly beautiful place.*

and

*“Sri Satchnalai is a really beautiful tourist attraction in this area. We are proud of it. We just want to bring our friends here...riding bikes and picnicking....oh! we might have a chance to see some foreigners.”*

The heritage is also perceived as ‘*a tourist attraction*’ that could be a worth-a-visit attraction for visitors to reunite or hang out with friends. A chance to meet and talk with other visitors (especially visitors who are from different nations or cultures) often draws out this experiential aspect.

*“What I was thinking is...wouldn’t it be nice to have a can of beer and lying on the beautiful green grass...well the temple ruins look the same to me everywhere.”*

A visitor also seeks to set themselves in a park-like atmosphere for *having a good lunch or hanging out, looking around, and taking some group photos* with other visitors. In this case, the heritage site can be just a nice place for hanging out.

### *A good day out*

They seek to do pleasurable activities such as ‘great bike out’, ‘sit and rest’, ‘a great break’, ‘playground’, escape from tension, bird watch, photographing and the touch of nature. Heritage can be a place visitors can do their own hobbies such as painting, sketching and reading. Visitors seek to set themselves in a pleasurable atmosphere (natural setting or relaxing and beautiful scenery). Heritage is a venue for visitors to pursue pleasant experience in beautiful scenery and relaxing atmosphere of a ‘nice park’. The experience they seek also involves getting around and leisure sightseeing:

*“Sukhothai has wonderful scenery. It is a big park and perfect for a stroll...while you imagine the Thailand of yesteryear.”*

and

*“One pagoda is surrounded by a man-made pond and is very lovely with a gentle breeze blowing over the water...just nice for a relaxing day.”*

The visitor experience does not necessarily involve the heritage or historic atmosphere because visitors may not pay attention to the historical value of the heritage. In turn, visitors seek to do activities in which they are interested:

*“This morning was quite quiet but it was busier in the afternoon. Still, the atmosphere was good, very friendly. People were friendly everywhere. The atmosphere was nice and it was quiet. Nice to go around on the bike”*

and

*“So we went to Ayutthaya. This little city was the Thai capital for four hundred years until the mid-1700, and it shows. It's a little island with a moat around it because three rivers meet here before heading south to the sea. The island and surrounding grounds are dotted with ancient Buddhist temples and ruins. Buddha, Buddha everywhere! It really feels like a mini Angkor Wat for us...”*



*since we haven't been there yet. Beautiful spires (stupa) and statues provided us with opportunities for photos and we didn't waste them. Sarah easily used two rolls of film. We even stayed an extra day so we could see more of the temples, and go back to ones we'd already been to just to get better photos in better light We must say that it feels much more relaxed here.*

Visitors are attracted to physical attributes of the heritage sites. They seek to have 'some time on their own', 'manual the hobbies,' to 'check out' some temple ruins and to 'relax in the beautiful and atmospheric site. The sight of historic attractions is usually interesting and made for some good photos. They may not recognise the difference among heritage attractions as often seen and quoted in their photographs as "another ruin we don't remember the name". Because the visitors seek an experience of pleasure, they often ignore the behavioural norms. There are evidences that the visitors take off their tops and seek to chill out in a quiet and breezy ruined temple and look for a quiet space to drink a canned beer although these manners should not be practiced while visiting the historical sites related to Buddhism and the Thai culture. Consequently, the quest for pleasure could cause the dilution of heritage cultural value.

#### *Exotic disclosure – exploring the novelty and adventure*

Visitors seek to unfold and see things that are different from their everyday life or cultures. The heritage is perceived for its exotic sentiment as an icon of other cultures, architectures and religions. It is also perceived as 'an unseen' attraction or 'something on the other side of the hill' as quoted below:

*"This is what we don't have back home...it's very interesting to discover something new."*

and

*"It's a really pretty little place to cycle around with lovely ponds dotted around all the ruins. Headed to the main ruin first which was quite impressive. Even after Angkor Wat and its surroundings, I'm still impressed by different ruins. They all seem to have something special and unique about them...then decided we were energetic enough to hire bicycles to explore the historical park and surrounding area. The main complex is housed within city walls about 1.5km x 1.5km containing 21 historical sites and 4 ponds, with another 70 sites within a 5 km radius. The sites were not quite on the same scale as Angkor and quite different in their design.*

The heritage is recognised for its uniqueness, which offers the visitors a discovery of the novelty. However, this experiential aspect does not necessarily involve an acquisition of knowledge. It may involve the *'pleasurable sight'* as often mentioned *'just to see exotic ruins'*.

The quest for exotic disclosure also includes adventurous exploration. A heritage site is full of wonder for the visitors. This experiential aspect involves the perspective of attributes such as size, spiritual ambience, and natural and wild setting. The visitors seek to experience attractions perceived to be interesting quoted *one of a kind* or *off-beaten track* for fantasy and fun. They often explain their trip: 'great fun climbing, 'amazing trek around', 'temple escapade' or 'exploring the myth' as in the following statement:

*"At this place, we climbed up these God-awful and very narrow stairs to make it to the top of the huge centre tower. The stairs were really falling apart with each step place upon them, and as you get closer to the top, they become smaller in width and length. Kiley and I finally made it up in our flip flops and the look down was frightening to say the least. But we enjoyed the nice view of the area, especially overlooking the river and the large Buddha statues."*

and

*"All of the temples were pretty much destroyed...today they are left in ruins, but they are amazing to trek around. You can climb some parts, and in others there is still a Buddha shrine set up... As I said before, some parts of the ruins and temples are open for climbing, so we took full advantage of this to get the best view. We climbed way up these SCARY, falling apart stairs, and are proudly taking a quick glance around."*

The heritage is an object of visitor experience. This aspect of experience involves an awe inspiration. The extraordinary attributes and ambience of the heritage attractions (i.e., size, wilderness, and spirituality) attract and lead visitors to explore the adventurous heritage experience such as *'climbing the high step ruins'* and *'exploring the myth'*. However, this quest of experience is often impulsive. A visitor seeks to experience any interacting attractions that thrill them such as gigantic or extraordinary monument (i.e. huge Buddha statues). Further, he or she may seek for the off-beaten track attractions (i.e., secluded spiritual and mysterious ruins) as often referred to *'an ancient playground'* *'Indiana Jones stuff'*, *'the tomb raider'*. The acquisition of knowledge does not usually involve this aspect. The quest for exploring the adventure, hence, leads a visitor to pursue a pleasurable experience.



### 5.2.6 Quest for Heritage Trails

A visitor seeks to investigate particular cultural heritage attractions related to his special interest in history, architecture, and art. The visitor usually perceives the value of heritage based on its attributes and historic sentiment. The quest for history trails is influenced by interpreted stimuli. It involves an acquisition of knowledge from facts, contextual and analytic enquiries. ‘Awe-inspiring’ features of heritage (i.e., spirituality, extraordinary structure) also drive a visitor to anticipate a quest for heritage trails. A visitor may seek to experience a ‘*visual sight of history*’. The knowledge sought involves the history, archaeology and architecture. The heritage site becomes an object and a venue of the intellectual heritage experience. Table 5.7 summarises the concept of the quest for heritage trails.

**Table 5.7 Quest for heritage trails: characteristics**

Heritage Trails
Investigate and comprehend the history and heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived heritage value - remains of glory (historic sentiment)</li> <li>• High self-involvement (related to personal interest and background)</li> <li>• Seek knowledge related to history of place</li> <li>• Interpreted stimuli driven</li> <li>• Perceive authenticity – pure ruins/ ruins now and then</li> <li>• Attracted to significant attraction related to history</li> <li>• Open to all source of enquiry but prefer contextual/ factual and analytic enquiry</li> <li>• Involves the interpretation of heritage</li> <li>• Respect the behavioural norm</li> <li>• Leads to an involving experience</li> </ul>
Heritage site – object of affective experience

The quest for heritage trails is of high self-involvement; that is, it relates the visitors’ experience to the visitor’s personal interest and cultural and historical background in culture and history. It is driven by interpreted stimuli and it leads the learning aspect as quoted below:

*“I think the great history exists in historic ruins everywhere. I’d want to learn and absorb the history and story of these historic ruins. It has always been my interest. I wanted to be an archaeologist...so I am interested in this historical and archaeological site. I normally read history books and something about the heritage stuff. It makes me feel...once I got here...seeing the real thing, I would understand all this and of course I could learn more about it... I could feel more enjoyable because I am so interested in it...not just seeing something beautiful.”*

and

*"I am amazed by the ancient civilization. Every time I see this stuff, I feel my soul is enchanted and my brain is fulfilled with the knowledge. I think history is my passion. I always try to learn from these ancient intellects. Look! I am wondering about the techniques they used in building such magnificent statues. I really want to know about it.*

A visitor also seeks to experience the '*real vision*' of the heritage and to learn about it. The visitor experience is based on the visitor's interest in history which both exists in the background and occurs during the visit. This experiential aspect can be related to an academic purpose. A visitor is attracted to particular attractions that are congruent to knowledge and related to his special interest. He usually searches an understanding about the heritage by self-orientation, i.e. a visit to a museum or an information centre for further knowledge about the sites.

This aspect of experience is intellectual purpose driven by an existing knowledge or notion about history represented by the heritage. Hence, the experiential aspect leads a visitor to an interpretive interaction with a particular heritage object or attraction in order to fulfil and enhance the knowledge of a cultural historic place. The visitor would enquire historical facts, archaeological content and architectural descriptions that sharpen and deepen the understanding and help him to '*see through*' the story of a heritage attribute. The quest for history trails leads a visitor to engage in the *knowledge-enhancement* and *self-development* through the experience. However, it can be a serious pleasure for a visitor as he may aim for the mixture of education and entertainment from the heritage visit.

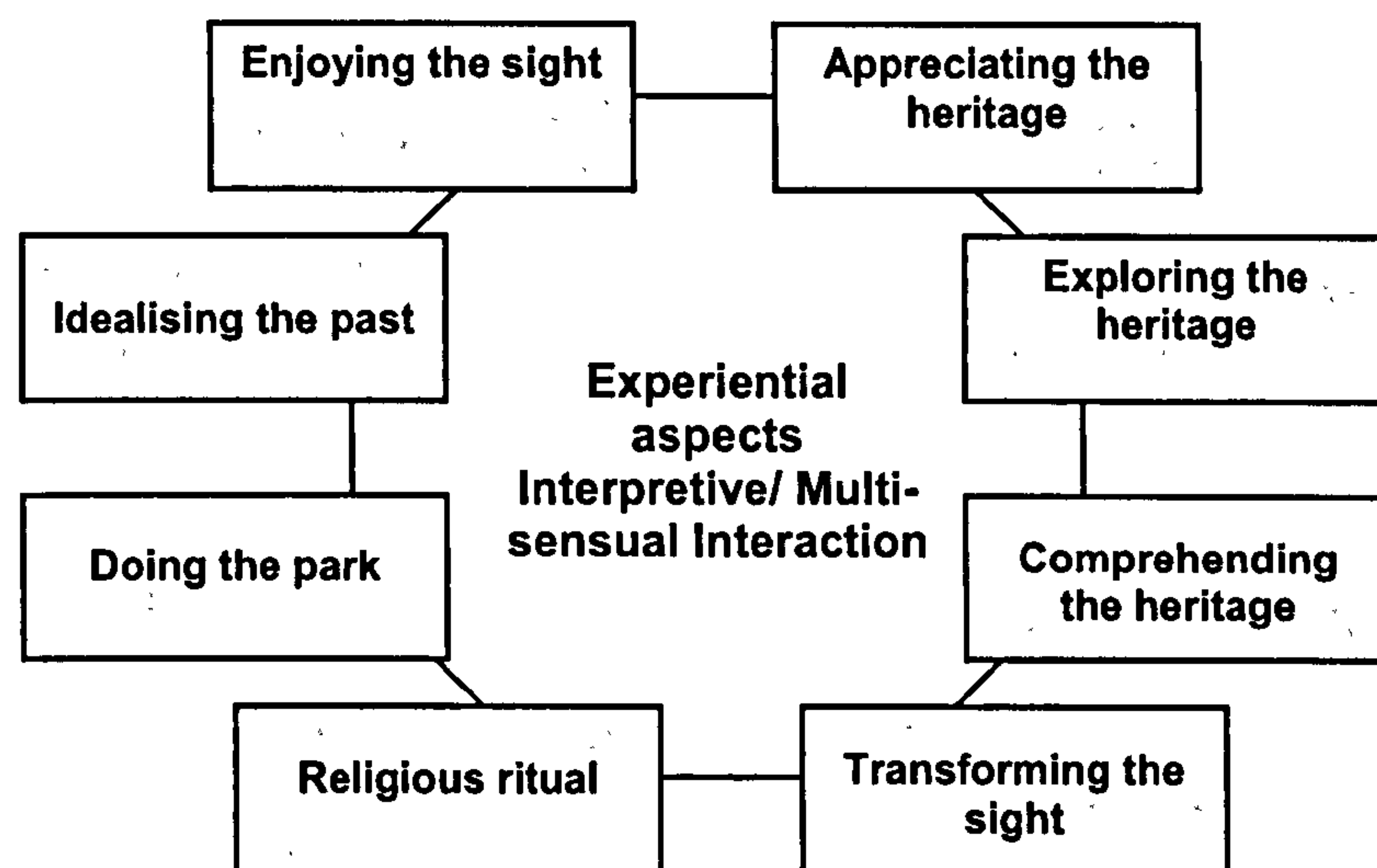
The Experiential Aspect conceptualised in this study reveals the multiplicity of the experience as well as the different levels of the interaction between a visitor and a heritage. The visitor's experience can be seen in six dimensions depending on perceived value of heritage, acquisition of knowledge, involvement, and perception toward behavioural norms and types of stimuli. Hence, the experiential aspects described above are crucial elements leading to the multiplicity of the experience consumption practice (discussed in 5.3).



### 5.3 EXPERIENCE CONSUMPTION PRACTICE

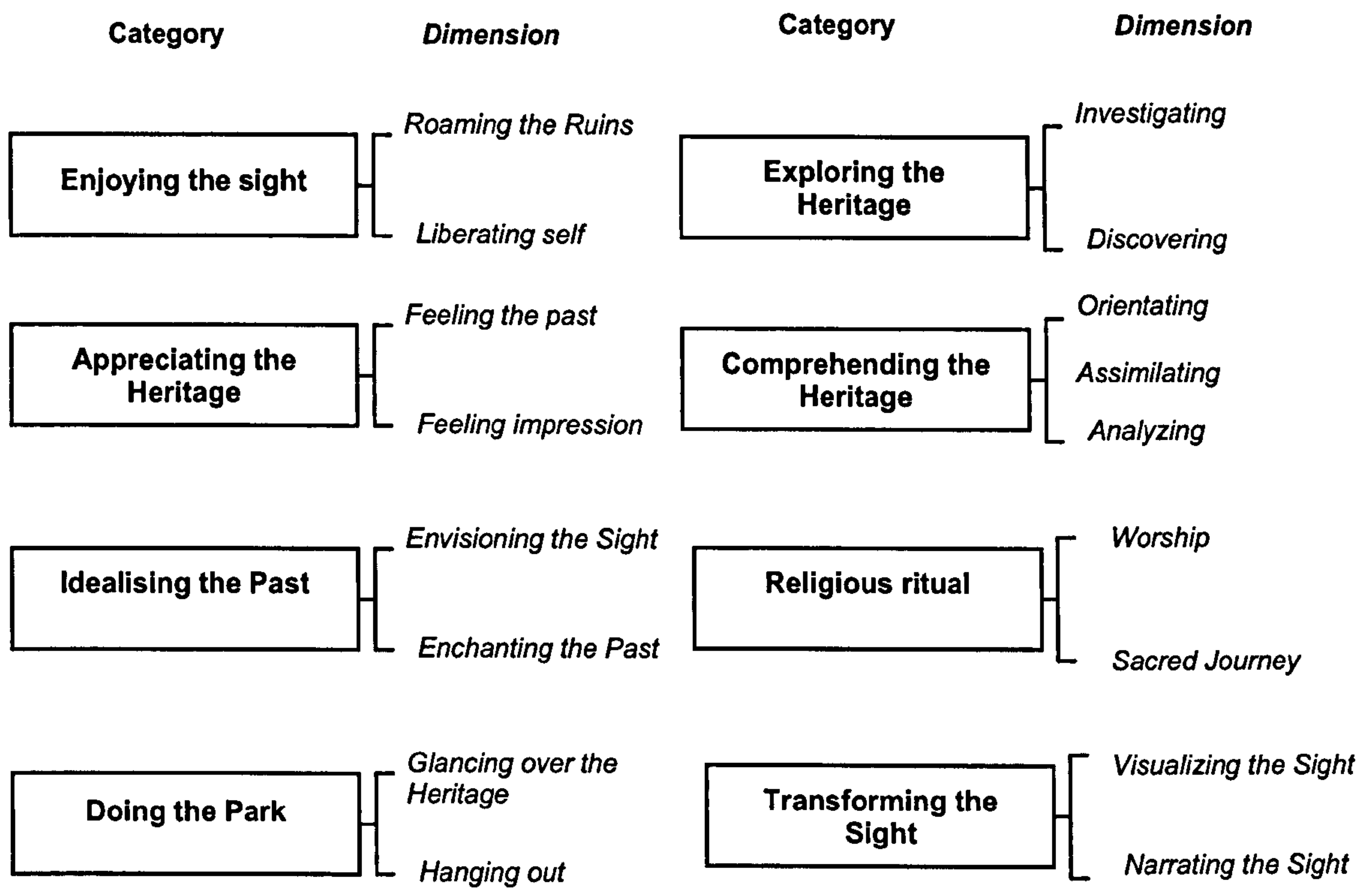
The Experience Consumption Practice discussed in this section illustrates the different patterns in which visitors participate to pursue their heritage experiences. Visitors interact with the heritage in multi-sensual ways. However, consumption practices and their meanings are not mutually exclusive. A visitor could consume the heritage experience through various experiential aspects, hence various experience consumption practices. These practices impart different meanings. Although this study suggests that these interactive configurations are discrete, the inter-link among them reveals multiple patterns of interactive experience or activity (ways of experience). This study conceptualises eight patterns of experience consumption practice embedded in experiential aspects and structure of interaction (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3 Experience consumption practices



The overview of experience consumption practices conceptualised in this study is illustrated in Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.4 Experience consumption practice: categories and dimensional ranges



### 5.3.1 Enjoying the sight

Enjoying the sight is a consumption practice to pursue a pleasurable experience led by the quest for pleasure and the quest for sense of place. It involves intrapersonal and sensual interaction in which the heritage site is a venue for the visitor experience. It is influenced by un-interpreted stimuli responded to awe-inspiring features of heritage sites associated with fantasy and emotive elements. Visitors consume the aesthetic and pleasure experience in two related practices: *roaming the ruins* and *liberating self*.

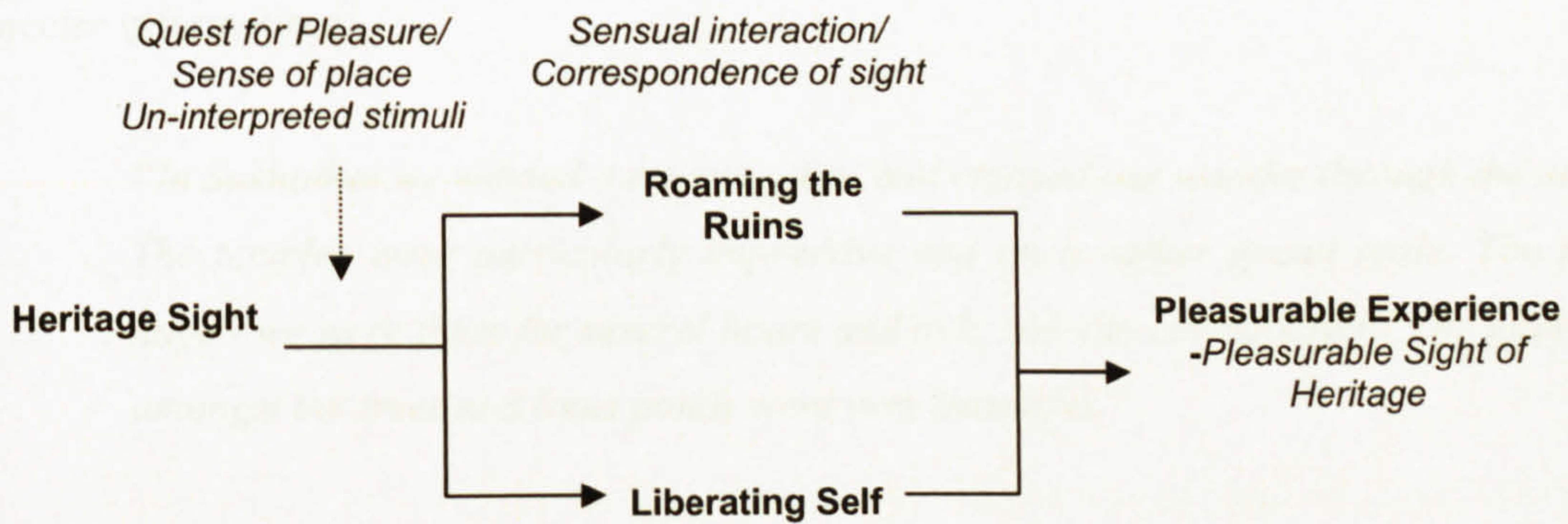
Table 5.8 summarises the characteristics of enjoying the sight and Figure 5.5 depicts its framework.



**Table 5.8 Characteristics of enjoying the sight**

<b>Forms of experience consumption practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roaming the ruins</li> <li>• Liberating self</li> </ul>
<b>Experiential aspect</b>	Pleasure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quest for pleasure – <i>a good day out</i></li> <li>• quest for sense of place – <i>taste of the place, escape</i></li> </ul>
<b>Structure of interaction</b>	Sensual interaction
<b>Characteristic of visitor experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracted to the heritage attributes (<i>historic scenery, awe-inspiring site ambience</i>)/ symbolic sentiment (<i>ancient ruins, a place to be</i>)</li> <li>• Responding to un-interpreted stimuli</li> <li>• High involvement – intrapersonal involvement (<i>solitary confinement</i>)/ Extended immersion of self in the setting (<i>escape</i>)</li> <li>• Acquisition of knowledge – minimal – disregard</li> <li>• Behavioural norms usually aware – could be neglected</li> <li>• Experience authentication – <i>experience heritage as it is (pure ruins)</i></li> <li>• Conservation anxiety</li> </ul>
<b>Roles of heritage in visitor experience</b>	Venue of experience

**Figure 5.5 Framework of enjoying the sight**



*Roaming the ruins*



**Image 5.1 A visitor roams a ruined temple in Sukhothai Historical Park**



A visitor experiences the heritage for a *'pure pleasure'* through a consumption practice quoted as *'strolling the historic park'* and *'wandering through the ruins'*. Roaming the ruins entails a slow movement with a diffuse direction through a heritage space. Indeed, the visitor interacts with the heritage environment or the site ambience instead of particular heritage objects. Through the quest for sense of place (*taste of the place*) and quest for pleasure (*a good day out*), a visitor is attracted to the heritage attributes (i.e., the historic scenery) and moves around the space and engages with non-particular heritage objects or attractions.

*"We headed off for Old Sukhothai to check out some of the ruin temples. We grabbed bikes and rode around the various sites. It was a pretty relaxed bike ride mixed in with lots of stops...so basically it barely felt like we were biking at all?"*

The visitor experience is usually impulsive. It is stimulated by *un-interpreted stimuli* such as awe-inspiring historic ambience perceived as a *'beautiful historic scenery'*. The experience pursuit does not necessarily involve the acquisition of knowledge. Nevertheless, a visitor may enquire basic or precise information:

*"In Sukhothai we wanted a relaxing time and enjoyed our wander through the ancient city. The temples were particularly impressive and on a rather grand scale. The place was huge - we were there for several hours and only saw the central area!! The giant Buddhas amongst the trees and lotus ponds were very beautiful."*

and

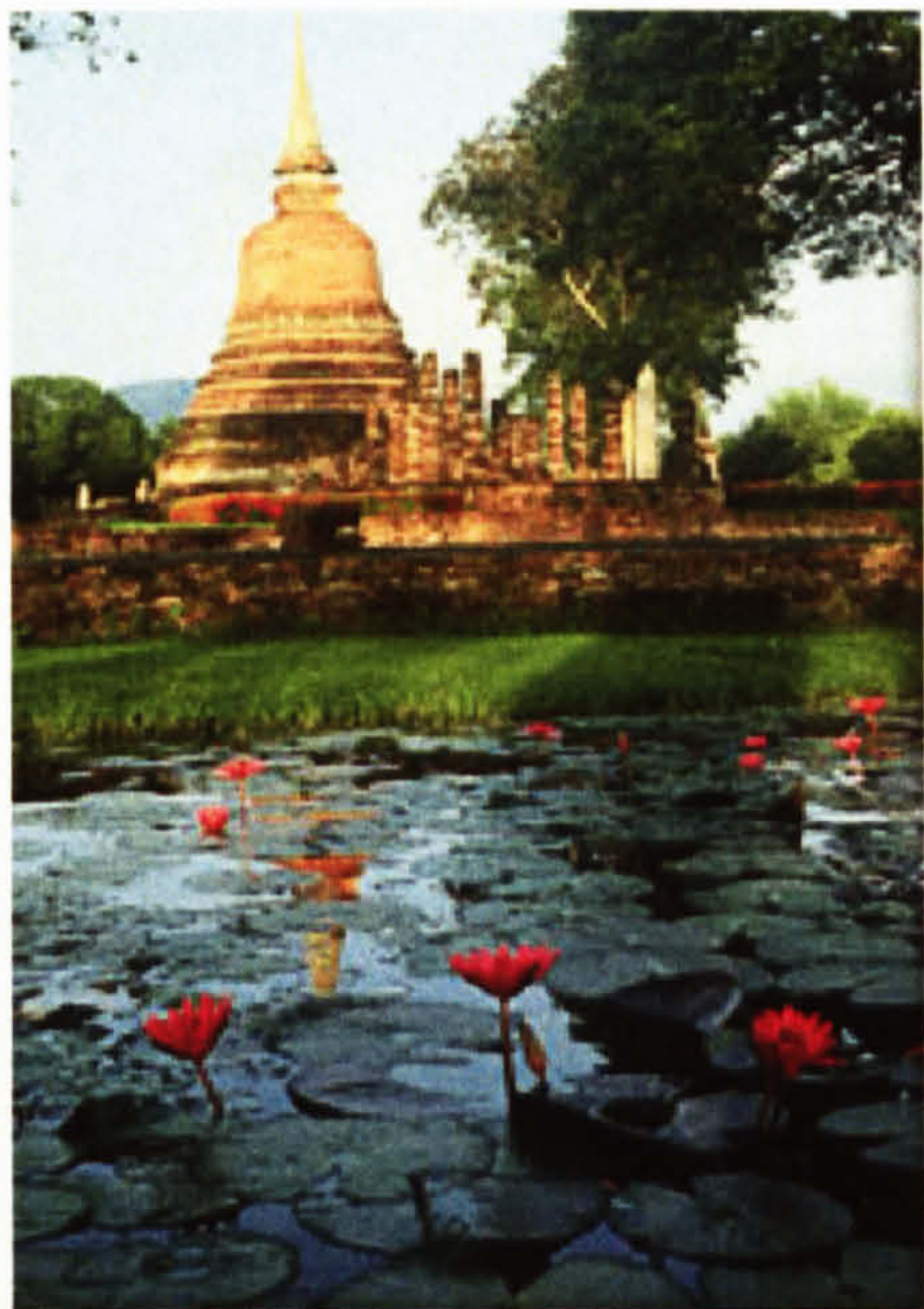
*"The next day we hired bikes to get around and see some of the many temples. We discovered a great park which was very relaxing and made easy cycling away from the hectic roads. The old Capital is more relaxed than Bangkok and is worth a couple of days to see around but there are only so many temples you can take."*

Visitors experience the heritage site for *a good day out*. In this sense, the atmosphere initiates the pleasure aspect for them to see the ruins. They intensely interact with the *'relaxing atmosphere'* and *'beautiful scenery'* for a time of leisure.

*"The early Sukhothai people had great religious fever and built dozens of temples that now survive as ruins. Typically they have one or more Sri Lanka-style bell stupas and a stone-pillared hall that held Buddha. A couple of temples had Khmer-style towers; at least*



*one of these predated Sukhothai and had originally housed Hindu gods. The central sites lay in parkland with trees and ancient moats...made pleasant bicycling destinations.”*



**Image 5.2 Atmospheric setting of the heritage site offers an opportunity for what visitors called ‘a good bike out’**

The site ambience could be a *‘pleasant surprise’* for the visitors. It stimulates the visitors to engage in a more self-involving heritage experience and to spend more time experiencing the site:

*“Sukhothai was a pleasant surprise for me. The town itself is not much to speak of, but the ruins of the ancient capital were in a very beautiful setting ... lots of flowers and manicured, green grass. I did find the ruins themselves spectacular, but the setting made for a perfect bicycle ride.”*

and

*“I prefer Sukhothai. It’s more attractive because it’s quieter and you have space for yourself. Not many people were around...It’s very nice.”*

There is no particular attraction to which a visitor is attracted. Visitors scatter around an atmospheric and beautiful heritage site. The beautiful and *park-like* heritage site is perceived as a place for *personal leisure* or *relaxing time* for visitors. They participate in activities such as *‘perfect bicycle ride’*, *‘great bike out’* or *‘walking around’*. Further, they spend quite a long time indulging in pleasure through this experience consumption practice:



*“It's quite inspiring to cycle slowly around, taking in the sheer scale and planning that went into building this place. The ruins spread out for many kilometres, becoming fewer and further between...I spent whole day enjoying the place.”*

and

*“We spent several hours walking around the ruins of the old city which is set in a pleasant park.”*

and

*“Well. It's RELAXING because for me I don't know much about the story which are linked with Buddhism and Thai traditions...just sitting there for hours.”*



**Image 5.3 The park-like atmosphere offers an opportunity for a relaxing day**

Visitors are attracted to the peaceful atmosphere and the natural environment of the heritage sites (Image 5.3). Enjoying the sight is a self-involving practice (intrapersonal involvement). Indeed, visitors routinely participate in this leisure experience consumption practice in the beautiful historic scenery as quoted below:

*“Sukhothai was a chance to see more temple ruins which I preferred to Ayutthaya. The old city is about 12 km out of town and most of the temples are set in the Sukhothai Historical Park which is beautiful, nicely set out and has been well preserved. I rented a bike again and really enjoyed venturing round the park and taking photos. I even went outside of the park to explore the temples surrounding the area and managed to get away from most of the tourists which was nice. It was there that I randomly bumped into Sophie and Laetitia again and so had the afternoon with them. Sukhothai is well worth the trip if you ever come to Thailand...”*



Visitors also adopt their hobbies into the experiences of heritage. The heritage site becomes venue of pleasurable experience.

*“The park is so beautiful and so relaxing. The next day, I brought a mat and a book I like...chill out and read my book. It was wonderful”.*

and

Visitor 1 *“I wanted to go there for a day and sit in the park...have lunch in the park. Just go and be lazy because it’s really nice. May be you can just sit and doing nothing...because it’s such a beautiful park. Even if you have seen that many times before but it was nice just spending time with your friends in a nice park like that.”*

Visitor 2 *“We are going to paint...Go and sit under the tree and paint.”*

The visitor experience may involve habitual aspects; therefore, the visitors adopt their personal daily life into their heritage experience consumption as quoted:

*“Once we got to Old Sukhothai we rented bikes...it’s kind of reminding us of Germany...It’s a lovely time biking around the park...oh..yeah..back home, we always ride our bikes to work.”*

and

*“I walk a lot in Vienna...I like to see things around me. So when you walk, you will see more life, scenery, and atmosphere.”*

The visitors also consume the experience for pure pleasure by doing their own choice of activities.

*“I wanted to spend time on my own yesterday morning ...then I found myself sitting in the temple on side the main park where I was drawing this image. (Buddha at Wat Sri Chum)*

and

*“I focused on the western part of Sukhothai today, the part that rarely gets visited. I also checked out some favourites, I like Wat Sri Sawai. During my time biking around, I finally*



*learn how to ride without hands. It was fun cycling the park over and over, touring without the handlebar.”*

The sunset and sunrise scenes at the heritage site frequently attract visitors to watch the scenes behind the temple ruins (Image 5.4). With this consumption practice, the heritage becomes a venue for moments of joy and peace as visitors share their experiences of the visit to the heritage site.

*“I was watching the sunset...I saw the shadow of Lunka Chedi\* on the lake...with the row of mountain as the background...was so beautiful...don’t know how to explain...you have to see it with your own eyes.”*

and

*“Today, we went to the ruins in Ayutthaya, which are architecturally about as Thai as one can find. It was lovely to see the crumbling ruins and watch the sun set over the elegant spires and trees.”*

and

*“I went to Wat Sri Chum in early morning to see the sunrise...yeh...I saw the photo of sunrise at this temple. It was amazingly beautiful...when the sun glistens on the building that houses the Buddha...he was hiding in the ruined temple...half of his face reveals!”*



**Image 5.4 The sunset against historic scenery**

In summary, Roaming the Ruins is an experience consumption practice led by the quest for pleasure. Visitors are attracted to the site ambience and the heritage scenery that are usually uninterpreted stimuli. They perceive the value of the heritage for its historic attributes. The heritage is



considered a venue for the visitors to engage in their everyday routine and leisure time. Roaming the ruins is a sensual interaction with which the acquisition of knowledge is not concerned.

***Liberating self*** – experience freedom



**Image 5.5 A visitor experiencing a peaceful moment in a tranquil ruined temple**

In addition to roaming the ruins, liberating self is a more sensual interaction. The heritage is perceived for its symbolic sentiment often quoted as ‘*a place to be*’. A visitor seeks self-attainment from escaping when they interact with a peaceful historic serenity often referred to as ‘*solitary confinement*’. Consuming heritage experience by liberating self could be impulsive or by chance. Indeed, visitors physically seclude themselves from the crowds and emotionally interact with the heritage space in order *to have a place for myself, soak up the atmosphere and enjoy myself in the tranquil historic setting*. The acquisition of knowledge plays a minimal role for this experience consumption practice:

*“For me I like a short one because if it’s too much then you forget it. I just like to know how old the thing is.”*

and

*“The park is so beautiful...the ruins are interesting...I feel so peaceful...I could feel a religious atmosphere. It’s so impressive but we skip the long story about Buddha.”*





**Image 5.6 A peaceful and spiritual atmosphere offers visitors escape and freedom**

The visitors interact with a peaceful atmosphere and a historic ambience (Image 5.6) rather than with specific heritage objects. They immerse themselves in the atmosphere to blend in with the peace and beauty of the attractions and to be on their own. Visitors experience pure pleasure by consuming the solitude as quoted below:

*“I am so impressed in this temple...with its serenity and nature...I was sitting there for half an hour. I left once several group of tourists arrived.”*

and

*“I have been to this temple for many times... All alone,....I like to see the view of the old town from the top of the hill. Lots of trees surround us...you can feel fresh air...and it’s very spiritual.”*

and

*“In the morning we arose at dawn and caught the first songthaew to the old city. There we rented bikes and were able to enter the historical park before the coach loads of German tourists arrived and hours before the 11 a.m. cut-off when central Thailand became too hot to breathe. It was incredibly eerie and quite magical to be alone in the ruins of a 13<sup>th</sup> century civilization in the early morning light.”*

To authenticate their heritage experience, visitors try to avoid the crowds in order to enhance the pleasurable experience of peaceful moments at the historical park.

*“We like the forest temple. There were not many people at the time. We found nice space for ourselves to rest and look at the Buddha and the view from the hill.”*



and

*“We got up early and got there around 9 a.m. The park was quiet during the time. We just went to have a rest at Wat Khao Pranomplerng...and then walk along the river.”*

A peaceful moment and the atmosphere in the extensive religious sanctuary ruins stimulate visitors to immerse their minds in the *‘looked spiritual site’*. They consume the heritage experience in a semi-spiritual way as quoted:

*“I felt so different from when I was out on the street. You passed by a crowded glistering restored temple...and entering this ruined temple. I felt a peaceful moment. Especially, I was alone at a little corner of the temple. You can imagine yourself in this place hundreds of year ago.”*

and

*“The city’s wooden houses and its entire people are long gone, and the quiet tranquillity of Sukhothai’s Historical Park is a welcome relief from the madness of Bangkok. Hired cycles are the preferred method of transport here, with few cars on the roads, which are surrounded by immaculately maintained grass and trees. Sitting within a valley around surrounded by mountains on all sides, I felt Sukhothai is a great reminder of Thailand’s abundance of space and natural beauty that are so easy to forget in the city.”*

The heritage consumption involves self-enlightenment such as meditation. Visitors *‘release the life tension’* and *‘learn to let go’* through the pleasure of the heritage sight. This consumption practice yields the experience of joy as quoted below:

*“I was sitting on the green grass...alone...in Mahathat temple. It was quite early. So, I was alone...listening to birdsongs and meditating as usual. I like to hear birdsongs.”* and *“I was just sitting alone in a remote ruin temple...cool the heat down with a breeze....being on my own is a good meditation. I felt an inner peace.”*

and

*“Sukhothai historical park has so many interesting things...good for education or an emotional-healing visit. If I have never been there, I would have never felt such emotional relief and happiness. It was a really impressive experience.”*



Further, the heritage environment and the setting offer a therapeutic value the visitors to unwind when they emotionally seclude themselves from the *chaotic world outside*. Heritage experience consumption is a 'retreat' generated by *'the geometric harmony of nature, the ruins, and the visitors' mind – to explore, escape and unwind'*. The heritage visit is valued as a source of pain-relief, self-attainment or self-refinement. The visit is a way to pursue an emotional therapy for the visitors as quoted:

*"If you have no way out for your problem, sit and relax in the old city. I think it helps."*

and

*"One could really unwind and relax while walking through the park ruins. Stalls within the quiet place were excellence."*

Liberating self is also a way in which visitors withdraw themselves from unpleasant conditions such as boredom and climate:

*"It's very relaxing just to sit in such a nicest park...no...we have done nothing...just sitting here. Our group went on biking. We just feel that we have seen enough old temples."*

and

*"I was just sitting under the shed after one round of walking through the ruins...Oh! It was so hot. I sat there for quite a while to cool me down. But I was nice...I enjoyed watching the ruins by myself."*

The peaceful atmosphere and tranquillity of the heritage space offers visitors a self-involving experience. The visitors consume heritage experience to pursue the quest for a sense of place. They would passively acquire basic knowledge about the ruins and rather enjoy having pleasant time of their own. They may not follow the demonstrators or guides and usually seclude themselves from the groups to spend more time with particular heritage objects or attractions (especially off-the-beaten tracks) that impress and interest them. The perception of authenticity for this consumption practice is associated with the experience of 'pure' ruins as quoted below:

*"We went off road and we found this temple. I think that it's the most impressive...pure and authentic."*

and



*“Going to the outskirts, outside the city walls to small woods connecting too little village houses, you could find an even calmer atmosphere, and greater space for yourself to linger around. These parts were very little visited and many quite worn down. But decay is beautiful and these well preserved and restored parts many times feel much too plastic, made for tourists. With the bicycle I had rented it was quite easy going off the worn roads... I sat down at one of these rambling temple ruin sites for a bit of meditation.”*

The undisturbed nature and the beauty of the surroundings are always a preferable condition for the heritage experience in this consumption practice. Visitors’ outlooks represent an emphasis on solitary, privacy and a personal semi-spiritual relationship amid the heritage sites.

### 5.3.2 Appreciating the Heritage

Appreciating the heritage is a consumption practice involving heritage experience such as *‘feeling the past’*, and *feeling impression’*. It is the practice by which visitors engage their minds with the heritage attractions and are led by the quest for a sense of place and the quest for nostalgia. Thus, this consumption practice is influenced by both interpreted and un-interpreted stimuli. It is a synchronization of sensual and interpretive interactions as visitors relate the place with its story and appreciate it.

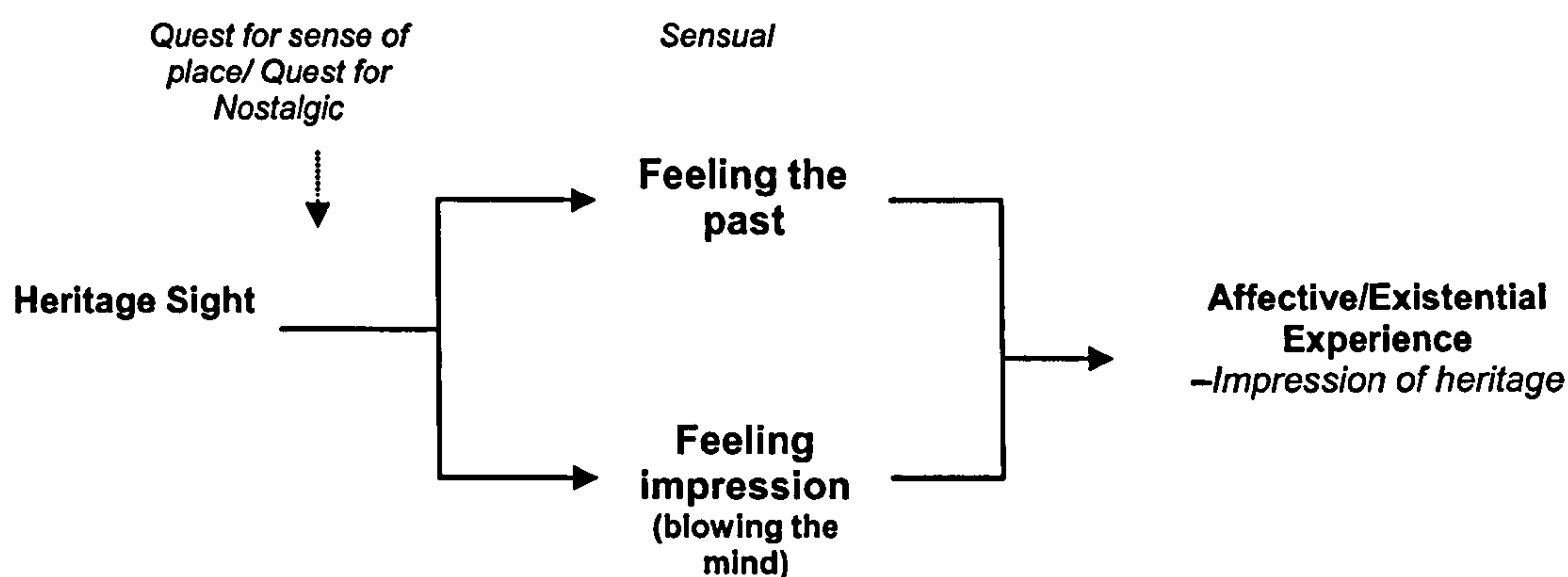
There are two related ways that visitors use for appreciating the heritage: *feeling the past* and *feeling impression*. Table 5.9 summarises the characteristics of appreciating the heritage and Figure 5.6 depicts a framework of this experience consumption practice.

**Table 5.9 Characteristics of appreciating the heritage**

<b>Forms of experience consumption practice</b>	Feeling the past – <i>taking it in/ soaking up the atmosphere</i> Feeling impression – <i>blowing the mind</i>
<b>Experiential aspect</b>	Affective/existential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quest for sense of place – <i>getting lost in time</i></li> <li>• quest for nostalgia – <i>glimpse into the glorious past</i></li> </ul>
<b>Structure of interaction</b>	Sensual (Imaginary) interaction
<b>Characteristic of visitor experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracted to the historic sentiment (<i>remains of glory</i>)/ symbolic sentiment (<i>ancient ruins, set of the scene</i>)</li> <li>• Responding to interpreted stimuli – <i>narrative and history connected</i> (feeling the past)</li> <li>• Responding to un-interpreted stimuli – <i>awe-inspiration</i> (feeling impression)</li> <li>• High self-involvement</li> <li>• Extended immersion of self in the setting (<i>escape</i>)</li> <li>• Acquisition of knowledge – <i>none contextual/ basic enquiry</i></li> <li>• Experience authentication – <i>experience heritage as it is (pure ruins)/ ruins then and now</i></li> <li>• conservation anxiety</li> </ul>
<b>Role of heritage in visitor experience</b>	Object



Figure 5.6 Framework of appreciating the heritage



### ***(1) Feeling the Past***

Feeling the past is a sensual interaction to pursue a heritage experience that involves a visitor's personal response to the heritage sight. This experience pursuit involves the practice visitors quoted - *feeling it, taking it in, and breathing it in, soaking up the atmosphere, connecting to it and even smelling the past*. It yields an impression and transformation of joy, relief, and personal connection with the heritage attractions. The visitors interact with particular heritage objects, attractions or landscape perceived for its intangible attributes – heritage sentiment:

*“For me it’s peaceful. It’s more spiritual than the church to me but spiritual in the way that...ummmm! ..also the nature around. It’s more spiritual for example I’m catholic. But not really religious. I don’t mean that I am not religious at all but not very strong. I am going to service or the priest...no never. Last year I went to Italy which is very famous for the church. So I entered the church but that doesn’t affect my religious feeling...but I just appreciate the architecture...this valuable ancient architecture... It’s old and you can smell that it’s old from the smell of wood. But this you can breathe it out also but even more I think. Very Spiritual!”*

and

*“The atmosphere is important. Sometimes, when you are in the neighbourhood of an old church with all ruins of castles...everything... It the Italy, for example, when you walk in the mountain. On the road where there are places of thousands of years old. And where people are still living... Then you feel something in the air and that what we feel in Sri Satchnalai more than in Sri Satchanalai.”*

Feeling the Past is different from Enjoying the Sight in that visitors value the heritage based on its heritage sentiment rather than heritage attributes or features and that the heritage is considered an



object of experience. This practice consider heritage place as a venue of experience for Enjoying the Sight.

*“Only the ruins are left...we can guess how great this town was. In those times, it was the spiritual centre of the Sukhothai Empire. While walking there you experience the greatness of everything.”*

and

*“Say what you will about the Burmese, but when they sacked Ayutthaya, the 400 plus year old capital of Thailand in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, they know what they were doing. I’d consider the Burmese...the sacked masters of Southeast Asia. Never mind that the Burmese and Thais are both Buddhists – statues were smashed, everyone of them, gold was shipped to Burma, and anything that could be burned down was turn to ash. It’s kind of sad walking around the once glorious Thai capital, so much destruction thanks to their neighbours. I hear to these days Thai people are still sensitive about the matter...I visited (via bicycle) all the wats that has a Khmer-style prang,, I love the prang.”*

Visitors perceive the value of the heritage for its nostalgic sentiment. The heritage is seen as the *remains of glorious past*. They relate the history of the place or attractions to the sight so that they develop sympathy towards the heritage ruins. Hence, this interaction leads the visitors to pursue an affection of the ruins through a romantic or nostalgic impression. The visitors are emotionally sent back to the remote time by the nostalgic sight of the ruins. They lose themselves in the ancient setting. Consequently, they come across a realization of some truth as they are able to distinguish differences among things.

Heritage is also perceived as *‘a field of dream’*. The visitor’s experience is sometimes associated with a nostalgic remembrance and a dream; that is, their impression experience from consuming heritage almost illuminates their mind. The sight of the heritage is stimulated by un-interpreted stimuli, and an impressive surprise is a consequence. The visitors respond to the sight by *‘feeling’ it*:

*“We decided to have a quick stroll down to the ruins...feeling the glorious past, which were mainly old ways built around 1300 and sacked by the Burmese. This turned out to be a very good idea as there were swarms of green glowing flying things around and the moon was being very bright for us. It was just light Hollywood moonlighting and felt like a dream, probably the booze.”*



In this sense, the historic or nostalgic sentiment plays an important role in the visitor experience consumption practice. The visitors also bring interpreted stimuli such as personal interest in history in to the heritage experience:

*“I don’t know how to explain how I fell about the atmosphere of the ancient town...I really like the atmosphere here...everything looks like a dream to me...you can just breathe the air of this ancient town.”*

and

*“Littered all around the city there were ageless ruins and Wats (temples) from this time, many destroyed by the Burmese before the fall of the Siam empire. It was strange to walk out of the traffic straight into the relative silence of a semi-destroyed temple, and be faced by rows upon rows of Buddha statues built into the walls. Silent sentinels watching all. I say this - many had actually had their heads stolen or removed and put into museums to prevent this - it still felt an eerily peaceful place. In Wat Phra Mahathat, a Buddha statue had been overgrown by the roots of the tree. It stood by, giving the impression that the face had emerged from within the tree”*

Feeling the Past could be stimulated by un-interpreted stimuli (i.e., storytelling, information on site, and awe-inspiration) that connect visitors to the impressive atmosphere of the heritage space. Hence, impression expression is a consequence. The visitors immerse themselves in the atmospheric heritage site to feel the past. Feeling the past is, therefore, involved with visitor immersion with the heritage.

Feeling the Past involves only minimal acquisition of knowledge because it is a sensual interaction influenced by a response of sight. The visitors sensually connect with the heritage sentiment to consume heritage experience as quoted:

*“I just sat in front of the Buddha in that big temple complex....it was just the spiritual atmosphere I felt. I had very little knowledge about Buddhism or the story of the place...But..you know... sometimes, you can have some personal connection with something in the past and you can’t tell what it is.”*

and



*“I didn’t really know much about the meaning of it.....but I have an impression that it was a place to sit down and relax. Although it was very busy outside the temple, I felt different when I got into the temple...I could feel the difference.. The temple was beautiful....it’s pure...yes. it was broken but beautiful. Buddhism is such a welcome religious...I just felt the past splendour.”*

and

*“To walk around these temples and feel it gives you an impression of how great this place must have been centuries ago.”*

The visitors perceive ‘*pureness of heritage sight*’ to be authentic experience. They sensually interact with the heritage and immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the remote past. They only acquire basic knowledge about the heritage sight. Feeling the Past is also a consumption practice in which visitors engage in an experience of nostalgic impression when they interact with a heritage attraction.

## ***(2)Blowing the Mind - Feeling Impression***

The sight heritage could ‘*blow*’ a visitor’s mind so that the visitor engages in an experience of pleasure and affection from the impressive sight of the heritage. Visitors interact with heritage objects and respond to an un-interpreted stimulus – the ‘*thrill*’, such as awe inspiration, surprise and excitement. Visitors feel the impression by a reflection or response of the sight of heritage that imparts awe-inspiration often referred to as ‘*the past splendour*’ and ‘*the grandeur of heritage*’. The experience consumption is more than just a pleasant surprise as quoted below.

*“I strolled along the park, amazed at the size and grandeur of the stone stupas. This was Ayutthaya I had expected.”*

and

*“I was angry about the Guesthouse...but when I went out and saw the temple in front of me...my god...it’s marvellous...it’s HUGE...I was so excited and forgot about the bad thing happening to me.”*

and



- Visitor 1: *“I think everything is interesting. All the Buddha statues are beautiful.”*
- Visitor 2: *“But the most impressive is Wat Mahathat. When you arrived in the front...it was ‘HUGE BUDDHA’...and WOW!!...building, chedi...so impressive”*

Feeling the Impression is inner-directed experience consumption. The visitors connect their minds to the place with a sense of excitement, fantasy and amusement.

*“I felt like I have some connection with the ancient town...felt like I had been living there before...I’m so thrilled!”*

and

*“We wound around a little back road that followed a canal and ran through the little semi-rural neighbourhoods of Sukhothai. We ended up at a very pretty ruin that looked like a chedi with stone elephants in a circle around the base. Many have been broken and defaced with time. We ooooohhh’d and aaaahhh’s for about 15 minutes, taking numerous photos, and then moved on.”*

Feeling Impression is a semi-spiritual experience in that visitors immerse and lose themselves in the spiritual and historic ambience of the heritage site.

*“This temple is very spiritual and sacred. Don’t insult it although you don’t have a faith. I went in to worship the Buddha. He is so big...I was so thrill. I said a prayer and wished for a good journey. It was going to rain...I said...please could you stop the rain because I had been longing to come here. And it didn’t rain...until before we left.”*

To feel the impression, visitors find themselves ‘in another world and another time’. The visitors immerse in the setting and prompt into an imagination. Feeling Impression is therefore imaginative experience.

*“It’s a shame because it’s so beautiful and the grave yards are amazing. I have never seen anything like that. I felt like deep down to the earth but we are in the same planet. It’s amazing but nobody was there.”*

and



*“The light was glorious on the structures; it left long shadowy figures on the grass behind their crumbling, tilted towers. “There were only few tourists. The park is beautiful... enormous trees and for me...I told you it’s like something in the past has left there....Sink deep into the atmosphere of the city, which is somehow much more intense than Ayutthaya...more like a city forgotten, much more peaceful.”*

Visitors value a heritage for its history-related spirituality rather than their religious value. They consume the sense of place through the experience of sight and smell. Moreover, visitors perceive that the ‘pure ruins’ are an important element of authentic experience as quoted below:

*“In terms of character, I think Sri Satchanalai has touched me the most so far. Especially, these two temples (Wat Chang Lom and Chedi Ched Theaw)... I was just having feeling and how big it was, the whole area there. I don’t know why when you thought, you just feel like AWE! I really like that. Feeling it’s holy. The one on the left with so many chedi and the one on the right with the elephant... I don’t know I just feeling it. When I walked through, I was just ...ahhh...I found that it’s really touching. I feel the ancient atmosphere surrounding the temple.”*

and

*‘I like a ruin that is completely broken...when you don’t really know what it was. It is fascinating to use my imagination’ and “when I walk through this ruined temple, I can smell the past”.*

Inspired by the awe-inspiring sight, the visitors can be sub-consciously ‘blown away’ as quoted as ‘it just blows my mind’. Visits authenticate their experience by the sight of ‘pure ruins’ as quoted below.

*“It’s beautiful. I am kind of like it because there are no people. It’s so quiet. Sukhothai has more old things but Sri Satchanalai is more natural. There are not many people, so you feel very refreshed when you visit the site like that and felt all energy in the ‘ancient ruins’...you just feel...ahhh..ha...fuuuu... ‘so real’. It’s beautiful and real. But it’s different for the tourists in groups around...you don’t get to...you know you are just rushing. You don’t have the same beautiful feeling. You can’t take it in...Because it’s just amazing some of things that were built. You can take it in how amazing those things are.”*

and



*“This temple just blows my mind! It looks elegant!!!...What a great structure...I cannot believe that the ancient people could build this gigantic and magnificent place. I do not think that people nowadays can ever do this...I had never understood how great it was until I stood under them. I was just looking up and amazed. I was just amazing...wonder...it’s just a wonder...How can ancient people made such things.”*

Time spent at the heritage attraction represents the self-immersion in the setting. Visitors usually avoid the rushing condition and crowded atmosphere. Serenity and a sense of place are considered the important factors for the affectionate experience.

*“I went on the temple on the mountain. I can’t remember its name. Just because I want to explore the town from the hill...But when I went up there...I felt different. I think this one is after dream of the king. It’s almost covered with forest. I can’t see the temple. But I can see the town from there. I think that older days, people can see the temple from town...look up...It must have been a holy place. I am very impressed in the way they keep this ruins in such condition. It looks so real to me.”*

and

*“I really like to watch the temple at night...lighten up temple. yes, it’s look so different. But...emmmm..how different...Fantastic?? nooo...I think it’s HOLY..yeh..holy. I was just..WOW...You can just look at from here...you don’t actually have to touch it. You can always appreciate this great thing through your eyes. This also makes you appreciate the culture and the religion. Wouldn’t it be nice if we can still have this historic thing until the next 100-200 years? ”*

The experience consumption enchants the sight of the heritage and makes visitors anxious about the well-being of the heritage as well as about the prospect of keeping it in a good condition for appreciation felt by the next generation.

It can be said that Appreciating the Heritage is a rewarding practice in that outcome of experience consumption practice encourages visitors to consume the heritage experience with a more interpretive way. For example, the pleasure and impression encourages visitors to pursue an imaginary heritage experience as quoted.



Visitor 1: *“I think the big statute (Buddha image at Wat Sri Chum) impresses me. They are very impressive...very very impressive! Also one on the mountain...especially! That was so quiet and I felt...HUH! I was trying to imagine how it could have been.”*

Visitor 2: *“I also tried but I don’t know whether my imagination was right...Then I think about that. We spent an hour there.”*

and

*“The Buddha statutes are amazingly beautiful. How did they make them and why did they make Buddha with this characteristic?”*

The visitors actively acquire new and analytical knowledge about the heritage. They discuss and interpret the conceptual knowledge in order to create an image of it in their mind. Indeed, they feel and comprehend the sight of heritage by Idealising the Past.

### 5.3.3 Idealizing the Past

Idealising the Past is an experience consumption practice by which a visitor creates a visual image in his mind through an interpretive interaction with the heritage. The visitor synchronizes the knowledge about the heritage with a ‘thought’ to get a ‘vision’ of the past. This consumption practice provides the visitor with an emotional affection, and understanding about the heritage. The heritage site, attractions and objects become an object of the visitor experience. It is led by the quest for nostalgia and the quest for heritage trails. To pursue a heritage experience, a visitor engages in an interpretive and imaginary interaction when he interacts with the heritage. The interpreted stimuli involved with an acquisition of knowledge usually facilitate the process of Idealising the Past. The knowledge visitors enquire varies from contextual to non-contextual and fact to fiction. By Idealising the Past, visitors pursue a heritage experience using two related practices *envisioning the sight* and *enchancing the past*.

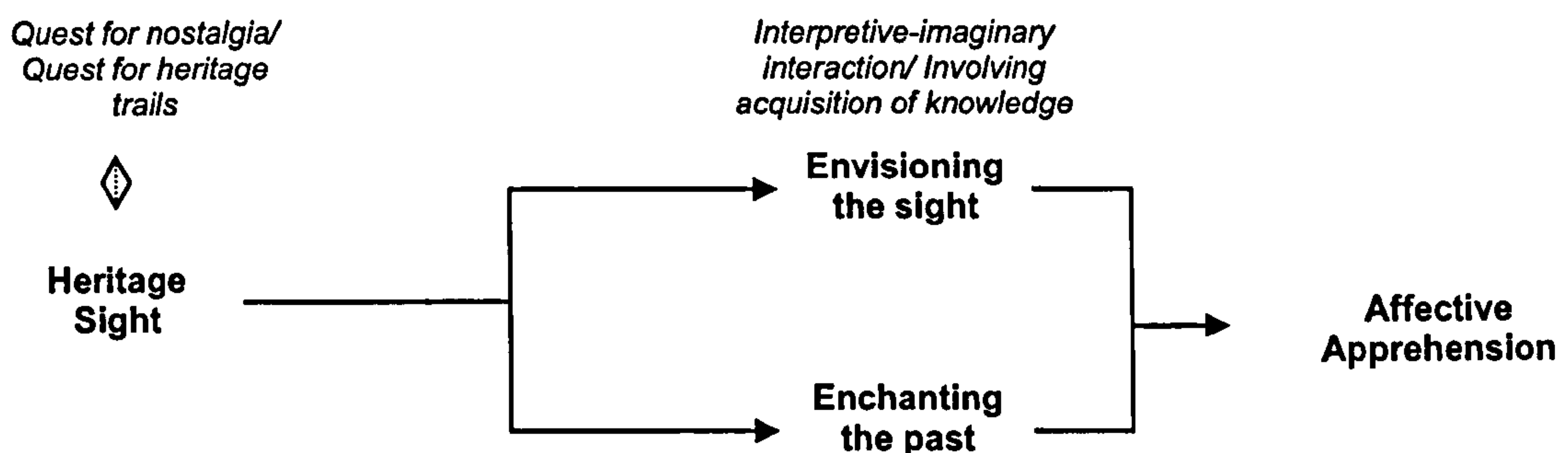
Table 5.10 summarises the characteristics of idealising the past. Figure 5.7 illustrates the framework of idealising the heritage.



**Table 5.10 Characteristics of idealising the past**

<b>Forms of experience consumption practice</b> <b>Experiential aspect</b>	Envisioning the sight Enchanting the past Affective/existential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quest for nostalgia – <i>glimpse into the glorious past/ living the past</i></li> <li>• quest for heritage trails</li> </ul>
<b>Structure of Interaction</b>	Sensual (imagery)/ interpretive interaction
<b>Characteristic of visitor experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracted to the historic sentiment (<i>remains of glory</i>)and symbolic sentiment (<i>historic treasure</i>)</li> <li>• Responding to interpreted stimuli – <i>narrative and history connected</i></li> <li>• High involvement</li> <li>• Extended immersion of self to the heritage</li> <li>• Acquisition of knowledge – <i>enquiry related to history and story of heritage – fact/fiction and contextual/none contextual</i></li> <li>• Experience authentication – <i>experience heritage as it is (pure ruins)/ ruins then and now</i></li> <li>• Behavioural norm recognition</li> <li>• High conservation ethic</li> </ul>
<b>Role of heritage In visitor experience</b>	Object

**Figure 5.7 Framework of idealising the past**



***Envisioning the Sight***

Envisioning the Sight is the way to consume heritage experience by what visitors usually describe as ‘*picturing*’ the past in minds and ‘*thinking about*’ the image of the past. They refer ‘*the past*’ as something that really happened in the history and what the ruins would have looked like in the past. This consumption practice is usually driven by quest for heritage trails and a quest for nostalgia (living the past) as quoted below.

*“You can see the old ruins...You can walk around and you can take it in. You can breathe it in and it’s my pleasure to be here and when I look at them, I try to imagine how it looked when it was first built and what were inside it. I have some imagination...images of people of that time walking around”*



Envisioning the Sight involves the integration of imagination and acquisition of knowledge. It is a way visitors use to *'bring history back to the present'*. They assimilate historical fact and contextual information with the *real images* of heritage ruins. The envisioned images of the heritage provide the visitors with better affectionate understanding about the heritage.

*"Imagination...but only with the big one at the end (Wat Sri Chum)... Also this temple (Wat Mahathat) because this one was the best ruin architecture... I was just trying to imagine how the buildings were like. What they would have been. It's difficult to imagine really because I don't know the information. I don't know that this was built by wood or the roof was like that. It was something I don't know...I like this kind of thing (ruins) because I find it quite interesting. Just need some information to bring it alive."*

and

*"It would have been nice to have more things around them. I am really interested in how people lived, what the ruins were used for. Were the people living there or were they just worshipping or which kings lived in there...have a story of it. Because nobody knows about the true story even though they live in this area."*

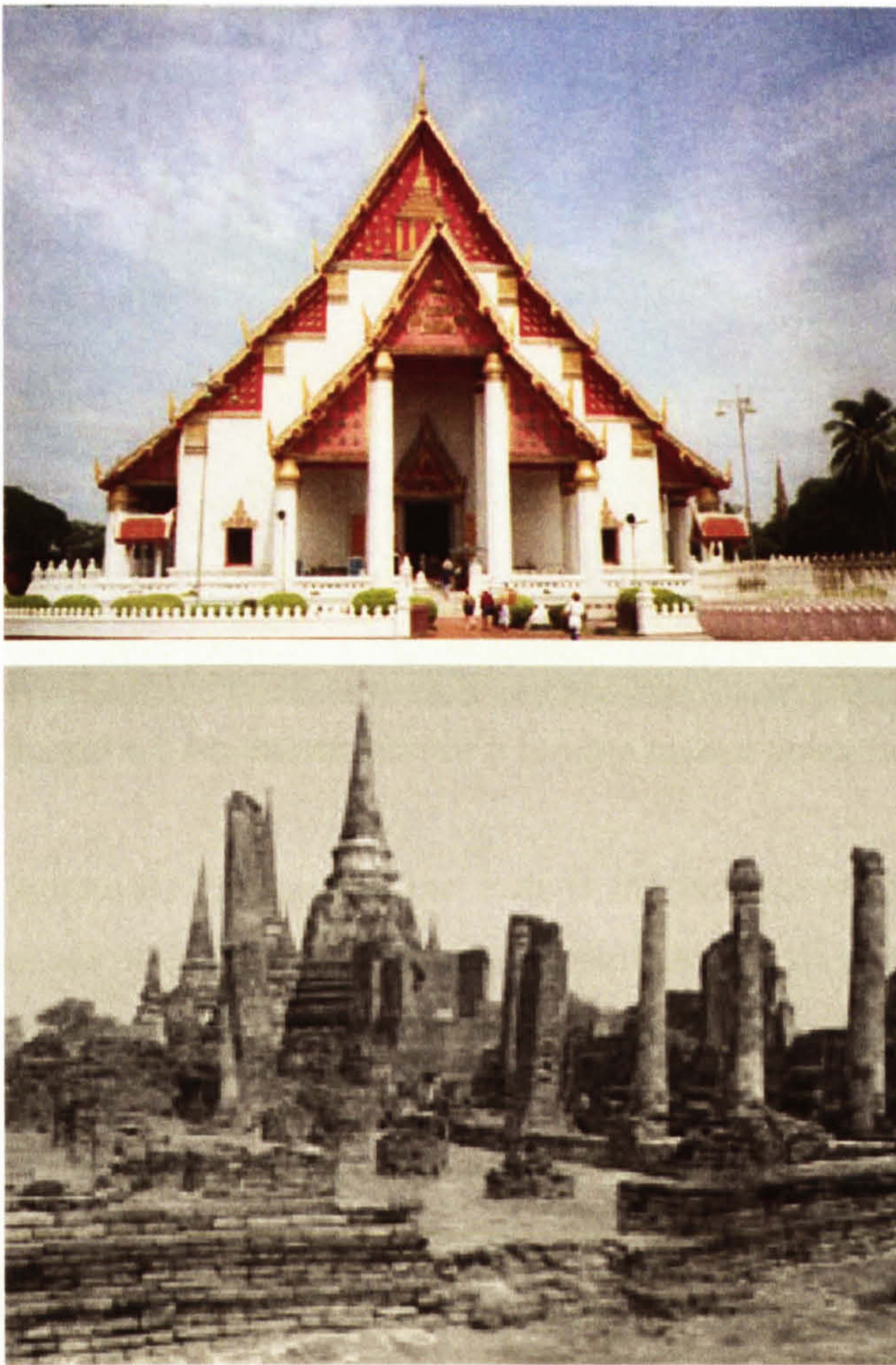
Visitors picture the scenes of ancient towns in their mind by integrating existing knowledge about the site with the sight of the tangible heritage:

*"It's a really special feeling. You are kind of...when you look at the ruins; you can imagine what it looked like so long ago. Sometimes, you just stand there and you can imagine the monks were walking around and it's old...may be the trees...surrounding outside. It makes you think...think about the history."*

and

*"Then if you forget about Sri Chum. In here...you see the buses...scooters...(imitate the engine sound)...If you are like at Sri Chum or up the mountain, there is nothing, then you can imagine more easily. When you stay up the mountain...also the same... It's just different feeling although there are a lot less out there. And it is also nice when you see the monks in the orange robes. I don't know whether they dressed the same way six or seven hundred years ago. So it must have looked the same then."*

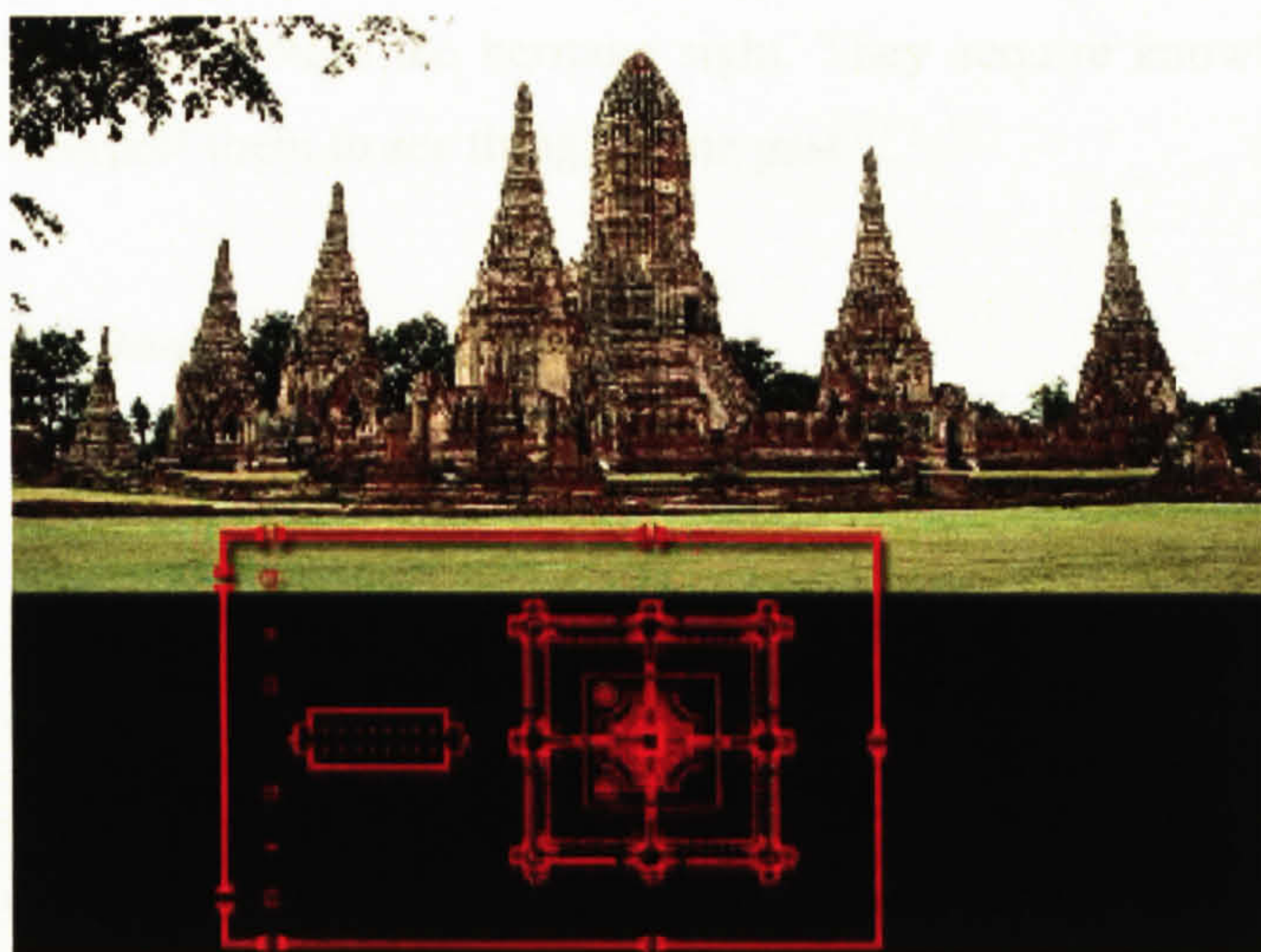




**Image 5.7** Picturing the past ‘then’ and ‘now’ used by visitors to idealize the past

Acquisition of knowledge plays an important role for Envisioning the Past. Visitors use 3D books containing maps of the ancient town and illustrated images of historic ruins in the past to get a picture of the past. This consumption practice also involves knowledge such as object specification, maps, visual aids (i.e., transparency images, layouts of temple ruins) that facilitate visitors to envision the image of the past in their minds as illustrated in Image 5.8.





**Image 5.8 An illustration of a temple layout used for object specification**

Moreover, Envisioning the Past is the practice visitors perform with a sense of direction and imagination relevant to the fact about heritage sites. Visitors perceive that the image of ‘now and then’ authenticate the heritage experience as quoted.

*“I was thinking...how many people would have lived there. It would have been a really nice community. I’m kind of seeing how they lived such beautiful and peaceful life...I went to the national museum in Bangkok...and saw many images. And I can imagine that. When I saw the temples, I could imagine that.*

and

*“I can imagine the story about fighting. Yeh...because I have known the story... I read from the guidebook.”*

and

*“On the columns, I saw so many hand prints...I think that they must have been hands of our ancestors. They amazed me. They must have made the columns by hands. I did put my hand on some of those handprints. I read from a book...it said our ancestors had bigger bodies than ours...So, I wanted to figure out how big their hands were.”*

Envisioning the Past would evoke a sub-conscious feeling of *being there* (the pastime) through imagination. It would also evoke the nostalgic impulse through thinking or feeling a sense of place. When visitors are in the place where they know what happened in the past, they develop images of



the past through the heritage sight. They acquire knowledge related to objects of their sight and interpret them to see things in the past.

### *Enchanting the Past*

Enchanting the Past is the way in which visitors form a mental image 'to think of things of the past'. This form of heritage experience consumption is usually driven by a quest for nostalgia and a quest for a sense of place. Enchanting the Past means re-experience or re-lives the past by interpreting the heritage sight through non-contextual and fictional information. Stories written and told about the heritage ruins (i.e., folklore tales, historical literature, stories of the golden days) are often used to stimulate images of the heritage that visitors believe to be real as quoted below:

*"When I was sitting in the sightseeing tram going around Sukhothai historical park...it was something written on the so-called Ramkamheand Inscription came up to my mind...what it ...This Muang Sukhothai is good. In the reign of King Ram Kamheang, this land is thriving. In the water, there are fish, in the field there is rice. The ruler does not levy a tax from people who lead their oxen to trade and riding their houses to sell. Whoever wants to trade in horses, so trade. Whoever wants to trade in silver or gold, so trade. People are all smiling."*

and

*"Ah...Buddha head in the tree makes me feel ... all things are always changed. Ayutthaya was a very very exciting town and very big. But now it's dead. The story of Ayutthaya is similar to a story of Japan 1000 years ago. You can never hold your power forever. This is what I feel when I see Ayutthaya."*

Visitors integrate the story of the site with the heritage sight to pursue an affective comprehension of the heritage. Image 5.9 illustrates an example of the sight of heritage that enables visitors to live up and idealise the past.

*"This enchants my imagination of the glorious days of the former capital of the Kingdom of Thailand. Then I was thinking of the glittery beauty of Wat Prakeaw (The Royal temple in Bangkok). I believe that all temples in the past of Sukhothai kingdom must have been equally glittery and beautiful...well it is just the matter of time...700 hundred years...erodes the beauty of them. I wish the elegant beauty and glory of these ruins could turn back...but I know it's impossible."*





**Image 5.9 A sight of heritage that enchants visitors' imagination of the past**

The consumption practice is driven by the quest for a sense of place and the quest for nostalgia. Enchanting the Past involves a synthesis of the sense relevant with the sight integrated with the stories or legends of *'the golden days'* or *'glorious past'* of the historic ruins. Hence, historical fiction could play an important role to enhance the enchanted past. Visitors perceive that the sight of *pure ruins* (Image 5.10) authenticate the heritage experience as quoted below:

*"Sometimes...it is hard to presume what happened here and there...but I like the way it's broken...just leave it like that...it's fun to imagine...I'm kind of thinking of how it would have been in the past. The town might have been a magical place."*

and

*"I like the real Buddha images. They are very interesting for me. I like the one that is just brick and just falling over and losing their shapes...not the perfect one. I thought it was interesting. I have never seen something like that. It's like everything is ruin. It makes me have some good imagination."*

Visitors perceive the heritage value for its historical sentiment related to the stories of the place or history fiction. They anticipate the quest for a sense of place to pursue an imaginary and interpretive heritage experience. This experience consumption is the link between the sight and the stories of the heritage. It is the way visitors *'bring the ruins to life'*.

*"If you like the Indiana Jones movies, you will feel at home immediately in this massive ruined city. Yes...it could have been the decor for one of the movies. The ruins are very*



*impressive and with some imagination, it give you a good impression of how the city looked like in the past...just marvellous.”*

The tranquil heritage ambience could be an important factor that initiates visitors’ engagement with the intangible heritage (i.e., heritage stories). Visitors create the image of the past in their minds as if they are sent back the remote time through the writer’s trails.

*“I am impressed I think that that the temple was very beautiful in the past. Now it’s already beautiful even though it’s ruined. I have read a book about Ayutthaya. It was written by someone who visited Ayutthaya in that period. And I can imagine how beautiful it was. Someone said it could be 400 times more beautiful than it is nowadays. I really want to see it...see how these temples looked like.”*



**Image 5.10 A ruin of which a visitor quoted ‘I like the way it’s broken’**

The quest for nostalgia combined with the quest for a sense of place influences a visitor’s immersion with the place. It makes him to ‘sink deep’ into the historic setting and the nostalgic sight of the ruins.

*“Well...we have something different from these temple ruins...but we can feel the minds of the ancient people.”*

and

*“I went on the temple on the mountain. I can’t remember its name. Just because I wanted to explore the town from the hill... But when I went up there...I felt different. I think this one*



*was built from a dream of a king. It's almost covered with forest. I can't see the temple. But I could see the town from there. I think that older days, people can see the temple from town...looking up...It must have been a holy place."*

Enchanting the Past also involves the search for literary place. Visitors are attracted by the historical literature featuring the stories that took place at the heritage sites. They interpret the stories to fantasize the past in their minds.

In summary, Idealising the Past is stimulated by the acquisition of knowledge and interpreted stimuli. The information enquired is selected depending on the impression yielded by the objects the visitors interact with. The experience outcome may lead visitors to consume the heritage experience using a more intellectual consumption practice as quoted below:

*"In Christian countries, you may understand things by the images of all the stain glass windows. It seems like the bible that you are familiar with. May be they just have the most important one that tell the ultimate aim at the far end. I am sure that there may be a lot of things that are related to the story of Buddha which we are not familiar with...So, it's a thrill for me and it's very interesting to find out. I ask this questions when I am here...like seeing the building and then some questions are raised."*

The visitor develops an involvement with the heritage overtime to search for the knowledge and understanding about the heritage sight. Indeed, the heritage experience consumed by Idealising the Past helps the visitors to contextualise the analytical knowledge of heritage.

#### **5.3.4 Doing the Park**

Doing the Park is an experience consumption practice led by the quest for pleasure. It represents the way which visitors use to pursue leisure and entertainment through a visit with the purposes of '*going there and seeing*', and '*having fun*'. The heritage could be perceived as both an object and a venue of experience for an interpersonal and bodily experience. Heritage value is perceived for its *heritage attributes* in terms of tourist attraction and cultural icons. Visitors interact with the heritage while interacting with others such as demonstrators and group members for social aspects. Through this consumption practice they participate in interpersonal actions. The acquisition of knowledge has a minor role for this practice since visitors only passively acquire the basic knowledge about the heritage. By Doing the Park, visitors pursue heritage experience by *glancing over the heritage* and *hanging out*.

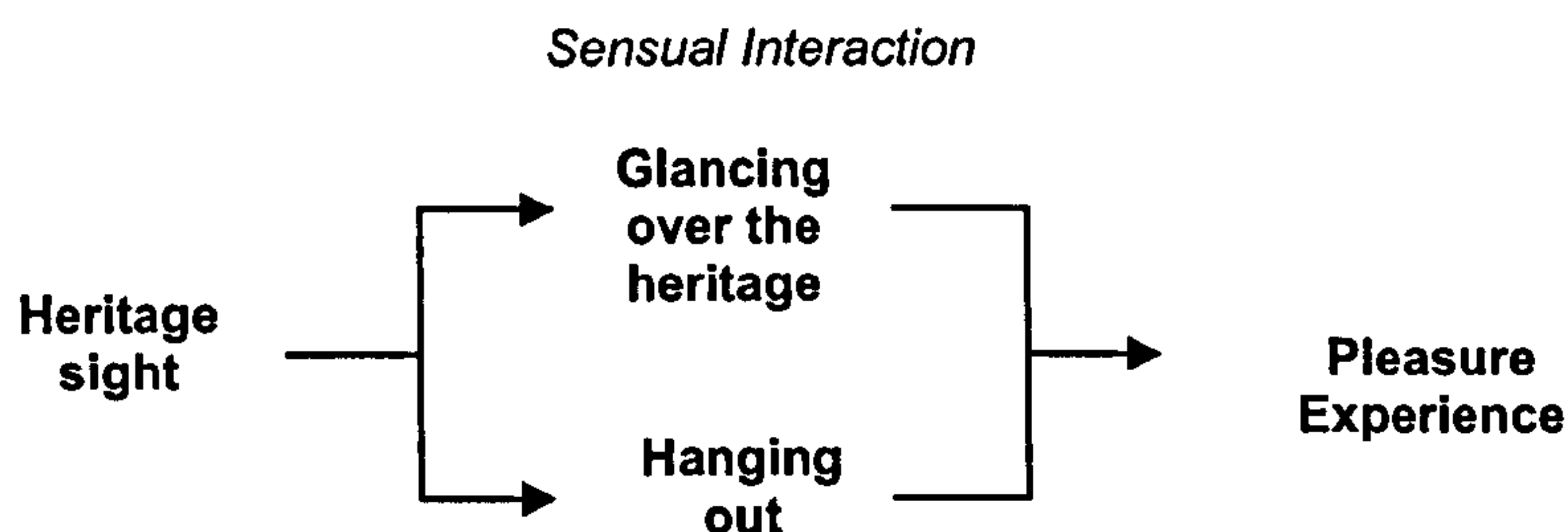


Table 5.11 summarises the characteristics of doing the park. Figure 5.8 illustrates the framework of doing the park

Table 5.11 Characteristic of doing the park

<b>Forms of experience</b>	Glancing over the heritage – <i>having a look</i>
<b>consumption practice</b>	Hanging out – <i>fiesta, friendship reunion</i>
<b>Experiential aspect</b>	Pleasure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quest for pleasure – <i>exotic disclosure (fantasy) / hanging out (fun)</i></li> <li>• quest for culture – <i>cultural observation</i></li> </ul>
<b>Structure of interaction</b>	Sensual interaction
<b>Characteristic of visitor experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracted to the historic attributes (<i>scenic park, tourist attraction</i>), cultural value (<i>cultural icon</i>)</li> <li>• Responding to un-interpreted stimuli</li> <li>• Low involvement with heritage/ High intra-personal involvement (Communal contact)</li> <li>• Acquisition of knowledge– <i>enquiry related to history and story of heritage – fact/fiction and contextual/none contextual</i></li> <li>• Experience authentication –<i>hedonic spectacles</i></li> <li>• Behavioural norms usually neglected</li> <li>• Conservation ethic usually unconcerned</li> </ul>
<b>Role of heritage in visitor experience</b>	Object – <i>Glancing over the heritage</i> Venue (meeting place) – <i>Hanging out</i>

Figure 5.8 Framework of doing the park



**Glancing over the heritage**

Glancing over the Heritage is a practice quoted by visitors as *gazing, surveying the heritage, watching the ruins or getting a glimpse of Thailand* for pleasure. It represents a series of brief heritage encounters.

*“We want to survey the old Thailand to see what Thai culture is like.”*

and

*“We want to see the roots of Thai culture.”*

Visitors glance over the heritage to get some idea about Thai culture that the heritage represents. The heritage site is seen as ‘a *must go place*’ since the heritage value is based on its cultural icon



and symbol. The visitors want to have a look at what represents local culture. They often stop to glance over activities participated by local people such as fishing and selling food.

This is a sensual interaction and a low involvement activity. Visitors seek to have a heritage experience through a glimpse of something related to the old age. The heritage could be seen as *'just a piece of art'*. They glance over the beautiful objects and scenery of heritage sites as quoted below:

*"For me it's really a piece of art when we see what was very interesting here and Ayutthaya too. We went to see the ruins because first we saw the temples...I mean new temples. We have seen some temples in Bangkok. They were always painted. Very shiny. So we felt like seeing temples...that are a little bit warned out with old age."*

and

*"The ruins are fantastic...real tomb raider stuff...we took far more many images"*

The visitors *'take a look'* at the ruins and spectacular local events for the sake of visiting it or for *'a good day out'*. The heritage is not the main interest. They seek to have good fun in a tourist attraction.

*"It was very nice inside the wat...but I can't stay 10 hours there. To look at it then walk around...that's okay."*

and

*"Next, we briefly stopped by a neglected-looking temple and "Buddha foot," set in the middle of a small lake. We quickly moved on to the Big Buddha."*

Visitors usually briefly take a look at spectacular, iconic or symbolic attractions such as the Buddha's head at the famous Wat Mahathat in Ayutthaya, the seated Buddha at Wat Sri Chum in Sukhothai and elephant sculptures at Wat Chalong in Sri Satchnalai. For the visitors, these attractions are remarkable regarding their spectacles, reputation, and significance as main attractions.

*"We rented bikes to see around. We were just biking around and stopping to have a look at some main temples."*



and

*“Sukhothai was nice because of the ponds. I like them so much. I think ruins look really...really nice with the ponds. The atmosphere was very nice...I was just biking and looking around.”*

and

*“The trip was fine because we didn’t have a high expectation. We see what we should see.”*

Un-interpreted stimuli such as the sight of site ambience and cultural spectacles attract visitors for ‘good views’. Indeed, the sight of heritage is a ‘*hedonic spectacle*’ for them. The visitors usually recognise the beauty of ruins and setting without the knowledge about the heritage objects as evident in the following statements:

*“I don’t know what it is...but the monument is beautiful...Oh! That’s why I’m taking this image.”*

and

*“I have read something about Sukhothai before but I must admit that I only know that Sukhothai was the first capital of Thailand...it’s just so beautiful. Good for photos.”*

The visitors seek to ‘*glance over*’ the heritage when they interact with it for the first time; however, some constraints such as climate conditions and insufficient information may drive visitors to experience the heritage by ‘*doing the park*’. In this case, glancing over the heritage is perceived to be the best activity to consume the heritage experience that does not require any background knowledge.

For doing the park, the intensity of interaction with the heritage is lower than that of other experience consumption practices. The acquisition of knowledge is not important for visitors because they aim for enjoyment from ‘*a good day out*’ and seek to achieve ‘*a leisure visit*’. The visitors see whatever the heritage sites could offer them as a tourist attraction. Therefore, sightseeing and looking around are main activities. However, the basic level of information could assist visitors to capture brief knowledge about the heritage.



*“I would explain about what I can say. There are many technical terms about history and arts that are hard to understand. But we just have sightseeing...just looking around and sometimes read information.”*

and

*“Generally we don’t go to information centre..No! We always have guidebooks and maps. Sometimes you can find a small book or postcard at the entrance. Usually, it’s enough. We are not here to read all the literature. (laughing)...just to see, so just to have some small information, small book like this is enough.”*

and

*“When you go to a tourist attraction like this, sometimes we want to relax. We are on a leisure trip. We don’t want to read something very long and hard to understand. I just have a book with me. There is some precise explanation, which I think is easy to understand, not complicated. I think the book is quite enjoyable. I think this book helps me to understand more when I see the ruins. In the book I would see the line that link to ruins and explain what they are,..This place use to be..and what happened there. A little bit of history...for me it makes ruins very understandable.”*

Visitors may just do the park because they are not interested in the heritage, as can be seen in this statement: *‘the temples are somewhat interesting but we are not into it’*. Doing the Park is a series of a brief encounters; walking around the heritage attractions and taking photographs of the spectacular heritage objects for pleasure. Hence, minimal conceptual knowledge is passively required. Visitors require precise information that is accessible and easy to understand. They prefer to be told of the information. Any available sources of information would be satisfied since the information is of a minor requirement and the goal of the heritage experience at the moment of the interaction is for pleasure.

### ***Hanging Out***

A visitor pursues a pleasurable heritage experience by hanging out with others. He socialises for what often quoted as a *‘fiesta’*. Hanging Out involves practices such as a friendship reunion, meeting new friends and picnic. The heritage is perceived as a tourist attraction and seen as a meeting place. In this sense, the heritage attraction becomes a venue for a pleasurable experience. Image 5.8 illustrates a picnic scene littering around a historical park.





**Image 5.11 A picnic scene appears everywhere in a heritage site**

A place becomes a venue for a friendship reunion as well as for sightseeing when visitors perceive the heritage site as a place to be proud of their identity and presented to visiting friends; hence, the heritage is a venue for a friendship reunion as Visitors may just do the park because they are not interested in the heritage, as can be seen in this statement: *‘the temples are somewhat interesting but we are not into it’*. In this sense, the heritage attraction becomes a venue for a pleasurable experience. Image 5.8 illustrates a picnic scene littering around a historical park as stated below:

*“My friends are in town to visit me. I think that it would be nice to just show them around so that they can see how beautiful my hometown is and maybe we can talk to some farang (foreigners)”*

Visitors meet on site and share a good time during the onsite visit. They easily form a group when they are resting somewhere on site or when they meet up on tour to share general experience:

*“We met some other tourists who shared Tuk Tuk with us when we visited the ruins at night. We really had good time. It was so much fun when we rode the Tuk Tuk around the park. The best time we had in this trip was when we get to know new people.”*

and

*“We met most people from the guesthouses around the site. Once in a while we met and talked.”*



Hanging Out shows high group cohesion. The visitors hang out with other visitors (especially when they meet people from other countries who speak the same languages) to exchange general information such as getting there are around and a future plan for another tourist destination.

Both consumption practices of Doing the Park involve the minimal knowledge enquiries because visitors search to consume a pleasure experience as quoted.

*“We had a local guide. He was informative telling us all about the Enlightened Buddha. Unfortunately, I don't think I retained more than 25% of the information he shared with us. I found it was a little bit boring.”*

and

*“Only precise information is ok...we are more enjoying the scenery of the park.”*

and

*“I am kind of want to see things in their beauty. I feel that they are beautiful. I am so happy just to see them. Well, I am actually not so into the details of the objects.”*

Visitors would only acquire very precise information about the heritage. Too much information could distract them from interacting with the heritage site since they prefer ‘just pleasurable refinement’.

Photographing that represents the visit’s motive, *remembering me here*, is a normal activity related to Doing the Park. The reproduction of the sight in this way is associated with visitors’ intention to bond their relationships with each other and to share the sight as quoted below:

*“...to remember that I visited the park with my friends”*

and

*“I didn't expect that it would be this big...let's take photos of everyone with everyone...since we've been here together”.*



Photography is done at the leisure basis such as groups posing in front of iconic or spectacular attractions or snapshots of group members although later they may not recognise where the places are.

The *remembering me here* aspect of photographing is usually irrelevant to the heritage sight in that the convention of framing the photographs is associated with fun and play. Careless about behavioural norms, they may act funnily in front of religious statues since they are not very much concerned about acceptable behaviour while visiting such attraction. The posture can be playful and irrelevant to the heritage value and usually inappropriate (image 5.12). Visitors also have a pleasurable time during their visit when they see things that are different from their everyday life. However, they may participate in inappropriate activities; for example, the imitation of Buddha postures or replacement of the head of headless Buddha statues.



**Image 5.12 A visitor with a headless Buddha statue**

Doing the Park conceptualised in this study is a consumption practice visitors use to consume pleasure and aesthetic experiences. Individuals may choose to experience the heritage this way due to many reasons; for example, time constraint, lack of interest in heritage objects and attractions, lack of knowledge, and tiredness. Eventually, it may dilute preserved values and images of culture heritage when visitors are concerned about behavioural norms or do not appreciate the value of culture.



### 5.3.5 Exploring the Heritage

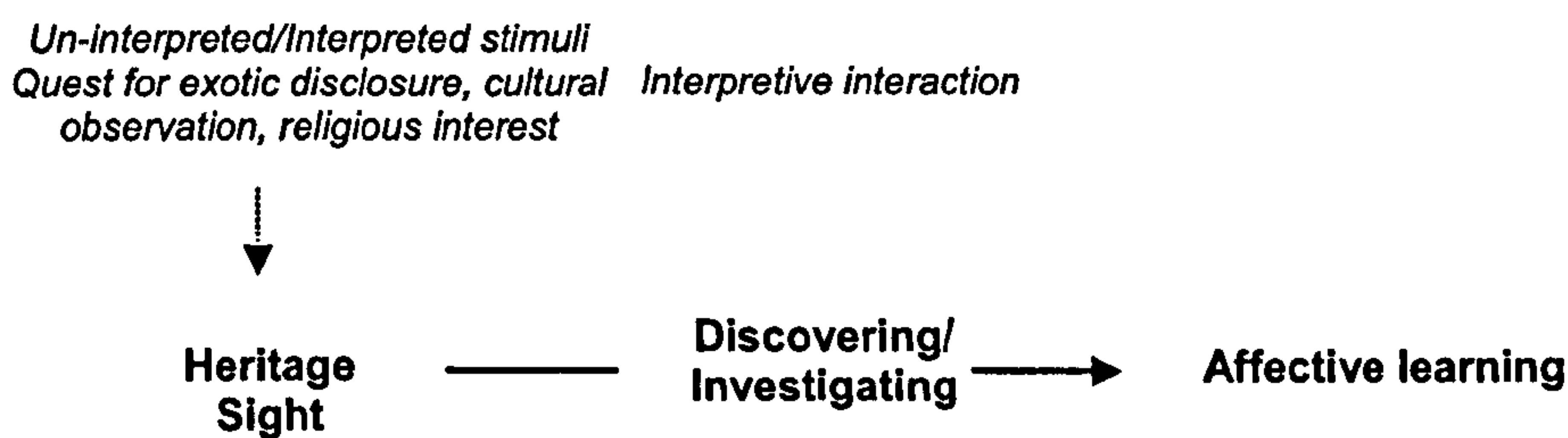
Exploring the Heritage is an experience consumption practice involving an interpretive and sensual interaction a visitor uses to consume pleasure and learning experience. It represents ‘*seeing and learning*’. Individuals pursue a heritage experience to explore and specify the heritage objects and attractions. Exploring the Heritage involves visitors’ direct interaction with heritage objects that involves *discovering or investigating* ruins.

Table 5.12 summarises the characteristics of exploring the heritage and Figure 5.10 depicts the framework of exploring the heritage.

**Table 5.12 Characteristics of exploring the heritage**

<b>Forms of experience consumption practice</b>	Discovering or investigating
<b>Experiential aspect</b>	Instrumental/pleasure (affective learning) - <i>edutainment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quest for pleasure – <i>exotic disclosure</i></li> <li>• quest for culture – <i>cultural observation</i></li> <li>• quest for religion – <i>religious interest</i></li> </ul>
<b>Structure of Interaction</b>	Interpretive interaction
<b>Characteristic of visitor experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracted to the cultural value (<i>cultural icon</i>), religious value (<i>religious symbol</i>), symbolic sentiment (<i>exotic ruins</i>)</li> <li>• Responding to both interpreted and un-interpreted stimuli</li> <li>• Acquisition of knowledge – open to various content of enquiry with basic level</li> <li>• Experience authentication – <i>experience heritage then and now</i></li> <li>• Conservation moral and behavioural norms could be neglected</li> </ul>
<b>Roles of heritage in visitor experience</b>	Object

**Figure 5.9 Framework of exploring the heritage**



Heritage experience is perceived to be exotic and adventurous. Hence, it is an experience of discovery and an expansion of a life experience in that visitors do something that they may not do in their everyday life when they visit heritage sites. This consumption practice is led by various experiential aspects including the Quest for Cultural Observation, the Quest for Religious Interest, the Quest for Sense of Place, and the Quest for Exotic Disclosure. The individuals usually interact with attractions they perceive to be a desired destination and an interesting attraction. Further, a heritage attraction is considered an object of experience. Visitors seek to experience leisure time



and fun while gaining some knowledge about history and culture related to the heritage. Pleasure and learning are central to this experience consumption practice as quoted below:

*“Ayutthaya is full of history and there are plenty of fascinating places to see....It's the kind of place where you can just wander around, and suddenly you stumble on a fantastic ruined temple (a ruined wat)...generally we had a really good time on our voyage of discovery. Not all of the temples are totally ruined - there are quite a few restored ones with great, majestic golden statues of the Buddha inside. Very tranquil.”*

and

*“We explored the Sukhothai Historical Park on our bicycles. We went and visited ruins and temples that dated back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. It was fun to explore...it was like a treasure hunt. They gave us a map and brochure which contained information about the important wats and we could go and search for all the different ruins.”*

Learning experience involves ‘knowing something new’. A pleasurable experience involves ‘having fun and having an adventurous heritage visit’. The perceived value of the heritage is based on its cultural value and heritage attributes that give a visitor an exotic experience as quoted below:

*“The temple area is so big that we need to rent bikes to get to see some of the temples...I think 8 of them. We explore the city for one day. Enjoy left-hand drive and we discovered that hundreds of Buddha statues in different positions and made of different materials...as they are plaster, stone, bronze and gold.”*

and

*“This temple (Wat Sri Sawai) is the most interesting temples in the park. I would recommend you to go. It's so interesting because the temple was in used from Hindu to Buddhism...it looked spiritual and was exciting to explore.”*

Exploring the Heritage is a consumption practice that yields a pleasurable experience while visitors are seeking knowledge. The visitors also aim to explore attraction due to its uniqueness. They pay attention to all artefacts and sculptures around the heritage. They usually read guidebooks or information along once they find some interesting objects. For example, on the way to Wat Sapanhin, a visitor suggested the group to stop at a secluded temple ruin which is usually ignored. Based on individual's interest, they had a reason to visit as quoted below.



- Visitor 1: *“I have no idea about this temple but I think that the chedi has never been restored. I like the stucco around the top...it looks like lotus. I still can see the colour. I think I like this one the most.”*
- Visitor 2: *“The Chedi is beautiful.”*
- Visitor 1: *“Oh...look at the floor! It’s really old I think.”*
- Visitor 3 touched it and said, *“Yes! It’s made of Granite.”*

Visitors capture basic knowledge about the heritage such as how Thai people call temples “wat” and conceptual knowledge such as the reasons ancient people made the heritage. They also seek basic information about the architecture and knowledge about history related to the attractions which could be from both contextualised sources such as guidebook or brochures and informing by someone (non-contextualized sources) as quoted:

*“We hired bicycles to explore the park the highlights of the park are the ruins of Wat Mahathat, the most important temple complex. We learn that the old city is the 13th century when this kingdom flourished. It was the first Thai capital. We just read our guidebooks and got a little bit of knowledge from the tourist information office. I think it’s enough. It was a good experience.”*

and

*“In Wat Sri Sawai, I found it interesting...It used to be a Hindu temple...then it was transformed into Buddhist temple. The structure of the Stupa is different from others. I found in a book it was an influence of the Khmer.”*

Visitors acquire some knowledge to satisfy their curiosity. They recognise the significance of places that could provide them with some ‘points of view’ about the heritage sites. The questions raised by visitors include ‘what it was’, ‘what it is’ or ‘what is in there’.

Visitors investigate the heritage because they have heard about it. Their existing knowledge about the site draws them to experience the heritage by discovering it as quoted on the excavation site of an ancient tomb and Buddha statue ruin:

*“I have known that ancient people in this town were Buddhists. They believe in reincarnation but why did they buried dead body? This is quite interesting because I think that this place could have been a community whose people were not Buddhist...I’m thrilled. Just to discovering another new thing.”*



and

*"I have heard that when Buddhists build religious statues, they put some stuff in there. I want to see what they put in there. It's really interesting. Why did they have to put that stuff in?"*

The spiritual attributes of the ruins drive the visitors to experience *fantasy* and *fun*. Exploring the Heritage involves the quest for adventurous trails as quoted below:

*"I found a passageway into the wall that was less than 5 by 2 feet. The place looks mysterious. I walked in a few feet, turned the corner...just want see what it's like in there, and then got creeper and ran back out. It's sort of fun and adventurous"*

The heritage site could be perceived as an ancient playground based on its heritage attributes. Visitors participate in activities such as climbing the height of ancient ruins and investigating mysterious ruined buildings. There are some particular historic monuments where people are allowed to do such activities. Nevertheless, these activities may cause some problems because visitors sometimes neglect proper behavioural norms:

*"These stupas were probably the most spectacular ruins in Ayutthaya. Wat Pra Sri Sanpetch is now a large park, surrounded by numerous trees, and thick and flowing grass...We have almost 2 hours to climb among the ruins here. The group took off in all direction as if we were kids who had just stumbled upon an ancient playground."*

Beside the un-interpreted stimuli derived from awe-inspiration, knowledge about the heritage could make visitors seek to experience *with their own eyes*. Visitors could be attracted to the myth or the legend of the historical ruins. These heritage attributes encourage them to pursue an adventurous experience. The heritage becomes visitors' interesting sight to explore and discover with an expectation of a fantasy and adventurous outcome.

*"Go there to prove the legendary myth of the speaking Buddha...I discovered the truth about it."*

and



*“The demonstrator said that there is a naga releasing a head of human on the prang...It look amazing and mysterious. I didn’t know which one...I was trying to find it...Here it is. Discovering cool stuff”*

and

*“I have a chance to visit Wat Ratchaburana. As I have heard that they buried king’s uncountable- valued treasure in the prang, I want to see where it was. Well, we didn’t see anything. Some was stolen and some was safely kept in the national museum...mmm...it was quite exciting to climb up and down the steep steps. I saw a wall mural. It could have been beautiful, if it were still in a perfect condition.”*

Exploring the Heritage also involves embodied interactions with particular heritage objects that stimulate visitors’ interests. The experience focuses on the specification of the objects including age, size, scale, position, shape, design, texture and features visitors interpret the heritage through some basic to moderate-level and factual information. They investigate the heritage using several methods: application interface or touching to feel and see how; olfactory – smelling; graphical or image method – drawing and sketching; layout of the ruins - position mapping or framing of the ruins layout; and filing the shape – entail craftsmanship. They make sense and find the meaning of heritage objects or attractions to satisfy their curiosity towards the ruins.

*“When I sketch this...I see things in details. You can look closer and how beautiful the structure is.”*

and

*“I think that this Buddha state is a masterpiece of Buddhist art...I have heard that the architecture is something called...laksana\* of a great man...”*

To investigate the heritage, visitors apply an aesthetic domain during the investigation by sketching and drawing images of heritage objects of their interest.

Visitor experience could be led by interpreted stimuli such as acquired knowledge when a visitor interacts with the heritage. The knowledge about the techniques and materials that ancient people used for building the temples that the visitor discussed with demonstrators encourages the visitor to explore the heritage objects by a ‘virtual hand touch’:



*“In the story...it’s said that the city wall is gigantic...assembled by big pieces of laterites...over 10 meters tall...please could you stand in front of the wall. I want to take the photo...I want to compare how big it is comparing to our size. I did touch it (the column) but very tenderly...just because I wanted to know how hard it is and what it was made from. ”*

and

*“The one we saw was very old...Wat Pra Pai Luang. That was nice because you could see how they made the statue...the brick first right and then the cement.”*

Individuals also specify the heritage using a sensual interaction. They integrate imagination with the interpretive information to produce knowledge from heritage experience.

*“From the hill temple (Wat Sapanhin)...I looked down to the town and I made a map of the ancient town in my mind....I could see the picture of the town in history.”*

This practice involves the quest for cultural observation and religious interest. Exploring the Heritage by discovering is a way to experience life, culture or architecture of others. The heritage experience consumption could be a moment visitors discover the truth about what they may not have known before. Visitors interact with both heritage and its environment. While consuming a pleasure visit, visitors can learn from their sight. Indeed, visitor experience provides the visitors an understanding of culture and ways of life.

To experience the heritage this way, visitors open up their minds to all opportunities to learn, as a novelty, traditions or live performances that provide a virtual sight of living heritage and as a novelty. However, they may only seek basic knowledge. Indeed, Exploring the Heritage is different from Comprehending the Heritage in terms of the acquisition of knowledge. The visitors usually acquire non-contextual information for heritage interpretation as quoted below:

*“I didn’t expect too much about a lot of things but I discovered a lot of things when I was there. As I told you that I don’t have a lot of background about the Thai history and the Thai cultures...with little information someone told me...when I see...I understood...well...not in a theoretical ways but I was looking at it like...Buddha and all places and then I started to understand something.”*



Visitors may have little knowledge about the heritage, as it is something new to their life or something they are not familiar with. Exploring the Heritage can also be a pleasant surprise combined with a learning opportunity for the visitors because an aspect of the experience involves an exotic disclosure as quoted below:

*“( )...Archaeological things are interesting...also the culture, the tropical Asian style like that..urr..yes! Chedi! It's not European. You have the feeling about the culture. You have the feeling that you are in Asia. We fly over the continent to see Asia. So now we want to see Asia...and also because of the Buddha images...statues. I have been to India and Turkey and I have seen Hindu temples, Mosque, and Churches because we are in Europe. So, we have seen a lot of them. We have been around Europe...always churches...churches and churches I have seen. This is what we expect to see...to discover Asia.”*

and

*“I discover such world wonder stuff. How did they build such big dyke when they didn't have any machine like we have these days? The ancient irrigation system is brilliant. It amazed me. I have not seen such things anywhere in our country, Thailand.”*

The great structure of the historic ruins is an un-interpreted stimulus that rewards visitors to become more enthusiastic to learn about the heritage sight. They begin to investigate the heritage as illustrated below.

*“Sometimes, you can just really want to walk around experiencing that and you feel like...wow...this is really nice...When I first came and I was like WOW this is incredible. This is just so different. This is something completely different. It's WOW! It's incredible. I am sure that there may be a lot of things that are related to the story of Buddha, which we are not familiar with. So, it's a thrill for me and it's very interesting to find out.”*

and

*“I rode a bicycle for a while and then I went to the temple...the one on the outskirts. (Wat Sri Chum) I like it a lot. It was AMAZING. The ruins are very impressive because the size of the Buddha image. Just to think people crafted that 1000 or 7-800 years ago. I don't know...just to think that they had the ability to make something like that. It's amazing I think. It is very impressive. It makes me interested in the ancient technology.”*



Un-interpreted stimuli could bring visitors towards an interpretive interaction that provides visitors with an enjoyable learning benefit and an understanding about the heritage.

*"I really like the way they did all these things, the engineering work. They (ruins) just blow my mind. There are lots of stone here. I thought of where all those stones come from. How much did they weigh? I am very mathematical person. I am in a scientist. So, it was kind of interesting. That's what I thought. There are lots of places like this. They have said this building weigh this much and this materials built this. There are lots of times; they bring the bricks and the stones from some places that are really far. You can see how long ago it was. So, I mean that kind just add the art of the whole building. This stone was each brought 1000 kms from somewhere else and lots of times I see that in historical place. That's kind of neat. Then you just think of that. That would have made the ruins more interesting. I would like that. It makes me understand more and it's enjoyable.*

Visitors would also actively exchange knowledge related to the sight or what *they are seeing now* with others. However, the heritage is not explored in depth as quoted below.

*"When we see the temples, we thought 'Wow'! The Buddha is very important. We have known a little bit before that Buddha is so important. And when we come to see that Buddha is still worshiped in every temple ruin...I saw people do the worshipping with flowers and candles even a small...small Buddha. We still can see that. I think that it must be related to the way of life of Thai people. I have seen a lot of children. They were doing the wai to us everywhere....in the bus and in the park."*

and

*"After exploring this historical site...Well we understand that it takes part of everyday life of Thai people...I mean like every house has a spirit house\* or mmm..small shrine in the house and you see this everywhere. Then you see the big things like the ruins in Sukhothai...and it's always nice to discover another culture to see how they live."*

At the site visitors may discuss about the Hindu gods and how the temple was transformed into a Buddhist temple in order to learn and investigate Hindu and Buddhist monuments. They may also discuss about how ancient people used the temple. Exploring the Heritage is a gateway to an intellectual experience consumption by which visitors create an analytical and a conceptual sense of heritage and synchronize it with existing knowledge to produce an understanding about it.



### 5.3.6 Comprehending the Heritage

Comprehending the Heritage represents an intellectual experience consumption practice that a visitor uses to achieve an intellectual consequence. It is an interpretive heritage experience that involves making sense of, contributing knowledge to and responding to the heritage attractions and objects feeding the visitors' needs to produce valuable knowledge. The heritage is perceived for its cultural and historical values and is considered as an object of experience. This practice describes a heritage experience pursuit by individuals through acquiring information, manipulating objects' meanings, producing knowledge and understanding about the heritage objects and attractions. The tasks for experience consumption practice are necessary to provide the visitors with resources to construct a meaningful experience. Individuals consume heritage experience by the process of heritage interpretation through consumption practices including *orientating, assimilating, and analyzing*.

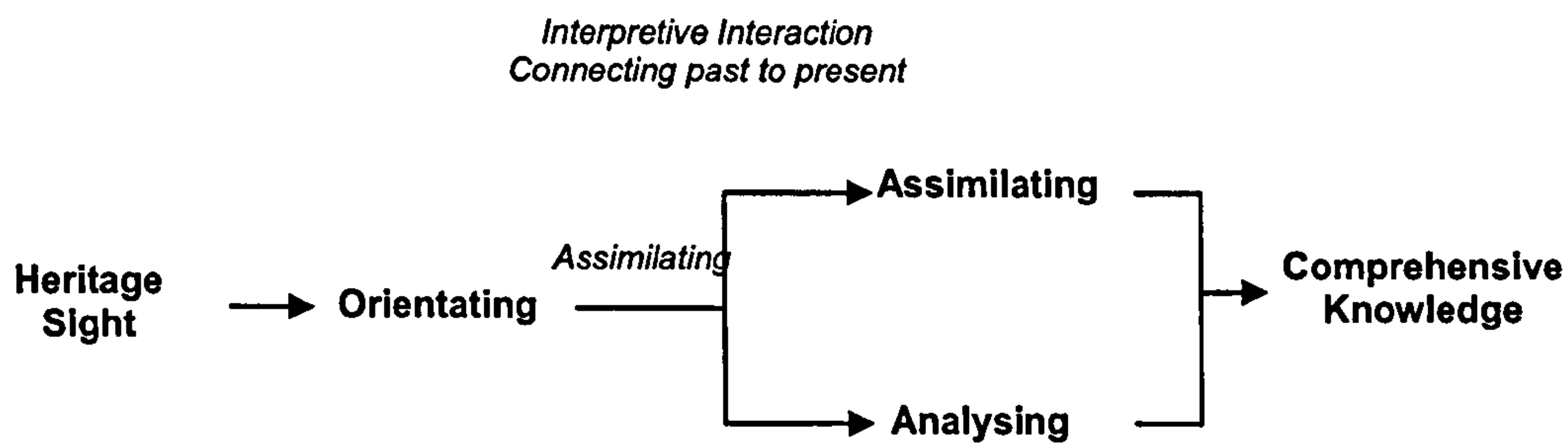
Table 5.13 summarises the characteristics of comprehending the heritage. Figure 5.11 illustrates the framework of comprehending the heritage.

**Table 5.13 Characteristics of comprehending the heritage**

<b>Forms of experience consumption practice</b>	Orientating Assimilating Analyzing
<b>Experiential aspect</b>	Instrumental/ Existential – <i>intellectual outcome</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quest for heritage trails</li> <li>• quest for culture – <i>cultural assimilation</i></li> <li>• quest for religion – <i>religious interest</i></li> <li>• quest for nostalgia</li> </ul>
<b>Structure of interaction</b>	Interpretive interaction
<b>Characteristic of visitor experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracted to the historic sentiment (<i>remains of glory</i>), cultural value (<i>cultural treasure</i>) , symbolic sentiment (<i>exotic sentiment</i>), religious symbol</li> <li>• Responding to interpreted stimuli – <i>narrative and history connected</i></li> <li>• High involvement</li> <li>• Acquisition of knowledge – <i>open to all sources of enquiry (contextual/ factual – in-depth and analytic)</i></li> <li>• Connect present with the past/ Facilitating self-development</li> <li>• Experience authentication – <i>ruins then and now</i></li> <li>• Develop respect behavioural norms</li> <li>• High conservation ethic</li> </ul>
<b>Role of heritage in visitor experience</b>	Object



Figure 5.10 Framework of comprehending the heritage



The framework illustrates that the visitor experience is stimulated by interpreted stimuli such as existing information about the sites (from various sources). The heritage experience is perceived to be valuable knowledge for individuals. The visitor needs an orientation to produce knowledge which will facilitate an interpretive experience consequently providing a comprehensive knowledge of the heritage.

### Orientating

By Orientating, a visitor pursues knowledge that is relevant to the object interacted to enhance an understanding about it. It is a process of *'defining'* objects and *'producing'* knowledge. It could be constructed at every phase of the visitor interactive experience process. Individuals perceive that *'an induction'* that enhances knowledge prior to an experience pursuit is important for heritage experience. Orientation involves visiting museum, reading history documents or guidebooks, and listening to a demonstration:

*"In the museum, we have seen different kinds of Buddha from different periods. It was not too busy to see what they have in the past. We were told of the differences but I can't say that is Sukhothai or Ayutthaya...Right! it's different in the features of Buddha. That is easy to see what period it is. To see lots of Buddha like this in the museum. It helps later."*

and

*"I talked to people about it. I found a lot about it. So, I can see better now. I like to know the information about materials that they used for building temples."*

Heritage experience is an evolving process. Visitors could orientate themselves after the stage of experience pursuits.



*“I like trying to read a bit before I visit the site. But I feel that it’s more interesting reading out after I see the place...because you have seen it and then you can think about it. Otherwise it’s kind of difficult to visualize it.”*

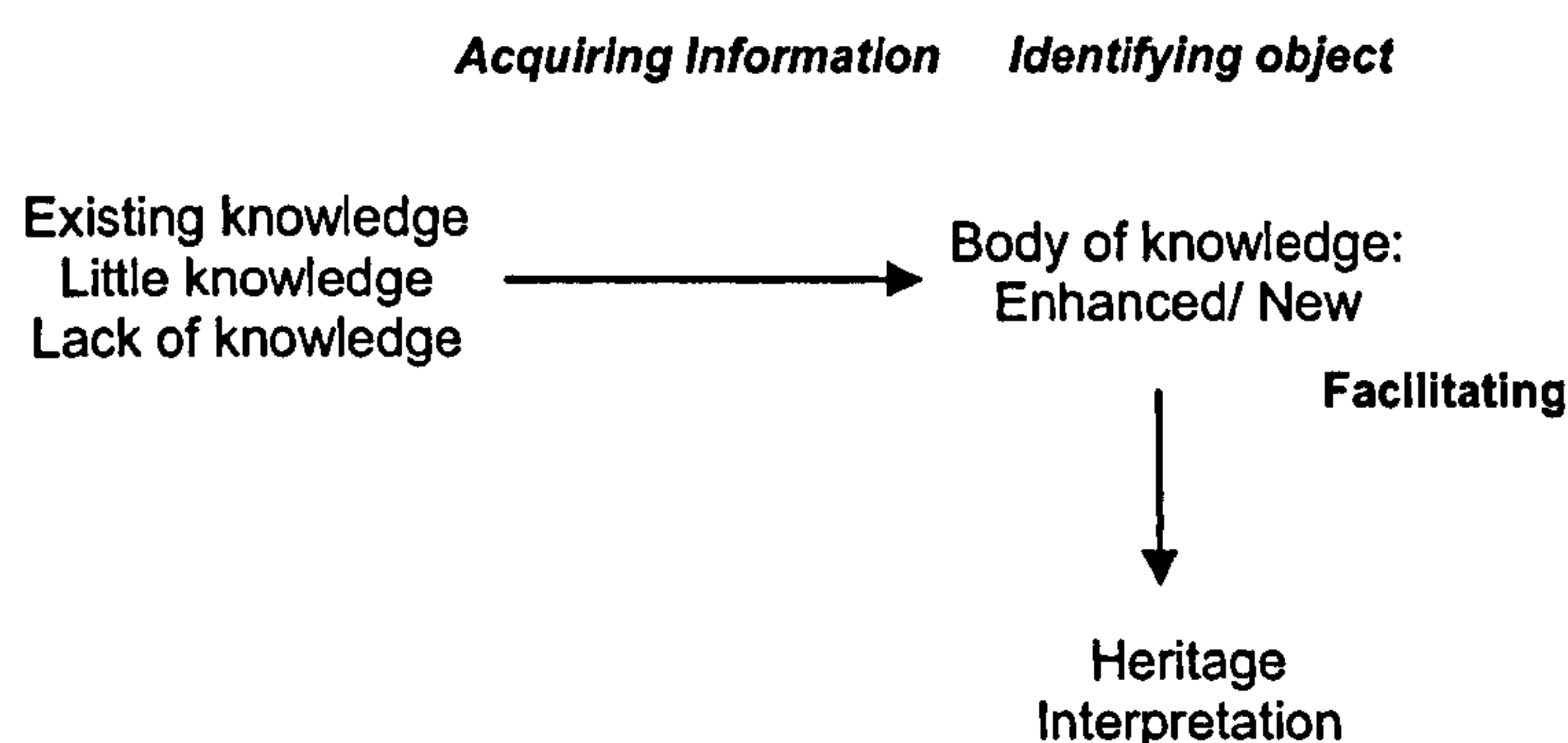
and

*“We went to the museum after the park...because yesterday we visited the main sites. And today we went to see some temples a little bit outside and then the museum...so we took our times to do it quietly to have time to look at. We would like to visit the historical site to get the feeling of life and culture. And we will go back and read more about Buddhism, so we would understand more about what we have seen. Now we understand more about what we saw in the park.”*

Orientating self after heritage experience consumption could provide a clearer image about the heritage because understanding the heritage can facilitate visualization.

Individuals acquire an amount of information to construct the intellectual knowledge about the heritage. Information enquired includes the knowledge in relation to the significance, values and meanings of the heritage objects and attractions. Orientating self involves a three-step process: acquiring information, identifying objects, and facilitating the heritage interpretation (Figure 5.12).

**Figure 5.11 Process of Orientating**



Orientation involves deepening and sharpening existing knowledge and developing new knowledge that can be used for heritage interpretation. The perception of this practice is ‘*see more, understand more*’. Consequently, orientating produces an instrument or beneficial experience of the heritage. Orientating comprises major activities: *acquiring information – defining heritage – facilitating the interpretation*



*Acquiring information*

At the first step, visitors acquire information that is related to both existing knowledge and new knowledge from all available sources. This information could be in a wide range of contents: contextual, in-depth and specialized, and both contextual and non-contextual. It involves the rational facts about the historical past and related history, architecture and archaeology that are usually acquired in detail. However, fiction such as legends or myths of the heritage sites could also lead an inspiration and interest towards particular heritage objects. The level of knowledge acquired varies from what visitors call '*a glimpse of Thai heritage*' to the deep, extensive, complex and analytical information. The sources of enquiries include variety of cultural and history genres, i.e. information provided by the sites, TV documentary and programs, words of mouth, guidebooks and a range of specialized texts related to Buddhism, Buddhist arts and Thai history.

Acquiring information is an act of '*finding out more*' about the heritage. It is a way visitors use to educate themselves in order to pursue new knowledge and an understanding about the heritage as mentioned '*the more I see, the more I understand*' as quoted.

*In Ayuthaya, one of the old stupas also contained one Buddha relic, which was on display in the Chao Sam Praya National Museum. Being sort of a sucker for such things, we went to the museum to have a look.*

and

*"I suppose that they have taken some of the stuff from Sukhothai. They are important things. I have not been to the national museum. Have they taken anything from here and put in there? I want to see those things. I also went to the museum after visited the site in Sukhothai yesterday. I could understand now why they built such magnificent Buddha images. Today we came to see Sri Satchanalai. It is even more enjoyable."*

Visiting museums or information outlets (tourist information centres, history education and research centres) is a way individual visitor gains comprehensive knowledge through the heritage experience. Visitors may be unfamiliar with the heritage. However, the knowledge constructed from orientation practices assists them to encapsulate the heritage. Indeed, the availability of knowledge and information about the heritage sites are essential.



*Defining objects*

The second step involves defining a specific meaning and value of heritage to create or extend the knowledge about it. Indeed, it is a process that makes visitors become knowledgeable and specialized in the heritage they interacted. Having a preview the sight of heritage is preferable for visitors who plan to spend a valuable time for heritage experience. Defining the object is an act usually mentioned '*finding out the truth*' about the heritage. Visitors seek the truth about, meanings or significances of something that are new as quoted:

*On Buddha images*

*"I notice that the Walking Buddha has very thin legs and big shoulders... a bit womanly! I know he was a man. Why did they have these features?"*

and

*We saw a lot of different Buddha image styles and read about them .Well...we think that we can recognise their differences now.*

*On religious monuments*

*"It looks like it was a Hindu temple that was then transformed into a Buddhist temple. How did Hinduism transform into Buddhism?"*

and

*"I have been to Ayutthaya many times but I have never read the history well enough in details. If we can remember all about the history, we will know who built the temples and why they built them. This time I just read the overview of everything and will come back and organise what I have learned about Ayutthaya after the trip."*

The visitors may have known about the site or have some good knowledge about it. They would share and the knowledge with fellow visitors in order to exchange knowledge that facilitate their heritage experience. For example, they may discuss about the possibility whether a story could happen in history and whether movies related to the history well. A conversation may lead to the development of experiential aspects such as heritage trails.



*Facilitating the interpretation*

In the final step, visitors use their knowledge to facilitate the heritage interpretation (assimilating and analyzing the heritage) which consequently yields an understanding of the experienced objects. The visitor pursue comprehensive knowledge about the history of the heritage site to learn more, to develop an insight understanding, to store, to refine knowledge from the trip, and to share the experience and knowledge with others. The outcome of this practice often makes a visitor who may lack the knowledge or has little knowledge to be interested in cultural heritage. For heritage experts, orientation comes naturally, except in interpretations of rare complexity. However, for a novice visitor, an orientation could be either boredom or inspiration. By integrating the existing knowledge and new knowledge, orientating becomes a significant element of visitors' interactive experience of a heritage site.

Visitors orientate themselves in order to 'not to miss' good heritage objects and to guarantee enjoyment of the visit. They usually locate themselves on a map and rely on it:

*"I can say...we have seen almost everything in the main park. We lost a little one maybe but we didn't miss any big and important ones...we have a map from the Lonely Planet, which we studied last night. We also took a map from our guesthouse."*

They acquire information to facilitate trip planning and choices of attraction. It is a way to ensure enjoyment of on-site experience.

*"We did read information at the front of the site...but that one is for when you are already at the place...but I think...maybe we can just prepare a little bit. I mean I like...what should I or if I will spend two days here. Then when you are at the place, you have this information. But it's to have before...in mind...to make choices. Well...I will go there and there...some information to assist us to make a plan."*

Orientating self involves a repetition of a similar experience. When visitors do something repeatedly, they will be able to assimilate the objects with their knowledge. Hence, the knowledge about the heritage is developed. It is also a way to improve heritage experience as quoted:

*"We saw a lot of different Buddha image styles. Well...we think that we can recognise their differences."*



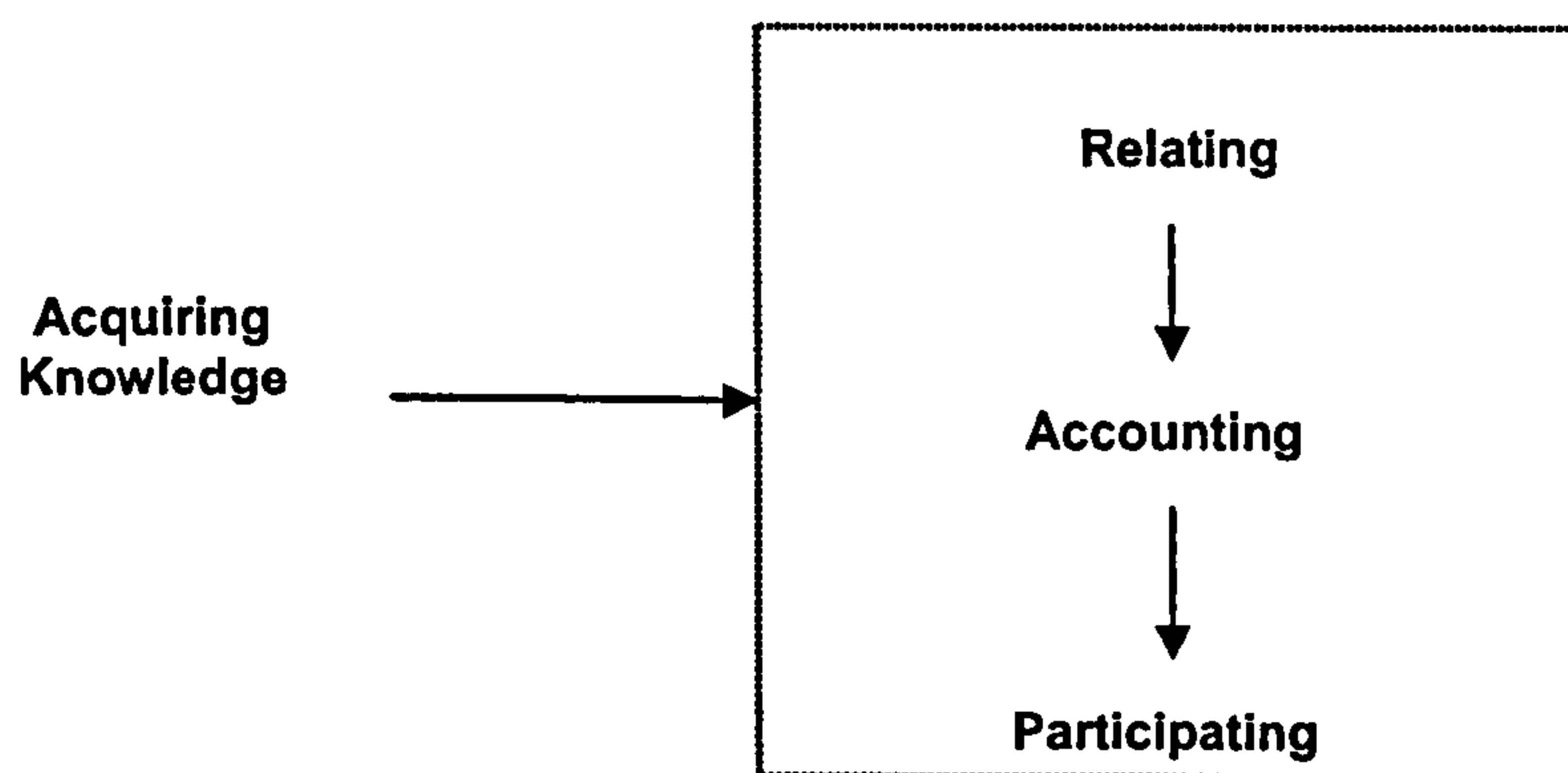
The knowledge developed from this practice is a motivating force for a visitor to achieve a more involving experience. In this case, the information acquired assists the visitors to organise the knowledge about the heritage. Consequently, they seek to pursue intellectual knowledge rather than *'just explore the ruins'*.

**Assimilating** – thinking alike, acting alike

Assimilating is an experience consumption practice a visitor uses for becoming familiar with the heritage through an understanding of it. It involves *thinking alike*, *feeling alike* and *acting alike* in that the visitors relate the heritage with knowledge, heritage experience from elsewhere, and their daily life. Individuals become participants in a social and cultural setting of the heritage site in this process. The interactive experience process is driven by what visitors quoted as the *sum of interest* – particularly an interest about the heritage, culture, history, and religions. The heritage is perceived for its cultural value and historical and nostalgic sentiment. Therefore, the quest for cultural (cultural assimilation and participation) and historic trails usually influence individuals to perform this consumption practice.

The process of experience consumption involves acquiring knowledge, and three-step internal-directed interaction (connecting, accounting and participating). Figure 5.11 illustrates the framework of Assimilating.

**Figure 5.12** Interpretive framework of assimilating



The acquisition of knowledge involves actively discussing with demonstrators or other visitors, reading and seeing. Individuals actively acquire information that is related to existing knowledge and particular interests from all sources. They make a *'conceptual sense and meaning'* about the heritage (relating). Indeed, they interpret the heritage mainly through contextual knowledge for making a comparison (accounting). They usually raise issues about the significance of the heritage



architecture, the philosophy behind the construction, how people lived there, concepts of Buddha's images to enhance intellectual learning. Then, they make a connection and a comparison of what they are consuming and what they experience:

*"It even makes us understand for this was influenced by Khmer. That was styling and how certain styles were united. This tells us about that. Sukhothai took styles from Sri Langka and then Ayutthaya took it. I see it's kind of interesting how the architectural style had been spread and developed as well."*

and

*"We learned about Buddha statues that afternoon. The ones in Sukhothai are very graceful, Khmer-influenced, with slender bodies and oval faces. Later, the faces became more square and the lips became fuller. I think it's about information. Just a basic level of information such as this was the capital of Thailand and may be you can tell a little bit more about some of the history – the sacking by Burmese and a bit more about the architectural style, the uses and stuff and why they built it."*

Individuals connect heritage objects with related religious philosophy – Buddha images with Buddha's life, Buddhism precepts or the characteristic of a great man – the philosophy behind Buddha image sculptures. The learning experience from this practice enables visitors to understand more about cultures or rationales related to the ruins as quoted below:

Visitor: *"I think it could have been more beautiful if everything had remained intact."*

Demonstrator: *"Yes... We don't have anything left because all the buildings and houses were constructed by wood. Time has washed away everything."*

Visitor: *"I see! It's different from buildings in Italy. They are still standing today because they built everything with marbles and hard stones. And in the past we didn't know the technique. They built everything with material they have in the era."*

The acquisition of knowledge drives the visitors to learn more about the heritage site. It encourages them to practice a more interpretive heritage experience because they begin to notice the



significance and the uniqueness of the heritage. They also relate and compare the heritage objects they interact with and with heritage objects they experienced elsewhere.

Demonstrator: *“There are some differences in Buddha’s images from different periods. You may see the differences of shapes and face expressions.”*

Visitor 1: *“Oh...yes! I noticed that and we also saw them in the guidebook.”*

Visitor 2: *“The face of Buddha here is longer than the ones in Ayutthaya..and I saw the eyes look down to us.”*

(They visited Ayutthaya before coming to Sukhothai.)

Visitor 1: *“Oh Yeh...the Buddhas in Ayutthaya have more square faces.”*

Visitor 2: *“And what are the differences between Buddha’s positions?”*

Visitor 1: *“And is there any difference between size of Buddha?. For example bigger one is more significant than a smaller one. And how can you tell the difference between each other.?”*

Later, the visitors may become involved in cultural participation. Visitors develop the requisite religious and cultural knowledge and the specialized tastes that flow from this knowledge including knowing how locals live, understanding about the important elements of Buddhism, and appreciating the unique value of culture.

*“I learn that the Thais have a different Buddha posture for each day of the week, and that people often leave offerings at the statue for their birth day. Mine is Buddha protected from the rain by a multi-headed serpent. Saturday, my birth day, is also associated with dragons.”*

Visitors contextualise the acquired knowledge and relate it with the sight of heritage ruins so that they become influence by interpreted stimuli. This practice could occur in any interactive manner associated with the heritage: watching and learning about local culture associated with the heritage, interacting with in the local community, and discussing about heritage culture and tradition with others. Individuals interpret the meanings of attributes related to the heritage by comparing them to their existing experience. Attributes of heritage include religion, culture, local traditions and



cultural events. Visitors enchant their heritage experience by participating in cultural events – *doing things like local people do*. Assimilating is closely tied to the quality of interaction between visitors and the original value of the cultural heritage. Consequently, they pursue a meaningful experience by taking the value of those attributes and adopting them into to their own. Indeed, the consumption practice provides high involvement experience:

*“I think it’s something similar to Japan because many temples are built at the top of mountain...may be the same concept. Japanese believe that mountains are holy. They are holy places. That’s why we build temples and shrine there. The temple must have been a very sacred one. I think that it’s also related to some political reasons...to protect the town from enemies. , Similar to my country.”*

and

*“I am a stone maker...so I think the tile...oh...The bricks are like the same size like those in Rome, Italy. And for the bricks, they took the substance to craft the ornaments...I notice the stucco outside. This is a little bit of my job, so I noticed it.”*

Assimilating is an act of ‘*Feeling alike*’ and ‘*acting alike*’. The visitors acquire knowledge and relate and compare it to their own experience in order to understand the heritage objects they have experienced. The outcome leads individuals to adopt the culture related to the heritage to their own practice (participation) as quoted:

Visitor 1        *“It’s spiritual. There must have been a lot of Buddhists coming up here and making offerings to the Buddha. It looks like people still worship the Buddha. When you get into such a sacred temple, Buddhists always take off their shoes to pay respect to a religious place. Here...local people take off their shoes. ”*

Visitor 2        *“I thought maybe we have to take our shoes off when we go there. We should also pay respect to everything local people do.”*

The visitors got up to temple ruins with a ‘wow’ expression, especially when they saw the Buddha image and the aerial view of the ancient town. Having walked around and explored every single bit of the area, they realised that this temple must have been a temple where strong religious value was still connected. They encapsulated the knowledge about the heritage and did like local people did.



All of them took off their shoes and walked on the hot granite floor heading to worship the Buddha statues.

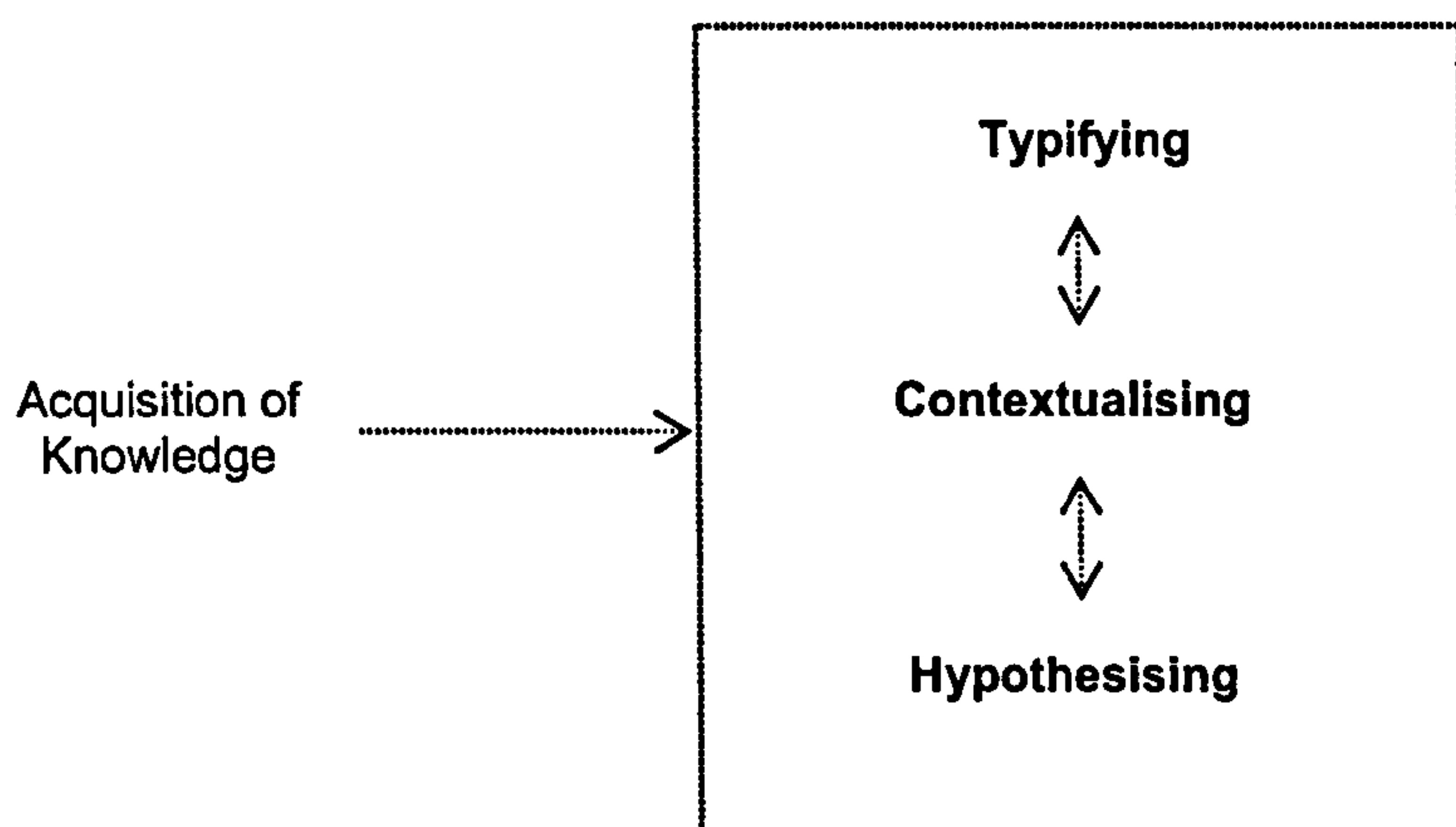
The consequences of heritage assimilation are used to facilitate a pursuit of heritage experience that provides a better understanding and appreciation to visitors. They learn from the actual sight and adopt this knowledge to their own values. Visitors' participation in cultural events makes them become familiar with living culture. When visitors possess good understanding of the ruins and the culture related to the ruins, they could develop the anticipation to take part in a local or cultural practice. This experiential aspect could lead to a preferable practice for the heritage experience.

**Analyzing the heritage**

Analyzing the heritage is an experience consumption practice a visitor uses to enhance or fulfil their experiential knowledge or to produce knowledge. Individuals usually apply an interpretive framework to make sense of the heritage they interact with. They try to capture the rationale and conceptual knowledge about the heritage in terms of history, architecture, archaeology and culture. The value of the heritage is perceived for its historical significance, cultural value, religious value and heritage attributes.

Analyzing the heritage involves a three-step interpretive framework: typifying, contextualizing and hypothesizing (Figure 5.12).

**Figure 5.13 Interpretive framework of analyzing the heritage**



This practice is usually led by the quest for heritage trails and quest for culture. The visitors seek a self-development through the acquisition of knowledge and process of knowledge production. The acquisition of knowledge is an important task as quoted below:



*"I think that when you come here and you actually see the buildings, you are kind of questioning. You want to know. You really want to know about them. What happened to them and what the symbolism is about and what they were used for... and then you may read in your guidebook and pick a little bit of some leaflets or something to read. There are a lot to learn about these ruins."*

The practice involves discussing, asking questions, orientating self and interpreting the heritage through acquired and existing knowledge. The knowledge acquired involves the rationales and focuses on what is important to the heritage with contextual, factual and investigative contents. Then, they contextualise this account by making connections with relevant facts to create a richer understanding and finally they make assumption about the heritage as a contribution to the consequences of the heritage experience.

### *Typifying*

A visitor identifies the meaning and value of the heritage. Typifying is usually in the orientation state. These examples illustrate the understanding about architectural style of ruins, meaning of Buddha statues and symbolic status of places. Visitors usually recognise the significance of the heritage and perceive that the heritage can be a source of knowledge rather than *'just a dead derelict rock'*. Thus, analysing involves linking contextual facts to the account in order to encapsulate meaning or specification of the heritage.

*"Ayutthaya attested to the power and splendour of an empire that dominated Southeast Asia for 400 years. The four century of the kingdom was of great important for art and architecture. Ayutthaya's architects borrowed forms from the Khmers (Prang) and Sri-Lungka (chedi), but they were modified into unique expressions of Siamese style. "Wat Chaiwatthnaram served as a royal monastery. It was where the king as his descendants performed religious rites. It was also used as a cremation site for princes, princesses, and other members of royal family. "*

and

*The wat consists of a main prang and four lesser prangs, all built on the same base and surrounded by eight lesser prangs and a gallery. Placed along the gallery are 120 gilt lacquered Buddha images in the attitude of the maravijaya, or Victory over the Evil one. Within the eight lesser prangs there are twelve crowned Buddha images. The outside walls are adorned with stucco relief depicting stories from the life of Buddha.*



and

*“I saw that most of the temples because ruins mostly from the attack from Burma in the 17th century. Most of the heads on the Buddha’s were cut off clean. Only Wat Na Phra Mane was intact as this was used as the headquarters for the Burmese army during the invasion.”*

Like assimilating, visitors are open to all sources of enquiry and try to comprehend the heritage by analyzing. They orientate themselves and prepare for the intellectual outcome from the heritage experience. They acquire conceptual knowledge to make rational sense of the interacted heritage objects. In this sense, they give critical or rational points of view about the heritage; for example, how people in the ancient period lived and why they lived like that, how ancient people built monuments and in what function they used the monuments, and how the heritage in a remote time experience a glorious era. Indeed, the visitors can identify the differences, significances, and values of each objects interacted:

#### *Contextualizing and hypothesizing*

Visitors usually make contextual and conceptual enquiries such as the philosophy of Buddhism, the transition of cultures and religions and in-depth details of history. The existence of knowledge also plays a major part in analyzing the knowledge with site and conceptualizing the sight to comprehend the heritage.

*“We read about Thailand at home. We read in several books that Thai culture wasn’t influenced by other cultures from other countries. Then we went to those two historical parks. I realized something different now. I saw some Khmer architecture in the area. Then I recognised what I had read before...The Dutch came to Sri Langka afterwards and they said they had forbidden Buddhism in Sri Langka and then Thai people went back to Sri Langka and brought back Buddhism. Then people from Sri Langka came to Thailand. That’s what I have read. There is a special type of Buddhism ...Theravati...And in Thailand, there was this branch. We fully understand it now.”*

and

*“We can see what is inside...like the brick inside, so we know how they built the temples...Are the temples nowadays built in the same way? Oh! Old Buddha is interesting.”*



When the sense-making task is complex and requires specialized information, the analysis becomes more intense and the visitors seem to be more involved with the heritage interaction. 'Contextualisation' is added to the interpretive framework with a more complex activity that enhances visitors' knowledge expertise:

*"There should have been craftsmen in the area because the quality of their work is so high. And I think that if now you want to build temples like that and you go to the craft man in present days...They can't do it. It will also be very expensive and will take very long time to do it. We think that each temple must be different from each other. There would be different reason for each temple to be built. They must have been built in different period. So, we would be able to distinguish the differences among them."*

and

*"Buddhism believes in reincarnation but why they did bury the dead bodies? I think that the ancient community could have other religion other than Buddhism."*

Contextualising and hypothesising allow visitors to develop an ability to distinguish the differences between ruins. Hence, the comprehension of heritage enhances its perceived value and the visitors' valuable experience of the ruins. It is found that the more visitors understand about the historical ruins the, the more develop a conservation ethic as mentioned below.

*"The trip today is valuable and memorable for myself to have a chance to touch these historic ruins, a very important place of the past. I wish that other Thais could have a chance to touch this atmosphere and to gain knowledge about our history...although it might be just little knowledge. They will be proud of our ancestors. I have learned a lot about the history today. This important place has lots of history. But...many visitors just recognise that it is a historic ruin so they just walk around and glance over it because they do not know the detailed history of it. If you have knowledge about its history, the relationship with the former Thai kings and the significance of the place in history, you will appreciate its memorable values. You can connect this ruin with the past. I think we all have to know how to experience it. The value of a place like this has been diluted even in the Thai society. People may destroy it without any intention...just because they don't realize that it has historic importance. This circumstance reflects the need to develop an understanding about this historic place. It is a responsibility of everyone."*



As conceptual learning and knowledge develop over time visitors engage in intellectualizing themselves and the valuable the experience of heritage would be. The heritage is then perceived as a treasure of humankind. Hence, the conservation ethic and norm recognition are developed.

### 5.3.7 Religious Rituals

A religious ritual is a consumption practice involving individual religious beliefs, faith and admiration towards a heritage. Religious rituals engage several elements: divestment of material property, solitude and silence. This includes existential experiences of spiritual elevating processes. Indeed, the heritage is an object of sensual interaction where visitors physically and emotionally engage in a formal ritual: sacred ceremony, and individual or communal worship. Visitors usually interact with particular heritage objects and attractions whereas any knowledge about the heritage could be disregarded. This study conceptualises two main practices involving in religious rituals: sacred ceremony, and worship.

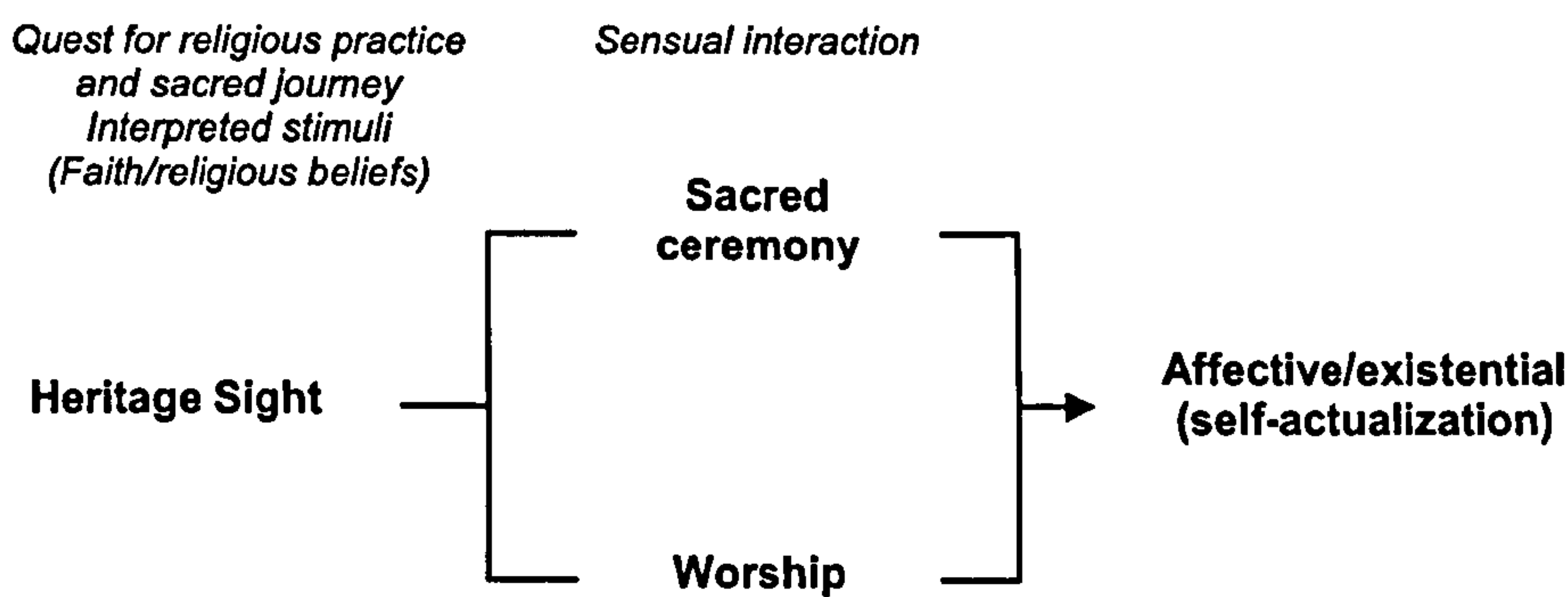
Table 5.14 summarises the characteristic of religious rituals. Figure 5.15 illustrates the framework of the practice.

**Table 5.14 Characteristics of religious rituals**

<b>Forms of experience consumption practice</b>	Sacred ceremony – <i>spiritual merit making</i>
<b>Experiential aspect</b>	Worship Existential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quest for religion – <i>religious practice/ sacred journey</i></li> </ul>
<b>Structure of interaction</b>	Sensual interaction
<b>Characteristic of visitor experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracted to the religious value – <i>sacred site</i></li> <li>• Responding to interpreted stimuli</li> <li>• Enduring involvement (related to faith and admiration)</li> <li>• Acquisition of knowledge – disregard</li> <li>• Connect present with the past/ Facilitating self-development</li> <li>• Experience authentication – <i>pure ruins</i></li> <li>• Develop respect – adopt behavioural norms</li> <li>• High conservation moral</li> </ul>
<b>Role of heritage in visitor experience</b>	Venue



Figure 5.14 The framework of religious ritual



### *Sacred Ceremony*

Sacred Ceremony encompasses an enduring involvement. It involves merit-makings to the Buddha and spirits residing in the historic sites. Visitors emotionally seclude themselves from the crowds and ‘*the world outside*’, and physically interact with the heritage. Merit-makings are considered a vital part of Sacred Ceremony to seek blessings on auspicious occasions. The Sacred Ceremony revolves around an episodic string of events at a given time. It expresses a personal or communal belief; admiration and faith towards the heritage. It might commence with a procession, followed by an offering, prayer, and a recession. Its string may be relatively short and simple or more elaborate, but it requires an appreciation of the multiple behavioural events that comprise it. The sacred ceremony focuses on a strong sense of direction towards particular objects believed to be sacred and spiritual. The practice is strongly stimulated by affective and existential aspects, especially the Quests for Religion and Nostalgia. Acquisition of knowledge is not usually required unless the in-depth information is related to the religious belief and spiritual history of the heritage. Fictional enquiry about superstitions and religious-related folklores tend to be associated with the ritual aspect of the sacred journey. Indeed, visitors may have much knowledge about the heritage already. Particular activities regarding the sacred ceremony are in similar forms to religious practice. Hence, the behavioural norms are highly respected.

A visitor usually seeks particular heritage objects such as the oldest religious ruins or the most spiritual Buddha statues. Individuals immerse in an emotional interaction with the heritage of their desire and faith:

*“We have no idea about things to see here. We intend to come here only to pray and do sacred ceremony.”*

and



*“We have waited for so long to have a chance to come here at least once in a lifetime. We will certainly come back again.”*

They make offerings by food, flowers and sacred ornaments to be offered to the *‘Holy Spirits’* dwelling in the perceived *‘sacred monument’* and participate in spiritual rites. The sacred ceremony may be either in relation to religious beliefs, i.e., Hinduism or Buddhism or personal beliefs (i.e., a birthplace or the tombs of great kings, a place hosting the great relics or spiritual Buddha). The visitors develop a sense of belonging through their experience of sacredness as quoted:

*“Oh! This is just what I dream about.”*, whilst chasing her tears. *“After I prayed, I could feel that I could come back again. We might have belonged here in the past.”*

This is high involvement experience consumption. The visitor spends the whole time during a heritage visit repeating a sacred ceremony. Beside the contribution to the social cohesion and sharing of meaning during a sacred ceremony, the rituals provide a positive benefit by contributing to a person’s individualisation towards what could be called a higher, divine self. The visitors engage in spiritual activities to pursue such experience referred to as *‘life enlightenment’*, a *‘perfect happiness,’* or *‘a touch of sacred moment’*. A religious ritual is related to an inspirational and spiritual admiration or strong belief. The visitor perceived the value of the heritage based on its religious value and heritage sentiment (remains of glory and myth).

Religious Ritual involves various tangible and intangible components. There are artefacts and physical evidence (i.e., decoration, lit incense sticks, ceremonial garments, ‘gifts for the spirits’, food and drinks) that communicate symbolic messages which are integral to the meaning of the visitor’s religious rituals. Icons, logos, or significant colour symbols (yellowish orange) represent or serve as mythological characters of the heritage objects (Image 5.13).



**Image 5.13 Offerings of food, flowers, yellow robes and lit candles are regularly found in the historical sites**



### *Worshipping*

This consumption experience practice is related to the heritage's religious value, spiritual and sacred symbols for worship. It is simply an automatic practice that people practice naturally in everyday experience. Visitors usually enter a temple ruin that houses a big Buddha statue without any enquiry; they knee down and make a merit bow to the statue. Among the big crowds, they stay in that position quietly for a while to attain themselves. Local and domestic visitors would automatically worship whatever a monument related to religion they stop at. With the faith and some belief, they would pray or make wishes when they make merit at a statue.

This is led by religious beliefs, faith and adoration. The acquisition of knowledge becomes a minor concern for visitors. Like the Sacred Ceremony, visitors consume the heritage experience by a making sensual interaction with particular heritage objects, especially with Buddha statues, pagodas, and dwelling spirits. However, this practice involves the visitors' daily practice more than the sacred ceremony. Visitors travel a long way from different places to accomplish a sacred journey of which heritage sites are the desired destination. Visitors usually come directly and ask for directions to particular attractions related to their belief and strong faith as a place for ceremony and worship. However, many visitors already know where to go. This experience consumption is not only practiced by Buddhist visitors but visitors from other religions and cults. Visitors who are not Buddhists could also find that worship gives meaning to their life when they connect with its religious value. Indeed a Quest for Culture Participation and a Quest for Sacred Journey lead visitors to consume the heritage experience this way.

Visitors who have not been engaged in Buddhism may find religious rituals interesting and worthwhile as they encapsulate the meaning of live experience of rituals and the religious value of monuments. It could often be led by an uninterrupted stimulus such as an awe-inspiration as quoted:

*"Buddhism is such a welcome religion. I really like Buddhism. They never flight. It's such so peaceful when you see this place. I become more and more interested in it. It's good to understand something about place."*

and

*"This Buddha statue is so BEAUTIFUL...I can't resists making a merit."*

The visitor appreciates the mythical beauty of the sight and become engaged in a sense of belonging. Hence, they assimilate the ritual practice with their own value.

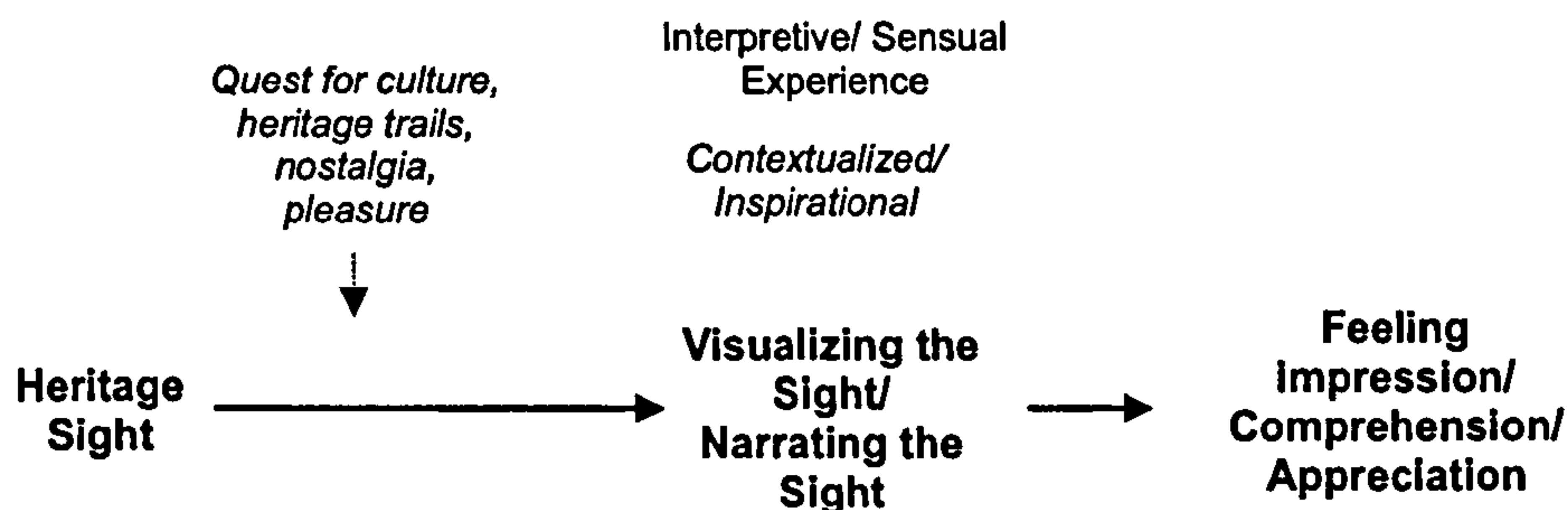


Visitors are involved in a religious anticipation when they are informed or educated about the heritage. Although acquired knowledge has a minor role in this consumption practice, it could stimulate visitors' perceived value of heritage and quest for religious practices. Enquiries involving the religious and cultural significance of the heritage (monuments, sites, Buddhism precepts) play a crucial role in visitors' heritage experience which could make them literarily become visitors who practice religious ritual.

### 5.3.8 Transforming the Sight

Transforming the Sight is the practice by which visitors illustrate their sight of heritage into visual and written forms through their thoughts and understanding of the heritage. This experience is a compilation of interpretive and sensual interaction influenced by the correspondence of sight ranging from 'aesthetic (pleasurable sight, awe-inspiration) to existential interaction (the transforming joy, fantasy and fun) and stimulated by both interpreted and un-interpreted stimuli. Led by various experiential aspects, visitors transform the heritage by *visualizing the sight and narrating the sight*. Figure 5.16 illustrates the framework of this practice.

**Figure 5.15 Framework of Transforming the Sight**



Visualizing the Sight is a way in which a visitor transforms the sight of the heritage into visual forms. It involves bodily and interpretive interaction such as photographing, painting, drawing and sketching. Narrating the Heritage is a way in which a visitor transforms the sight of heritage into a written form for remembrance and shared experience. The acquisition of enquiry is a concern for interpretive experience. However, it also involves sensual interactions because visitors transform the feeling, appreciation, remembrance and expression into these visual and written materials. Visitors pursue a heritage experience to achieve various experiential aspects including the quest for culture, the quest for sense of place, the quest for nostalgic and the quest for heritage trails. Therefore, the experience consumption is practiced for pleasure, appreciation, and comprehension.



### (1) Visualizing the sight for pleasure

Visitors are attracted to spectacular attributes of the heritage; therefore, an experience consumption practice represents a pleasure aspect of an experience. It is a sensual interaction driven by un-interpreted stimuli such as atmospheric scenery and beautiful features of ruins regardless of enquiries about the heritage. The visitors take photographs to show a good composition of images. This practice could also reflect visitors' self-development. A clear example when visitors frame photos that represent their photographing skill. Visitors' perspective is illustrated as follows:



**Image 5.14** The perspective from the front gate of Wat Mahathat

With this photo, a visitor stated:

*“This is the image of the big tree. I like it. If you take an image just without the tree, your image will have less depth. So, now you can see from here to there.”*

Visitors might see the most respected Buddha statue as a piece of art. They would only try to achieve a pleasurable ambition from taking a good photograph.





**Image 5.15** A photo of the most respected Buddha in Sukhothai representing a visitor's artistic view of the statue

In addition, a visitor quotes:

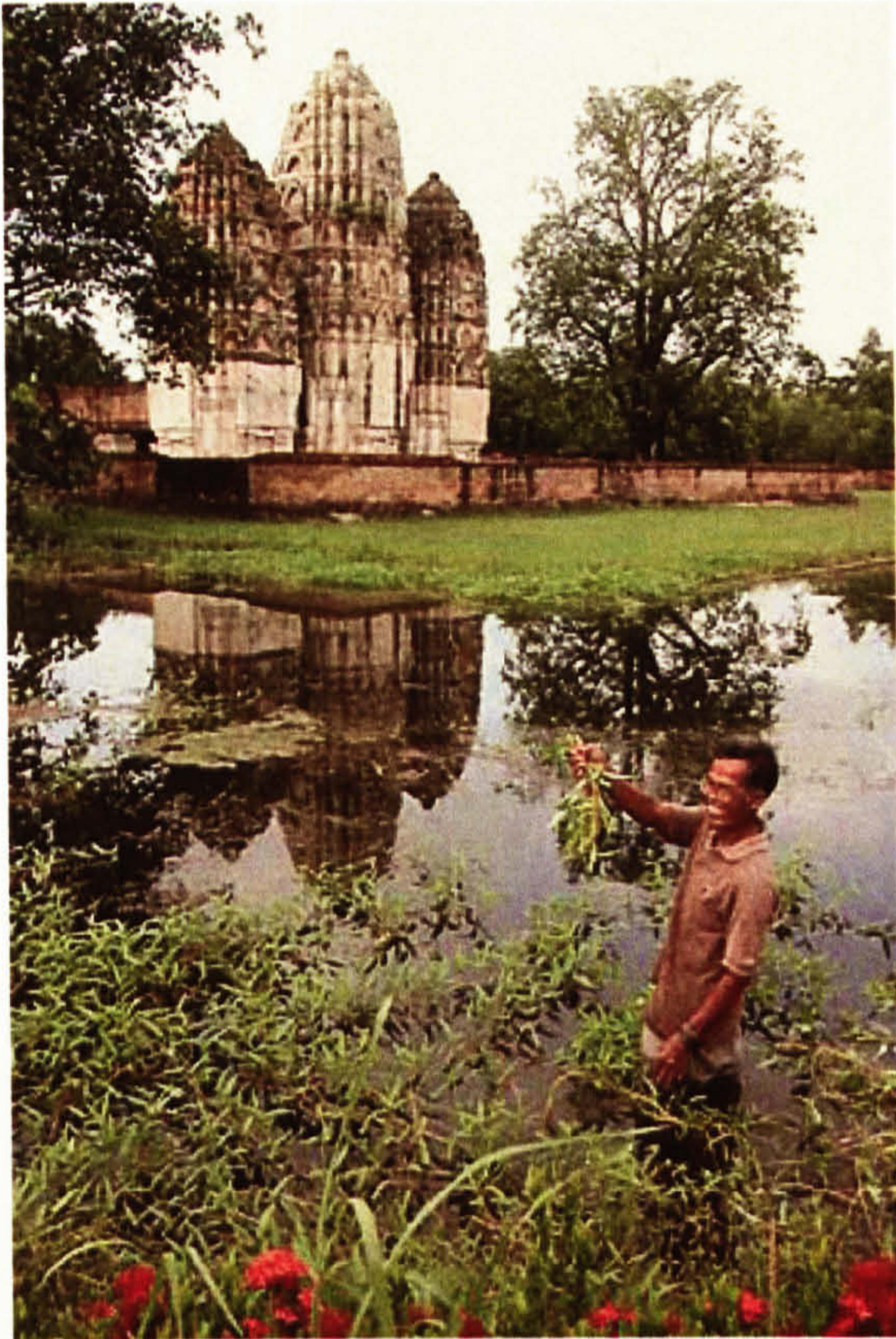
*"It's a really fine piece of art. I just tried to get a good composition for the photos."*

Visitors view religious practices as hedonic spectacles which are very interesting for a photograph. This experience is led by the quest for cultural observation. The visitors transform the sight into a visual scene of life around the ruins as quoted below:

*"I like flowers and gardening at home so I think that the lotus is a holy flower here because I have seen people made offerings to the Buddha. So, I take the image. I didn't notice at the first place that it's like the shape of Chedi. It's interesting. But I like the flower so I take this image. ..and I think the things are nice."*

The local lifestyle also attracts visitors because it brings life to the 'dead rock'.





**Image 5.16 Local people harvesting watercress in Sukhothai Historical Park**

A visitor mentioned about a photo he had taken:

*“We met a guy harvesting watercress in front of the wats..Later we met a woman fishing from the pond with her grandmothers. This just gives me an expression of what the Thai lifestyle was like.”*

Transforming the sight also reflects visitors’ memory of the pleasurable experience. A visitor described a picture of a famous temple:





**Image 5.17 Image of the famous Wat Pra Sri San Petch representing the set of scene**

*“Three very old chedis in area which as the top rebuilt already... This image is showing the chedi which is very tall and old. If you have seen the movie ‘Mortal Kombat’, you might recognise these images. The movie was made here in Thailand.”*

Visitors also transform the sight to recall the scene that represents a desired destination. This experience is led by the quest for a sense of place. Examples are as follows.





**Image 5.18 The sunset at Wat Sra Sri in Sukhothai Historical Park**

*“This is the most spiritual scene. It’s the third time in three days...I have waited go to be a photo of the sunset. It’s such a beautiful scene.”*

and

*“I have been waiting to get this image because I have seen it long ago in a magazine...The place makes me feel a real sense of ancient town.”*

In addition, visitors talked about on one of the most photographed scenes of Ayutthaya as the follows.





**Image 5.19 The famous desired sight of Wat Ratchaburana**

*“This image makes me come here. It’s beautiful and mysterious.”*

and

*“I have looked for this place. I wanted to paint this image because it’s so beautiful. It’s beautiful and peaceful. Beautiful and sunny everyday....and not many people.”*

*“This image makes me come here. It’s beautiful and mysterious.”*

and

*“I have looked for this place. I wanted to paint this image because it’s so beautiful. It’s beautiful and peaceful. Beautiful and sunny everyday....and not many people.”*

Visitors are attracted to attributes of the heritage and anticipate a quest for pleasure. The visualized image represents an achievement of an ambition through pleasure consumption. The matter of choice is relevant to desired or interesting attractions.

## **(2) Transforming the Sight for Appreciation**

Visitors transform the sight to capture the symbolic meaning. In this case, visualizing the sight is a method of self-indulgence. The convention of image framing shows the heritage’s symbolic significance, especially religious and cultural symbols. For example, visitors visualize the sight of

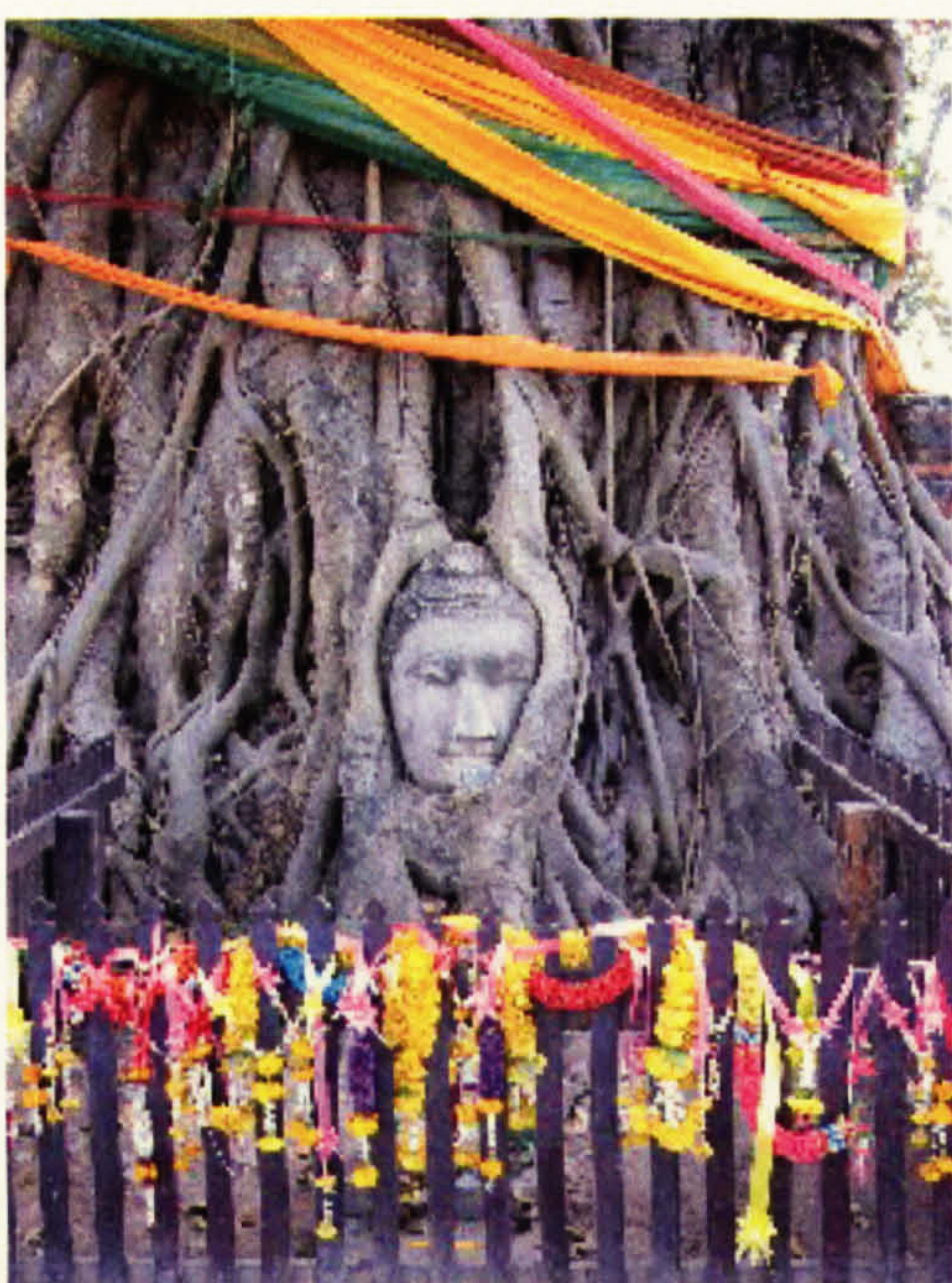


local cultural events to encapsulate the meaning of heritage related to Buddhism illustrated and narrated as follows:



**Image 5.20** The image of reclining Buddha at Wat Logayasutha

*“After walking around the exterior of the complex, wandering what it was all about...the wat didn't look too impressive from the outside.. We realized that the beauty lay within. For inside was a marvellous reclining Buddha. A man was standing on the statue, dressing him with orange robes. It was an impressive image to me. This put everything into perspectives as you can see from this photo.”*

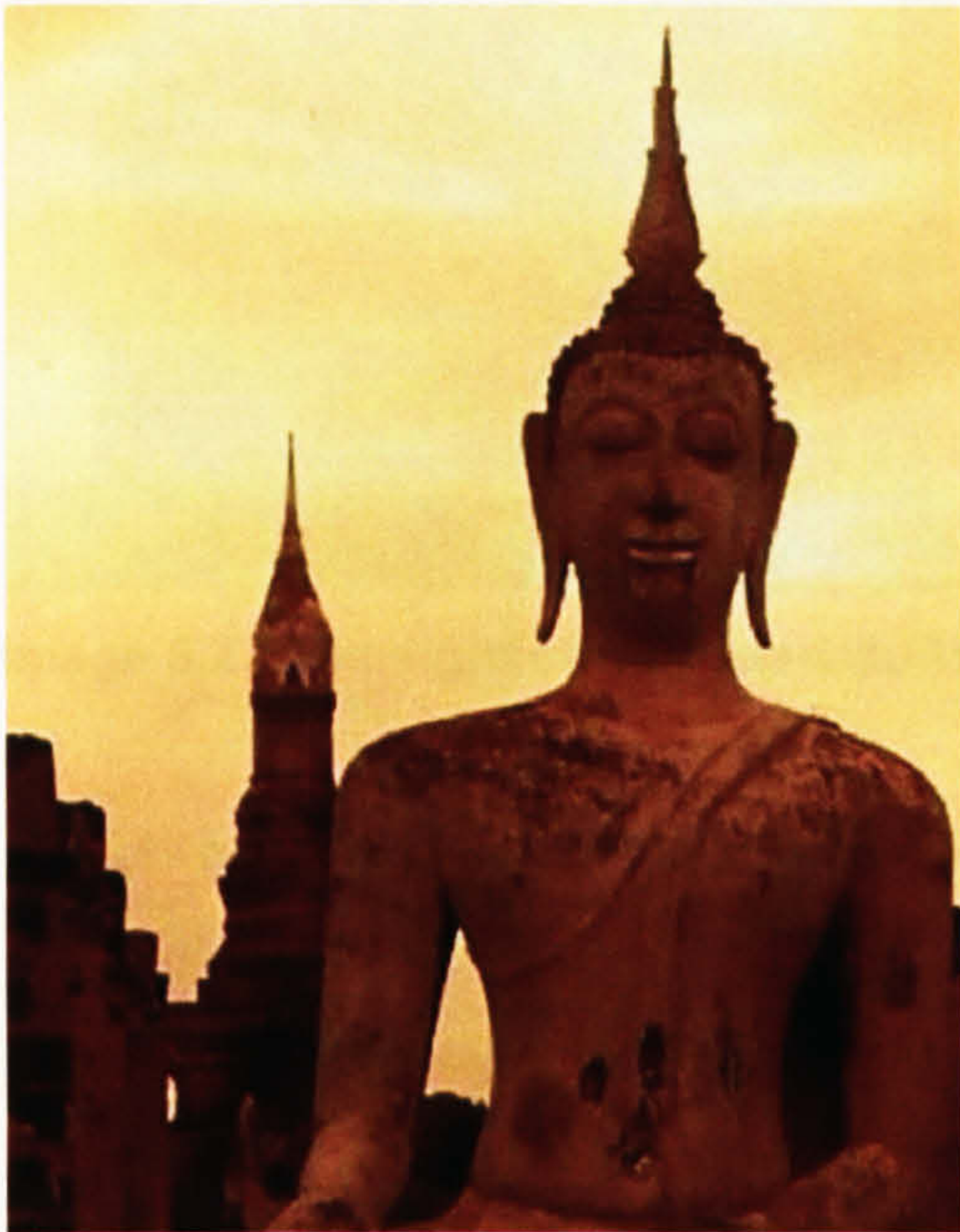


**Image 5.21** The image of Buddha head at Wat Mahathat, Ayutthaya, worshipped by visitors



*“The famous thing about this temple is ‘the face of Buddha’ with a tree growing around it. Even though the temple is in ruins, the Buddha image is still respected.”*

Visitors also transform the sight to represent an appreciation and impression towards the heritage. In this sense, they capture and make the sight visible to reveal an awe-inspiring attribute of the heritage as quoted under the following images.



**Image 5.22 An impressive scene of Wat Mahathat Sukhothai**

*“As we were cycling, I think that we like the big statues...the combination of scenes. It was an awe-inspiring scene for me. The big Buddha and the ruins of building and statues! So, we took many images of it. This book suggests us the best cycling trail. So, we passed by the temple. It was REAL nice.”*

The transformed sight imparts the appreciation of an immense statue and its beauty. The heritage experience is sensual but involving because the heritage interacted with the visitors and because object of experience.





**Image 5.23 The sight of ruins and Buddha statue at Wat Sri Chum**

Visitors may narrate a sight to represent an impression towards a heritage attraction.

*“A not so impressive wat, but with an extremely impressive Buddha image is Wat Sri Chum. It is probably the most photographed wat in Sukhothai. It is quite far from the entrance...but it really is a must as hopefully is clear from the image.”*

With excitement, visitors visualise their impression of the ruins led by awe-inspiration of a spectacular heritage object.

*“Wat Sri Chum is my favourite. Just because it is so big!! Very big!! Just to look at it because I am so small...You know it’s such a good experience when you look inside. It’s like WOW, when you looked up because it’s so BEAUTIFUL. Such a lovely feeling... All of the ground...it was just lovely feeling”*





**Image 5.24 The three Prang (stupas) at Wat Sri Sawai**

*“Another personal favourite is Wat Sri Sawai, apparently a Khmer-style structure ...it is very reminiscent of the Cambodian temples of Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom, so that makes sense...although we’ve yet to see those beauties for ourselves.”*

Visitors also visualize the sight of heritage with a quest for nostalgia. Illustrated images represent a nostalgic sight of the ruins as visitors interpret the heritage through the history of the site.



**Image 5.25 ‘An impression of the past splendour’ quoted by a visitor**

*“The old city of Siam is no more but it’s glorious past still echoes from the remains...Shadow of the past glory litters the sacred ground.”*

and

*“Centuries-old relics reveal a varied and often turbulent history.”*





**Image 5.26 A row of headless Buddha representing a quest for nostalgia**

*“When Buddha rules the earth!!! Throughout the grounds, there are scores of Buddha statues, mostly in a vary poor state and almost all of them missing the head. This is probably due to the sacking of the site in ancient time by Burmese invaders.”*

Visitors perceive the heritage for its nostalgic sentiment, interpret the knowledge about the heritage and narrate the nostalgic impression of the nostalgic sight of the historic ruins giving an image of the past splendour.



**Image 5.27 The Buddha head at Wat Mahathat**

*“There is one Buddha head to be seen on the site, though, and it’s very famous because it has been left to the force of nature. After the site was deserted for over 100 years, and the trees took hold. This was the result. I felt so sorry for Ayutthaya.”*



The illustrated image represents visitors' impression towards a nostalgic sight that imparts the admiration for the remains of golden eras of the place when the visitors consume the heritage through the interpretation of its history.

Transforming of sight may not involve the acquisition of enquiry. Visitors enjoy exploring archaeological sites, as they perceive the site to be expansive, elaborate with a sense of awe, and exotic. The heritage experience is transformed through the sight visualisation and narration as in the following quotes.

*"I take photographs because I think the ruins are amazing ...it's strange to me. I have never seen something like this in our country."*

and

On the sight of Buddha at Wat Sri Chum:

*"The fingers were bigger than my body. That's why I want to take those images...just to show how big they were."*

and

On an image of reclining Buddha:

*"Check out the people by the elbow for scale."*

Photographs represent the correspondence of an awe-inspiration that is the sight is unexpected and consequently yields a 'pleasant surprise' to visitors.

Visualizing entails the story of the heritage. Transforming the sight could enhance imagination. The practice imparts interest about architecture, archaeology, art and something that shows the ways of ancient life and culture. Visitors may transform the sight into what they would like to remember:

*"I take this image because I want to remember what happened here when I look at them again."*

and



*“The photos will tell me the story about Buddhism.”*

Visitors illustrate images and heritage objects that represent and stimulate their personal interests such as the layout or structure of the ruins. They usually visualize the sight in artistic way such as drawing and sketching. Transforming the sight enhances visitors’ imagination of the heritage.

*“One of the most impressive sites inside the old walls is Wat Mahathat which has some 198 chedis (towers/spires) within the monastery, along with the requisite Buddha images. There were almost too many statutes and structures to take in at this spot, but I could see that this location would be perfect for the sunset...just imagine what life could have been hundreds of years ago...It’s a perfect scenery...the silhouettes of numerous spires and statues against the impending Thai night sky.”* and

A visitor described on an image of the ruins at Wat Pra Sri San Petch (Image 5.28):

*“This place was really amazing. It was the capital of Siam for several hundred years, and the Burmese attacked and successfully ransacked the city. Many were killed, other tortured. Many of the Buddha images were destroyed, all of them were damaged. The destruction was quite amazing...but it also was rather amazing to think that the people of Siam suffered such great losses, yet managed to regroup, build a new capital and succeed the nation.”*



**Image 5.28** The historic ruins of Wat Pra Sri Sanpetch representing a nostalgic sentiment of history



Visitors pursue the heritage experience through the interpretation of history. Consequently, they encapsulate the meaning and value of the heritage site. In addition, the images and narratives of the sight facilitate visitors' imagination of the events that happened in the history. Indeed, the illustrated sight could bring the ruins to life and become more meaningful.

### (3) Transforming the sight for comprehension

Visitors usually recognise the meaning and significance of the heritage objects they consume. They illustrate the sight in a contextual way.

*“The town of Ayutthaya is a complex of three rivers: Mae Nam Lopburi, mae Nam Pasak, and Mae Nam Chao Praya. The three rivers join into one and create a moat-tup waterway around the town. In the past, boats made the most of the river, transporting cargos and ferrying passengers around.”*

A visitor described on a ruins temple representing the victory of a great king:



**Image 5.29** Wat Yai Chaimongkol illustrating the historic victory of a great king

*“This monastery, constructed during the reign of King U-Thong, is located outside the city to the southeast in the same direction as the railway station; one can see its large chedi from far away. King Naresuan the Great commanded the chedi be built to celebrate the victory of his single-handed combat on the elephant’s back.”*

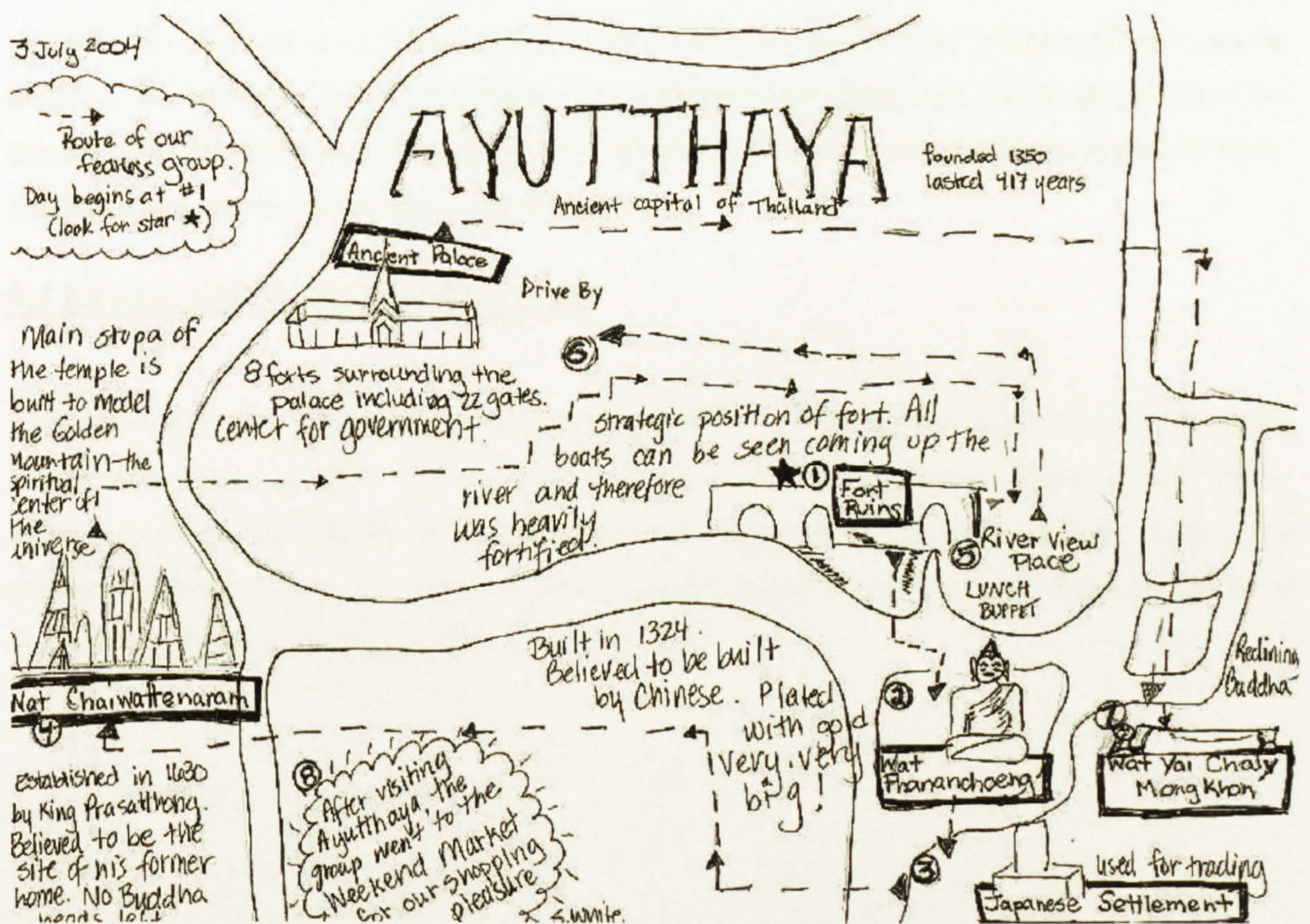
Visitors assimilate the local culture and tradition into their knowledge and practice for an understanding of the heritage sight. A visitor narrated the sight of Buddhist monks with the temple ruins of Wat Mahathat Sukhothai as follows:



“Any man can enter monkhood and many young men spend part of their lives as monks. Traditionally, during the rainy season, they will spend from 2 weeks to 6 months studying their religion, giving sermons and atoning for their sins. They are allowed no personal possessions and like the regular monks are fed and clothed by the local community.”

In this sense, illustrated images are selected, combined and symbolized. The convention of an image is characterized by theoretical and conceptual cognition of the sight. Transforming the sight is a strategy used to visualize the heritage that assists visitors’ learning experience. The images also impart the perceived value on the significance of the heritage, thereby enhancing the visitors’ involvement with the heritage site.

The mapping and detailing of the place and incidence related to the place in visual and written forms could reflect visitors’ perspectives of the ‘historical overview’ of the heritage.



**Image 5.30 Hand-drawn image of Ayutthaya that reflects the town structure and significance of heritage attractions (Map drawn by S. White)**

“The city of Ayutthaya was founded about 1350 by Ramathibodi I. By early 15<sup>th</sup> century Ayutthaya became a major power. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ayutthaya was a well established port city, processing goods for export to other countries in South Asia and South East Asia,



*including ports on India's east coast. European began to visit Ayutthaya in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Known as Venice of the East, Ayutthaya was an important trading centre. Remnants of foreigner settlements are still present today. Sarah White provided us with a map she created detailing the places we visited. Ayutthaya was destroyed by the Burmese in 1767 and was left for many years. Later King Rama V declared the conservation of Ayutthaya. Ayutthaya was the capital of Siam for 417 years and was registered as a world heritage site by the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO) in 1981. In 1990 the Ayutthaya Historical Study Centre was established."*

Visitors assimilate the sight they encapsulate with conceptual knowledge about the heritage from narrative sources. In this case they take the knowledge from the book '*Ayutthaya and Asia*', and '*From Japan to Arabia: Ayutthaya's Maritime Relations with Asia*'.

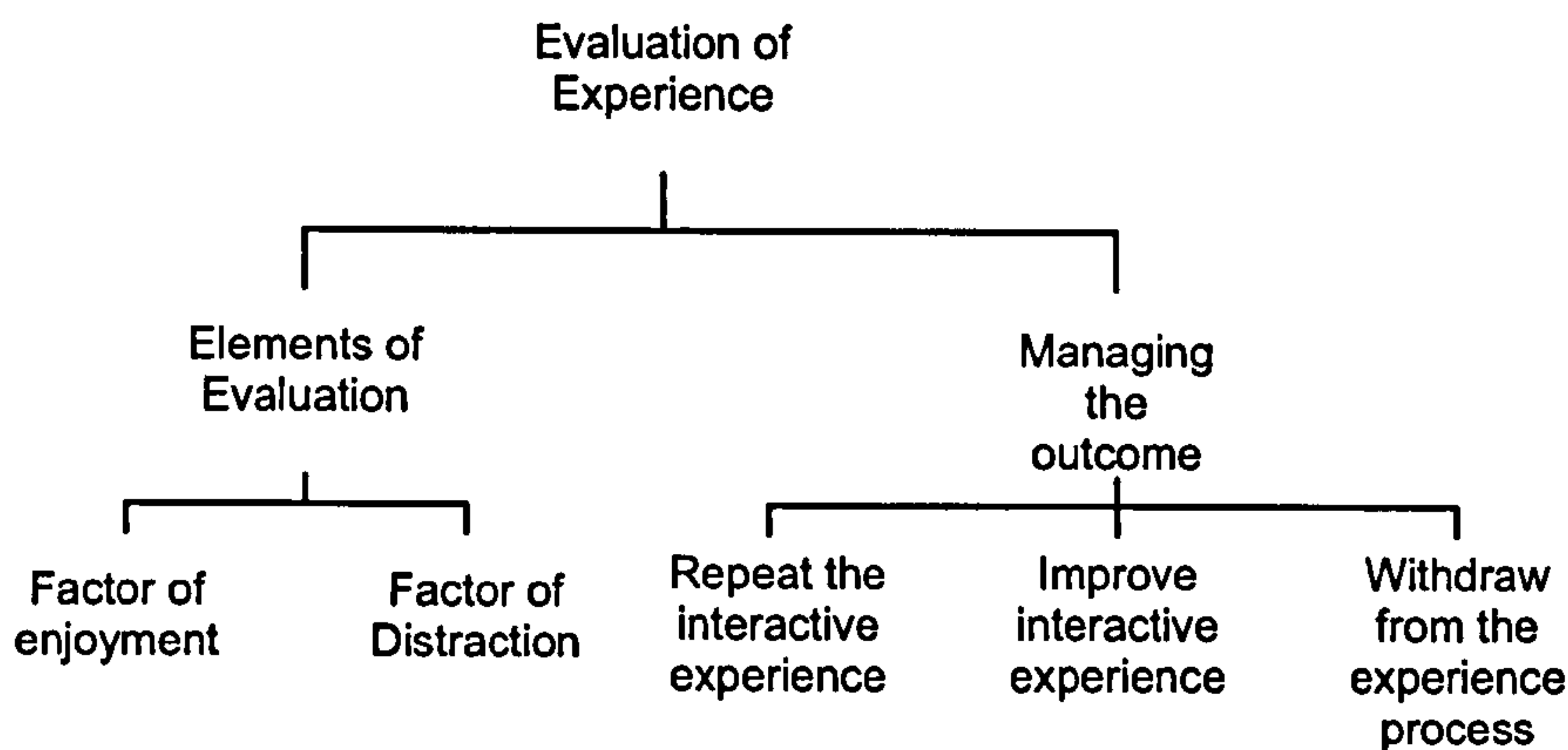
The conceptualization of experience consumption practices reveals the complexity and multiplicity of visitor experience. This concept indicates that individuals engage in heritage experience in multiple ways depending on the experiential aspects anticipated at the time visitors interact with the heritage. The heritage experience is interactive, rewarding and changeable due to the results of the evaluation of the experience at the third phase of the visitor interactive experience process. It shows a dynamic the process of the visitor experience.

#### **5.4 EVALUATION OF EXPERIENCE**

Evaluation of Experience is a process visitors use to monitor the outcome of experience consumption practice. This section aims to explain the third ongoing phrase of the visitor interactive experience process. It is constructed from visitors' perspectives towards the result of the experiential phase (from anticipation to pursuing experience). The framework of the evaluation of experience is illustrated in Figure 5.17.



Figure 5. 16 Evaluation of experience framework



The evaluation of experience consists of two main structures: the elements of evaluation and the evaluation process. The determinants of evaluation consist of factors visitors use to monitor the outcomes of a pursuit of experience: the factor of enjoyment and the factor of distraction which act as intervening factors in the visitor interactive experience model. Managing the outcome represents the ways in which visitors handle the monitored outcomes. These strategies include repetition of experience consumption practice, improvement of the consumption practice and withdrawal.

### 5.4.1 Elements of Evaluation

These elements are considered as external environments or intervening factors that affect an experience pursuit in either positive or negative way. This study conceptualises three main sets of factors relating to visitors' evaluation of experience (Table 5.15).

Table 5.15 Factors relating to the evaluation of experience

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<b>Site Management</b>
• <i>perception towards conservation, traffic management, information management</i>
<b>The Setting and Cultural value</b>
• <i>the site ambience, physical features of the site, the perception of cultural value related to the heritage</i>
<b>Environmental Conditions</b>
• <i>climate, time constraints</i>

---

The sets of factors are classified into the factors of enjoyment and those of distraction because they could affect the pursuit of experience in both positive and negative ways.



**The factors of enjoyment**

Factors of enjoyment have their roles in rewarding the visitor experience. These factors consist of main determinants as follow:

**1. Site Management**

The factors that involve site management include information management, an ability to generate opportunities for visitors to learn and discover something and the conservation policy of the site.

*Information management* – the availability of the acquisition of knowledge and the quality (content and level) of information that suit visitors' preference

Visitors' comments illustrate how information (i.e. history and story related to heritage attractions) can stimulate an impression toward the ruins.

*“Buddha sculptures in Sukhothai are different from those in Ayutthaya. In Ayutthaya, they are completely..emmm most of them are completely destroyed. Buddha with no head... So, it's very very real...very historical. But Sukhothai is beautiful...so, it's not so impressive. In Ayutthaya it's impressive because of the history. We understand the history of Ayutthaya. I have read about the history of Ayutthaya. Burmese came and destroyed the city. So we see the old things...it's so impressive.”*

and

*“I think that it's so strange that not many people know about history. It's good to hear about it. You appreciate the ruins more when you know about it.”*

A brief history of the place, especially a nostalgic part provides an impression towards the heritage sight through visitors' appreciation.

*“One of the cool things about Sukhothai is that it seems not a lot of people visit it. Sukhothai is also relatively compact, and easy to get to by bike (in fact I'd say it's the recommended method of seeing Sukhothai.), and if you start early in the morning, it's easy to visit all the wats by day's end.”*



Despite taking an organized trip, visitors seek an easy manual of the trip on their own in exploring a heritage site. When visitors interact with the heritage, they may be curious about it due to the lack of knowledge. Information management at the site allows visitors to manage to arrange the visit successfully.

Visitors may also have limited knowledge about the heritage; therefore, they acquire information from specific information sources that facilitate them to plan the visit and experience at the site:

*“I like this book because it has got illustrations and also it tells you specifically about something like...go and do this and that. You can just make your trip easy. So you can never miss the highlights. And they tell you about every single place. This is kind of specific for places and it makes me feel it’s easier to make a plan.”*

The availability and of appropriate information provide a positive impact to visitors’ experience of a heritage.

*Opportunity to learn and discover something* – ability of the site management in facilitating visitors to achieve a valuable heritage experience

This factor involves traffic management and the layout of the toured route at the site.

*“It was so cool because we could walk all through the ruins and learn which buildings were used for what types of religious ceremonies.”*

*“This temple is special because it lies right on the river, and most of it was kept in good condition...it closely resembles the famous Angkor Wat of Cambodia, and is absolutely huge, overpowering, and BEAUTIFUL. The solid, towering architecture and natural colour really makes this place all the more vivid and powerful. I especially enjoyed this place because many of the structures were open for climbing and free roaming, and I found so many rooms that still had active Buddhist temples and shrines.”*

It also involves an opportunity to go off the beaten track because it often yields a pleasant surprise from a discovery and serenity.

*“The city is bright and hot, dusty and drowsy. Strolling along streets lined with short buildings and small shops, you may be surprised to stumble upon visages of the city’s glorious past (in form of small ruins), like hidden gems. Of course, these are child’s play compared to sprawling sites like Wat Maha That and Wat Ratchburana, but they really are one of the city’s most unique features.’*



and

*“Wat Chang Lom is not inside the archaeological park, but it’s located to the north...it’s really worth a detour: the chedi is beautiful and unusual: it’s shaped like a bell like other chedis...but what makes it different and incredibly charming is its base: 3-tiered platform decorated with a row of white elephant faces. Not only it’s very graceful: it’s very isolated, too – and you can admire it in absolute solitude.”*

This factor also involves the characters of the ruins such as picturesque scenery and a variety of attractions. This factor encourages visitors to spend longer time at the heritage site. It also encourages visitors to engage in a more involving experience consumption practice.

*“More to discover...I never have enough of it. At Sukothai we enjoyed our wander through the ancient city. The temples were particularly impressive and on a rather grand scale. The place was huge - we were there for several hours and only saw the central area!! The giant Buddhas amongst the trees and lotus ponds were very beautiful.”*

and

*What made Sukhothai so good was a really cool Buddha that was housed inside a cave that could only be accessed through a small slit in the rock. It’s kind of difficult to explain, hence the photo, but it was very impressive. When you stood in front of the Buddha, which was 15 metres high, you could fully appreciate how big it was.*

Although ‘doing the park’ is a consumption practice that proves the least level of interaction intense to the heritage, there are some factors that make this practice a more valuable experience. The heritage experience provides an enjoyment when visitors have an opportunity to ‘see more’ although it is unexpected. For instance, they may find that a heritage site offer a chance for cultural observation.

*“I like Sri Satchnalai because there are lots of trees and we can ride our bikes through the village and see things. We don’t feel like we just come here to see the ruins and we also see life around ruins.”*

and



*“Yeh..along the river, saw people catching fish. There is something to watch apart from sleeping ruins and there are some temples outside the park that on the way you can see farmers and the village. It’s nice.”*

**Conservation Policy – Perception towards site management** also involves the preservation, maintenance, service and amenity, which varies among individual visitors and different perspective of - authenticity.

*“I like the way they keep Sri Satchanalai the way it is. The nature...the ruins...are just so inspiring. I like this park more than the one in Sukhothai. That site is more artificial to me. But this town is real. It looks very old...ancient... I could feel the atmosphere of the past. I think this site has been well preserved...In Sukhothai as you can see...they cut the grass so neatly. There are lots of beautiful flowers. But I felt that they make it like a park to attract tourists. I just think that it doesn’t look real like the atmosphere here.”*

and

*“When you are travelling around the site...you see no car. I think it’s nice. I always wonder if the vehicles would harm the ruins. I think so. That’s why I like this park. You can feel the nature...Zone A (central area of Sukhothai Historical Park) is very orderly. It seems too planned out to be a set of ruins more feeling of an amusement park. Zone C is much more enjoyable. Here the ruins remain in ruins. In many cases they are overgrown by plants so there is a feel of a lost city buried in the jungle rather than the lost city with neatly manicured lawn back in Zone A.”*

The awe-inspiring sight influences visitors to anticipate a quest for nostalgia. Driven by awe inspiration, the heritage is often viewed as a wonder of the ability of ancient people and their great histories. However, this factor depends on how individual visitors perceive the meaning of an authentic experience. The artificiality of the site decoration and restoration often decrease the interest in the heritage. These factors become crucial intervening factors that influence the outcome of the interactive experience. Moreover, an atmospheric site encourages visitors to consume a heritage by *‘feeling’ the sense of the past*. An appreciation towards the heritage sight occurs as visitors immerse themselves in the setting. The sight of atmospheric heritage ruins could raise conservation ethics in visitors’ mind. In this sense, visitors develop a conservation moral through the heritage experience:



*“I think that preservation of cultural heritage is important for Thailand as a tourist attraction. Ruins here are so impressive. I’m sure that we wouldn’t have come to Ayutthaya if the wats were not there. So, it is important for Thailand to keep it...keep this culture...preserve it and I think that it’s important that local people work together with the authorities, who are responsible for the sites...as well as tourists like us.”*

Local people should take an important part in conservation campaigns. Visitors perceived that ‘the heritage belongs to everyone’. Preservation is everyone’s job.

## 2. The Setting and Cultural Value

### *The site ambience*

This factor involves physical attributes of the heritage site regarding the sense of place.

*“We enjoy riding the bikes so much...freedom...beautiful ruins and a good company. I’d say the trip today is like Cherry on the top of cake.”*

and

*“Some of the temples inside the Sukhothai Historical Park are surrounded by ponds filled with lotus flowers. The scenery is even more picturesque, then. There are small wooden bridges to cross the ponds on foot or by a bike. A real good day out”*

The site ambience usually provides an enjoyment to the experience pursuit driven by pleasure and affective aspects as quoted.

*“Sukhothai was a chance to see more temple ruins which I preferred to Ayutthaya. The old city is about 12 km out of town and most of the temples are set in the Sukhothai Historical Park which is beautiful, nicely set out and has been well preserved. I rented a bike again and really enjoyed venturing round the park and taking photos. I even went outside of the park to explore the temples surrounding the area and managed to get away from most of the tourists which was nice. It was there that I randomly bumped into Sophie and Laetitia again and so had the afternoon with them. Sukhothai is well worth the trip if you ever come to Thailand...”*

and



*“Sukhothai is a national historical park filled with wat ruins from the Sukhothai kingdom, from the 1200s. It is a huge park so the easiest way to get around is to rent a bike (or a motorcycle but I figure I should learn to ride one before renting one). The ruins were beautiful and the setting they were in made the day great. An idyllic park with ancient ruins that remind you of Greek or roman ruins. Until you realize they are only 800 years old.”*

### ***The Cultural Value***

This factor involves the cultural value of the heritage. The cultural value and historic sentiment represents the compilation of local culture and tradition and cultural events related to heritage sites. This factor also reflects the perception towards the behavioural norms.

*“I have been here for many times, this temple is always wonderful, attractive and I still have not discovered all the building. But all these things tell me how great the Thai culture is. Absolutely sure! I’ll be here again.”*

and

*“Before I got here, I didn’t know what the chedi was used for. I thought that I don’t know and then I came here to find out what it was used for. I thought it was really interesting and you found that it has religious meaning and it was used for storing the ashes or something...I think when you come here and you actually see the building...you are kind of questioning. You really want to know about them...what happened to them and what symbolism they were used for.”*

The cultural value is an encouraging factor. For example, visitors may initially perceive heritage as an exotic ruin that drive a quest for novelty. Visitors explore the heritage, develop knowledge about it and become familiar with it. In this way, the visitors enhance the ‘understanding’ of the sight of heritage after the evaluation of experience.

*“I think maybe we should go to the museum. So, we can understand more.”*

and



*“...because what you see in the parks are just beautiful buildings but we can imagine how ordinary people live there... When you cycle around, you feel that is very old. The first thing I ‘d ask you is where did the people live and how did they live? I suppose the people were living here...may be between the road. Also the use of temple is what we want to know. However, there is no information about it.”*

### **Factors of Distraction**

Table 5.8 presents the overall factors that visitors use for the evaluation of experience. The factors of distraction consist of main determinants as follows.

#### **1. Site Management**

The factors of distraction are related to visitors’ attitudes towards the site management involving the management system and the traffic within the site.

##### ***The management system***

Insufficient information, unequal service system, double-standard practices, the unwelcome venue such as tourist information centres and unexpected vendors such as souvenir sellers who follow visitors around with no control acts dilute the appreciation of visitors’ heritage experience.

*“For every temple we visited, we had to pay an entrance fee for the individual temple, there was not a joint ticket for all the temples. The city of Ayutthaya managed to find a group of the crankiest unattractive old ladies in Thailand to man the ticket booths. I think they might have appeared very cranky because of the heat, and also because Jesse was constantly trying to pass the tickets from the previous temples as a valid ticket to the temple we were trying to get into.”*

and

*“The complicated ticket system just puts me off...I just changed my mind...I didn’t want to get in there because I didn’t know that the temple is worth my money. I didn’t want to get a combined ticket as well because you can only enter it once.”*



Since the system requires visitors to pay for separate tickets for different temple ruins or zones, visitors feel offended when they find that it is confusing. Their attitude towards the management, consequently, dilutes the visitors' motivation to consume the heritage experience.

The quality of information depends on the accuracy and availability of the information (especially signs and maps) as well as its ability to facilitate the experience outcome that individual visitors expect. Visitors mention about missed opportunities as quoted below:

*"We visit many pagodas in the park, all in ruins. George's English isn't very good, and he seems to answer every question with "yes," so sometimes it's difficult to really understand what we are seeing. We learn that Sukhothai means "dawn of happiness," and that it was the first real unified Siamese kingdom. We also learn that Thais differentiate between "pagodas" and "stupas" or "cheddis" by how they are decorated on the top. The ones that look like corn cobs are Khmer (Cambodian)-influenced and called "cheddis." The ones that are lotus-leaf shaped on top are "pagodas." Or vice-versa. I wish I'd brought our Thailand guide book with us. Ayutthaya is a little tough to describe here, basically because it's a lot of ruins with very little explanation."*

and

*"At the end of the day, we went briefly to the Historical study centre, and were pleasantly surprised to find models of some of temples – as they originally looked – inside. The problem with many of these old ruined places is that there are NO TOUR GUIDES to tell you what you are looking at. Everything is up to the limited reading material available and your own imagination. Having these models made the task a little easier, even though I still am not completely sure what the full story of Ayutthaya is."*

Uninstructed information sources obstruct the learning aspect. Visitors may lack existing knowledge because the motivation to visit the heritage could only be 'to do the park'. However, when they are attracted to the historical significance of the heritage, they would probably want to rely on some information provided by the site. For instance, they may feel that the heritage is interesting when they interact with it so that they seek a more involving experience. Visitors could be disappointed by the unavailability of the knowledge that is related to either un-knowledgeable tour guides or on-site lack of information. This factor distracts visitors from the heritage interaction.

*"I was trying to read the information provided in front of the temple but I ended up knowing nothing...because they only tell you the year that this ruins was build., how tall I*



*it is... something like that. But what I wanted to know is what are the reason ancient people built this temple for.”*

and

*“I didn’t think that this historical park is so interesting. It makes me want to see more. I went to the tourist information ... wanted to get some information. Well it was not much there. I saw the model of the old city. That helps a little. But the leaflet I got from there was pretty much the same as what you find everywhere. I think we should have learned more...”*

In this case, inadequate information makes visitors fail to achieve satisfactory heritage experience.

*“By this time is around 2 in the afternoon and I had been biking around for about 3 hours (in the ridiculously hot sun). I was hoping the map provided was correct and turned on to a road that actually wasn't part of the park. The map was right but the road was still a major one for bike riding and I had to contend with pickup trucks zooming past me and farm equipment for about a mile. When I got back into the park, the scenery was beautiful but I was reaching my threshold for ruined temples. I knew it was time to head back when after about half a mile, I stopped, climbed up the gravelly hill (tripping twice because I was only wearing flip-flops), looked at the ruins and said "It's just another damn stupa! Everything in moderation”*

and

*“After so many temples and palaces, the scenery starts to repeat itself and it feels like your brain is going to throw up if you see one more.”*

Lack of information may give visitors the impression of repeated experience of similar things which could make them develop boredom towards the heritage visit.

### **Traffic Management**

A crowded atmosphere at the sites usually demolishes a sense of place. Traffic management at the sites emerges as a crucial element for heritage experience.

*“Due to the close proximity to Bangkok, Ayutthaya is also full of tourists. It is hard to feel romantic about the fabulous and incredibly old stupa standing in front of you, when there*



*is a line of tourists with silly fans next to the stupa waiting to snap a photo of themselves...these sacred ruins are just like...another tourist attraction. It wouldn't be pleasant when you are looking at such beautiful ruins and then the coach party came...there are hundreds of tourists talking and photographing behind you."*

and

*"I don't understand while they let such vehicles getting into the park. It causes pollution ...noises and air...and of course it spoils the atmosphere. The historical park looks like a public park to me. We are supposed to enjoy this atmospheric heritage park."*

Visitors' opinions reflect that the traffic in heritage sites becomes a factor of distraction that dilutes a sense of place or the heritage's historic value. This consequently causes dissatisfaction to visitors who (at that moment) were seeking to appreciate and understand the sight of heritage.

## **2. Unpleasant environmental condition**

The most important environmental condition to the heritage sites in this study is relevant to the climate. Unpleasant environmental conditions cause a negative impact on the visitor experience. For example, visitors may decide to 'just look at' the ruins to 'have a good time' together instead of carrying on tracing the heritage trails for more knowledgeable experience.

*"Most of the time...we watch ruins from our car. We would get off when we think that there are more things to see. We just walk around a little bit. We can't stay long because my friends are not familiar with the climate."*

and

*"There're lots to see there but I recommend you to go there as early as possible; otherwise, the sun will burn you and you will sweat like sauna."*

and

*"...bloody hell was it hot!! - but then again what did I expect riding around in the midday heat on bicycles!!! What does it say in the lonely planet...best visited by bicycle'... yeah if it's not 40 degrees out and as humid as you like!!!! Certainly got my dose of exercise mind!!!"*



### *Time Constraint*

One of the important factors affecting how individual visitors consume a heritage is the time constraint. This factor could obstruct the length of time, intention and involvement that the visitors could spend on their experience consumption as quoted below:

*“I wish we had more time. I’d like to come back and rent a bike...have more time to explore the ruins. We haven’t thought that we could come here’ and ‘I didn’t know that the park is this big.. So, I only think that I can do a half day tour.”*

*and*

*“I did stop by some of those temples but I can’t remember what they were called. Just stopped by some of them on the way...stopped and took a look.” And “I took some images of little temples. Do you know one of the elephants? And the Buddha up the way somewhere, the white Buddha. But I looked at the bigger stuff more because I had limited time. And a small temple doesn’t have anything to do. It’s for me. I stopped to that for a bit but I don’t know what it meant...I just liked the elephants. But they were reconstructed I think.”*

Visitors may find the time constraint imposed on them by an organised tour. Therefore, they cannot spend time experiencing the heritage in a more involving way because they have to see as much as the time allows when they travel with the group. They also have a limited chance to acquire the knowledge that can stimulate a higher level of interaction with the heritage site.

Time constraint also affects the heritage experience as an ‘impulsive decision’. Visitors may face a time constraint and do not have an opportunity to plan the trip and acquire information about the heritage site so that they end up with what often quoted ‘*seeing only few things.*’

#### **5.4.2 Managing the Outcome**

The heritage experience is an on-going activity. Individuals take the outcomes to lead and continue the consumption practice. The experience evaluation also determines the way in which visitors manage the results of the evaluation process, which can be encouraging or discouraging for an experience pursuit. After the experience is being consumed, the consequences of the evaluation are now considered. Different situations emerge from the data. Based on this study, there are three



possible resulting practices. On one hand, visitors may proceed with the heritage experience by repeating it when the heritage experience meets the experiential aspect or improve on it when the heritage experience is rewarded by the experiential aspect and external environments. On the other hand, visitors may delay or withdraw from the interactive experience process when the heritage experience is distracted by external environments.

### ***1. Repeating the interactive experience***

Individuals would retain the ways they experience a heritage for the time being at the heritage sites by repeating the experience consumption process when they achieve the experiential aspects. The willingness to maintain a certain consumption experience practice arises when visitors enjoy their experience of the toured objects in a preferable circumstance as quoted below:

*“I’d recommend everyone to see this beautiful wat. It was definitely my favourite wat by far...It was absolutely breathtaking. I would recommend renting a bicycle when you are in Sukhothai so you can ride around the park and see the ruins. You have a nice breeze while you are riding and feel like a kid again. It had been 14 years or so since rode a bike but it didn’t take me long to get the hang of it... you know the saying ... it’s like riding a bicycle... if you are in Thailand, Sukhothai is a must. Yeh...I kept riding!”*

and

*“The site is wonderful. It’s a photographers’ wet dream. I fired roles after roles!”*

Visitors are satisfied with the result of certain experience consumption practice. Hence, they retain a certain pattern of the heritage experience.

### ***2. Improving the interactive experience***

Individual visitors may seek a variety of experience consumption practices to gain more valuable heritage experience. They would improve the experience consumption process when the experience outcome is influenced by the factors of enjoyment or distraction. Experience contributes to the changed perception of evaluation, and to the breakdown of preconceived ideas about particular heritage attributes. Visitors develop a favourable way to consume a heritage through an improved experiential aspect. The willingness to improve experience consumption practice can either stem from both the factors of enjoyment and distraction as quoted below:



*“A great deal of the things that we see (architecture, Buddhist symbolism, etc) is a little esoteric; I think perhaps we need to do little reading on the history of Thailand and Hinduism-Buddhism to really get a better conception of the meaning behind what we are seeing. The differences between east and west are great and without more complete background in the nuances of the culture and history; we may be missing out a bit.”*

In this case, Glancing over the heritage is a rewarding consumption practice that encourages visitors to prolong the engagement with the site by acquiring knowledge about the heritage.

*“We passed Ayutthaya on our way to Bangkok and had only one afternoon, a night and the following morning. The short time and the unfavourable weather (clouds and occasional rains) did not allow us to see much of the place, but enough to assure me that I have to come back. And, trust me, then my stay will last a couple of days and I will come back with better and more photos than this time.”*

Further, individual visitors could seek a better way to appreciate a heritage attraction when they have learned how to experience it best over time as quoted below:

*“Outside the city walls of Old Sukhothai lays the giant, beautifully preserved Buddha at Wat Sri Chum. This has become the icon of Sukhothai, the four story high statue now instantly recognisable from a thousand postcards and brochures. Unsurprisingly, tourists and locals alike flock to this wat and are not disappointed – the sheer scale of the statue is mesmerising, and the tight confines of the protective shield around it makes its size all the more overpowering. The image is known as Phra Achana – one who is not frightened. Despite its slightly obscure location, a constant succession of coaches arrives for tourists to take photos of the famous Buddha. If you’re cycling, you can wait around like the locals until its quiet between coach loads so as to get a private audience with the Buddha. It’s an experience that lingers in the mind long afterwards.”*

and

*“I was very impressed. It was really much bigger than I thought. Then, I think I should see the other one, too...Sightseeing in Ayutthaya is a wakeup call. There must be many interesting things to see more ruins in other places.”*

Visitors lack interest since they have no idea about the historical site; therefore, they initially have little interest and low expectation of the sites and perceive the heritage as a tourist attraction.



However, the heritage sight gives an impression and enjoyment that encourage them to engage in more involving experience consumption; i.e., from doing the park to comprehending the heritage. The visitors plan a visit to other historical parks after gaining an enjoyment of sightseeing, which stimulate them to learn more about Thai heritage. It can be supposed that visitors also learn how to improve the experience for future visits to the same park and to other heritage sites.

### *3. Withdrawal from interactive experience process*

The results of the experience evaluation can distract visitor experience consumption in two ways: postponement of consumption practice and withdrawal from the interactive experience process. The followings are some examples of incidents.

Too much information whilst visitors are not very interested:

*“...the heat did not make my mood critical, instead, I was eager to just take and take photos...I even sneaked out when the group tour was guide talking and talking about the history...actually he was very talkative!”*

Individuals often find that extensive information discourages his/her experience of heritage.

#### Lack of information and knowledge

Visitors may lack interest and may not be willing to distinguish the differences of ruins they have visited. Hence, they feel that the sight of ruins is saturated after visiting a series of ruins.

*“We have had so many ruins in the past two days. I think that we have seen and heard a lot of them already. So, for this one today, we will just go around to have a look. Well, the park is very beautiful though. I think that sitting here is such a good experience...very relaxing in this atmosphere.”*

Visitors were tired of the continuous exposure to the ruins. The exploration reached the saturation of the experience. The interest and excitement begin to decline and boredom develops. Therefore, a consumption experience practice is replaced by doing the park as they shift the experiential to pleasurable sight of heritage by chilling out in the atmosphere.

Unclear signs and information may influence visitors' aspects of experience to shift from 'willingness to learn' to just aiming to see.



*“I think that the information is more than enough for tourists. It’s difficult for us when we read a sign or name. It’s very hard for us to remember. So, every time we look at the word. It’s new. We have to compare what we see.”*

Visitors end up doing the park and do not enjoy their experience of heritage because of some distraction factors – crowds affecting the peaceful sense of place.

Lack of interest could develop along the trip because visitors are presented with the repetitions of the same heritage experience.

*“We went to Wat Sri Chum...then Pra Pai Luang and the Sapanhin...but these ones we skipped. We were passing these wats on the way to the dyke...I think if we started here (the main entrance), we would have seen all the east temples. But we rode the bike...we saw them...and we said..ah..we know this..so we just passed by. In the beginning...everything ...you stop. But the longer you are riding and then you notice..ah..there’s another one.”*

and

*“I have seen enough temples. You know when we see this kind of thing again and again....you are kind of losing an interest...”*

Visitors cannot tell any differences among temple ruins they see because they do not know anything about those temple ruins. The uniqueness of attractions is not noticeable in visitors’ perception. Hence, visitors often withdraw from visiting some upcoming attractions on the trip schedule. A heritage visit is often described as *‘see one, see them all’*. They may form a perception toward a visit as they mention *‘well...it’s just another temple’*.

Warn Out.

The intensity of visitors’ interaction to a heritage may descend as they have been travelling around until they are worn out. Hence, they lose the interest on the upcoming attraction despite its spectacular monuments. Visitors may just glance over the heritage or socialise with fellow visitors as quoted below:



*“I think the wat we just went to was nice as well...but I did not see much...urr..things were nice when we just started off the tour.”*

and

*“Oh..Wat Sra Sri...We thought it was beautiful but it was the last temple we went. At that time we were so tired. We just thought...mmm..it’s an interesting one but we were too tired...so we just went there..but..well...maybe we should have a rest. We were sitting and chatting instead.”*

Visitors may withdraw from the interactive experience process with a heritage to socialise with others due to the declining interest in heritage attractions.

#### *Coach Party*

Visitors withdraw from interacting with the place since the crowds dilute the site ambience. Hence, they fail to be fully engaged and withdraw as quoted below:

*“I have been to Ayutthaya. It’s good but I think it’s too crowded. I only am there for 1 day. I didn’t enjoy much there.”*

and

*“I was enjoying watching the gigantic Buddha. It was quiet and peaceful. But then you realized there was a coach party....you turned your back...there were fifty people! The whole spiritual moment was just gone!!! We needed to leave the place.”*



## 5.5 CONCLUSION

The development of the theory of visitor experience consumption of attractions discussed in Chapter 5 addressed research question two by identifying how visitors perceive cultural heritage sites and how they interpret their interaction with the sites. Research question three is also addressed by identifying the factors that influence the visitors' experience at the sites and by investigating how these factors affect the experience. This chapter describes the elements of the interactive experience process which consists of the experiential aspect, the experience consumption practice and the evaluation of experience. It confirms the complexity of visitor experiences in terms of how '*individual visitors*' construct the meaning of experience explained by experiential aspect as well as the multiplicity of visitor experiences in terms of experience consumption practice. The findings in this chapter indicate different ways in which individual visitors authenticate their experience through the individuals' perceptions of authenticity at the time they engage in the on-site experience. In this study, the visitor heritage experience is attributed to the components of experience (see Chapter 4) and external or intervening factors. Visitors develop various aspects of experience (quest for culture, religion, nostalgia, sense of place, pleasure and history trails) which lead to a variety of experience consumption practices (enjoying the sight, appreciating the sight, idealising the past, doing the park, exploring the heritage, comprehending the heritage understanding, ritual experience and transforming the sight). Nevertheless, these experiential aspects and experience consumption practices participated by individual visitors are not mutually exclusive.

The findings in this chapter also acknowledge that the visitor experience is an interactive and dynamic process. The dynamic nature of experience is presented in terms of experience evaluation process by which external environments (factors of enjoyment and distraction) influence visitor interactive experience outcomes. Visitor experience consumption practices at the phase of an experience pursuit impart several meanings depending on experiential aspects they develop at the early phase of the interactive experience process and evaluate the heritage experience at the recollection phase. They manage the evaluated results in three ways: repeat experience consumption practice, improve experience consumption practice and delay or withdraw from the interactive experience process. Hence, during the course of on-site experience, individuals develop various experiential aspects and participate in various experience consumption practices in order to achieve those aspects of preferable heritage experience. Indeed, visitors have an active role in initiating and creating their own heritage experiences which can be both interpretive and sensual interactions. This study establishes the notion that visitor experience involves individuality. An individual may experience a heritage in many different ways depending on the quest for an



experience at the time being. A visitor could consume heritage in many aspects and use various ways of practice.

In this chapter the elements of the interactive experience process explains how visitors experience and interact with heritage sites, the meanings they associate with the sites, their participation, how they interpret their interactions with the sites, and how they construct and shape their experience of heritage sites. The discussion addresses research question one. Chapter 7 of this thesis collates the response to the research questions in relation to the research findings and comparisons with relevant literature.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **EXPERIENCE IN TOURISM CONTEXT**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses experience in the tourism context which will be used for theoretical comparison to the emergent theory. These theoretical reviews are used to explicate distinctive nature of visitor experience including dynamic nature, complexity and multiplicity of experience. The reviewed literatures are categorise into major concepts including experience process, approaches to experience, dimensions of experience, and authentication of experience.

#### **6.2 EXPERIENCES IN TOURISM CONTEXT**

The concepts relevant to the visitor experience consist of experience process, on-site experience and the dynamic nature of experience.

##### **6.2.1 Experience Process**

This section reviews a basic model of the leisure experience process (Figure 6.1) patterned after a model suggested by Mannell (1999) and Driver and Toucher (1970). This model involves three basic parts: input, throughput and output of leisure engagements. The '*input*' refers to innate or learned needs and preferences that push or drive people to decide to engage in recreation. '*The through put*' refers to on-site activity that is shaped by both input motivations and on-site setting conditions. '*The output*' refers to the leisure experience that can be viewed as immediate outcomes, as satisfactions with elements of the experience and overall satisfaction, and finally as benefits (improved conditions) from having engaged in the activities in the specific setting. '*The output*' is shaped by both input and throughput variables.



Figure 6.1 Model of leisure experience



### *Input*

Driver and Touche's (1970) behavioural approach to tourism suggests that recreation is an experience based on intrinsically rewarding engagements during a non-obligation time. The experience engagement includes a participation in an activity which can be anything that is freely chosen during non-work time. Indeed, the engagement must provide pleasure to be intrinsically rewarding; for instance, the recreation may be simply a state of mind. With this approach, human behaviour is viewed as goal-directed; that is person's choices are instrumental in obtaining some goals or need satisfaction. Hence, the human behaviours are driven by needs, preferences and desires to achieve certain outcomes or benefits from leisure experience. Manfredo, Driver, and Brown (1983) states that there is an expectation that effort to recreation leading to the desired performance for an individual to engage in a specific leisure activity in a specific setting and successful performances will lead to the experience that was desired. Additionally, the theory of recreation and leisure (Driver *et al* 1987) assumes that the choices made by human are reasonably rational and people tend to participate in leisure activities to attain a desired goal or motivation for participation or leisure pursuit. The motivation to recreation consists of psychological and physical forces. This pull motivation represents the desire for a gain in learning, creativity, and self-actualisation which can be potentially fulfilled by attributes and components in the leisure experience and setting. Thus, experience preferences are commonly seen as important reasons or motivations for an individual's participation in an activity (Heywood 1987). This statement gives an overview of a model of recreation experience and the role of motivations in shaping recreation experiences.

### *On-site engagement*

On-site engagement involves an individual's encounters the attributes of the setting, engages in activities, and begins to experience and evaluate the quality of setting and activities engaged in. This evaluation is partly based on motivational forces and experience preferences that prompt the recreational engagement. The setting variables consist of physical (landscape and facility conditions), social (use and user conditions), and managerial (information and education services)



(Driver et al 1987). The on-site engagement can also be explained by the model of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) approached by Virden and Knopf (1989). The model is relevant to the setting management and planning by which the basic assumption is that people choose a particular activity in a setting to achieve a particular preference experience. In other words, people have different needs and preferences when they consume leisure and recreation. The application of the ROS is to ensure that a diversity of recreation opportunities and preferences is satisfied.

### *Output*

The output addresses quality and benefit of leisure experience. The model suggests that experience is shaped by what in the visitors' mind brought to the site, the setting attributes encountered, and the activities engaged. Thus, the quality of experience can be conceptualised in various dimensions including cognitive, affective, and behavioural/physiological.

The '*cognitive dimension*' of experience typically includes '*learning aspect*'. Roggenbuck, Loomis, and Dagostino (1991) conclude that people engaged in leisure activities in a leisure setting grow in knowledge of facts and/or concepts and develop framework for organising knowledge. These recreational engagements often result in increased learning that is highly satisfying. Roggenbuck, Williams, and Bobinski (1992) reveal that significant increases in knowledge about natural and cultural history among New River Gorge rafters with trained guides and that the increased knowledge is value by participants. Along with the learning, the improvement of attitudes towards perception of park resources and conservation can also be achieved through leisure activities as well as an increased desire to visit historical sites.

The '*affective dimension*' involves changes in mood, such as an increase in happiness or enjoyment yielded from leisure experience. Mannell (1999) contends that leisure is a positive experience accompanied by satisfying and pleasurable moods, emotions, or feelings. The mood can be defined as a specific set of subjective feelings that occur as a consequence of everyday life experience including happiness, sadness, excitement, and relaxation. This experience can be predictable, measurable, theoretically grounded product of leisure activity. Moreover, leisure-related cause of mood can have many consequences, for instance, certain moods can increase attention and cognition among participants (Hull 1991). An individual in a state of relaxation would like to spend more time learning and be more respectful of resource or other visitors. Nevertheless, output of leisure engagement can be negative when visitors experience conflict and it can be associated with both affective and cognitive dimensions.



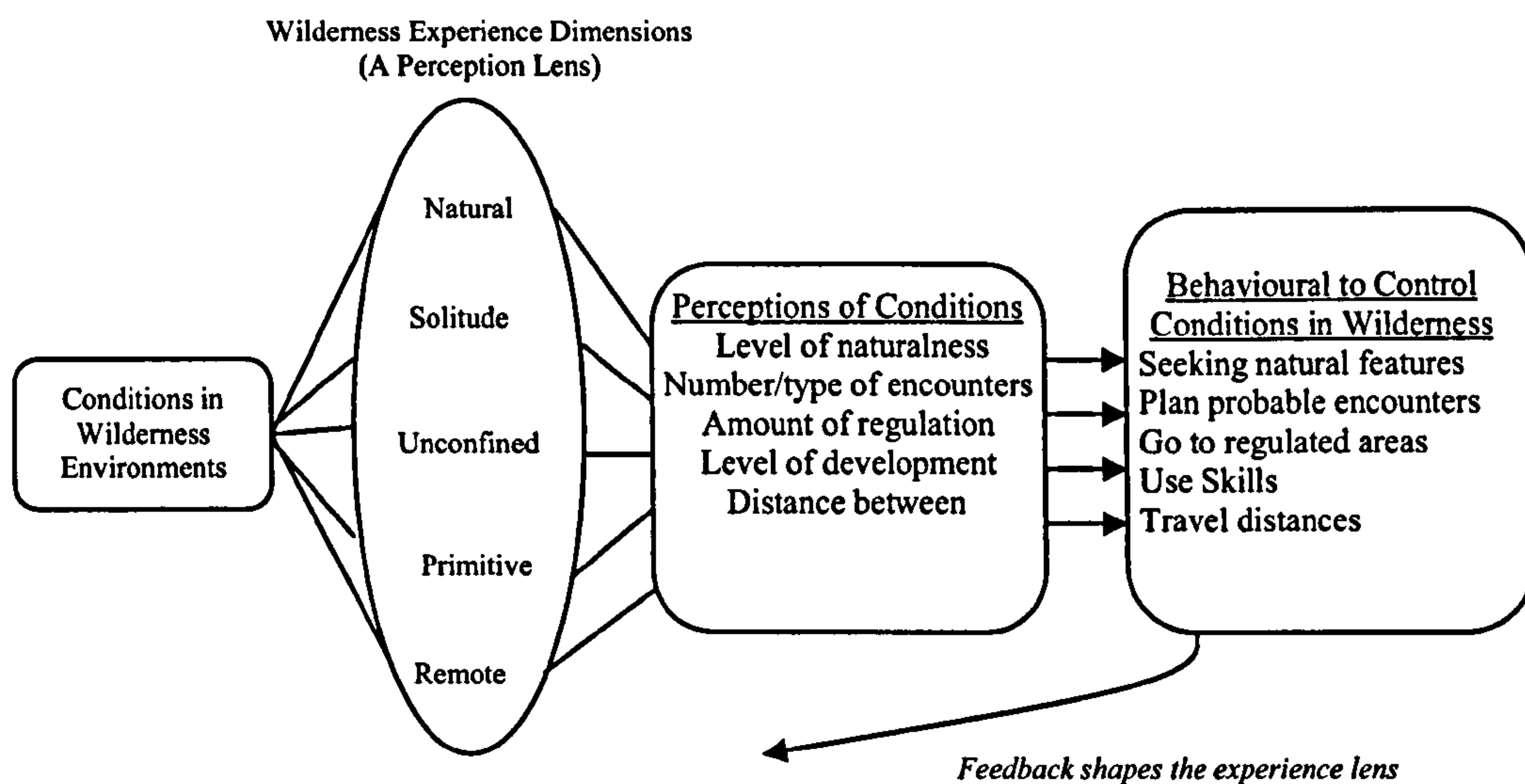
The 'behavioural' and 'physiological dimension' of leisure output is explained by the study by Paffenberger, Hyde and Dow (1991) which reveals that some of the beneficial impacts of recreational engagements on the well-being of the individual can be achieved through more rigorous leisure pursuits, but on any level leisure time can be used to reduce stress in an individual. Ulrich *et al* (1991) also states that the temporary escape from life's pressure can reduce stress and the restorative properties of leisure allows for stress reduction. Active activity such as exercise or passive recreation such as sitting and enjoying a natural landscape works to produce a sense of control to overcome stress.

### 6.2.2 On-site experience

This section reviews a literature regarding on-site experience of which the concept is relevant and comparable to the emergent theory.

The on-site experience can be explained by the qualitative study of wilderness behaviour (Shafer and Hammit 1995). The study adopts Brunswik's Lens Model (Figure 6.2) to explain how wilderness experience dimensions act as a lens to organise and focus perceptions of wilderness conditions that influence recreation behaviour in wilderness.

**Figure 6.2 Conceptual model of wilderness experience**



Source: Shafer and Hammit (1995)

The model represents congruency among experience dimensions (goals), condition indicators, and coping behaviour (actions) in wilderness recreation. The wilderness experience dimensions exist



and reflect five descriptors (nature, solitude, unconfined, primitive and remote). These dimensions are congruent with constructions representing perceived conditions and coping behaviours. The study indicates that natural and solitude aspects of the recreational experience are most significant in the relationship among the constructions. This means people attachment to the experience depends on the perception of conditions which then influence behaviour that feeds back to the experience meanings, changing way the lens might order and focus the perception in the future. The model also suggests that recreationists use behaviours to control and manage the conditions, and thus their wilderness experience. Additionally, Roggenbuck *et al* (1992) indicates that the wilderness recreation experience is multidimensional, and emphasised the need to select condition indicators that represent dimensions as a part of experience process. Furthermore, Borrie and Roggenbuck (2001) provide evidence illustrating dynamic, emergent and multi-phasic nature of the on-site wilderness experience. They suggest that the wilderness experience is dynamic, complex, and evolving. The wilderness visitors tended to attune more to certain aspects of wilderness environment and to feel greater connection to some core wilderness values after a period of time. The condition indicators and coping behaviours can be interpreted in relation to the policy dimensions for wilderness management.

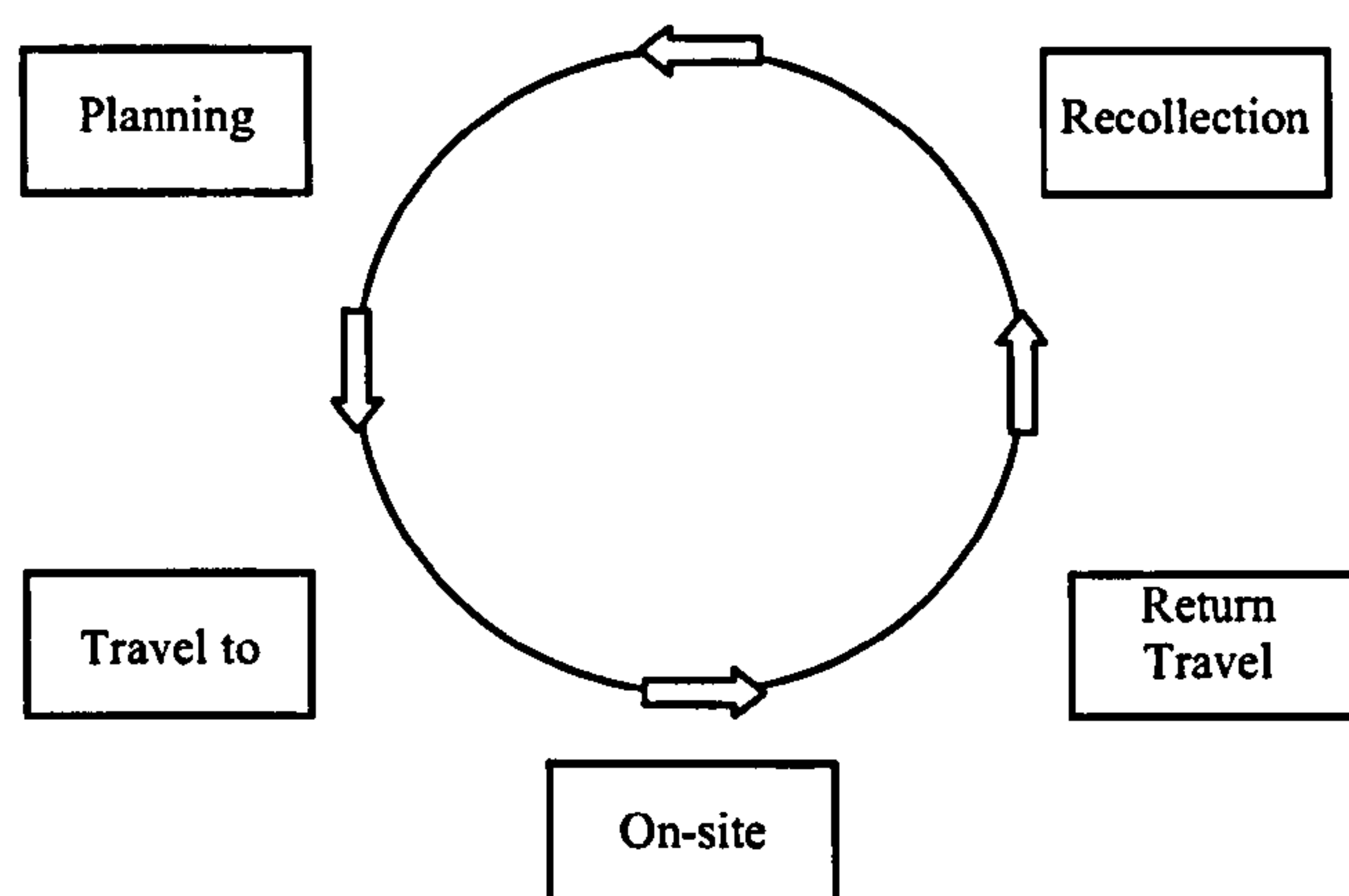
### 6.2.3 Dynamic Nature of Experience

This section reviews travel experience process (Clawson and Knetsh 1966) and three phases of the vacation experience (Craig-Smith and French 1994).

Many studies state that tourism experience has a dynamic nature (Driver and Toucher 1970; Hull *et al* 1992; Killion 1992 Lounsbury and Polik 1992; Craig-Smith and French 1994; Mannell 1999; Borrie and Roggenbuck 2001). Clawson and Knetsh (1966) described the outdoor recreation experience as *multi-phasic* and the total experience typically consists of five phrases in travel experience process (Figure 6.3): anticipation, travel to, the actual on-site experience, the travel back phase, and the recollection phase, in which outdoor recreationists gain satisfaction or dissatisfaction from each phrase of interaction. There might also be a common pattern of increasing joy, satisfaction, or benefit from the anticipation through travel to and including the on-site experience (Killion 1992). The experience may drop in satisfaction during the travel back phase, but then considerably recover in benefits during the recollection phase.

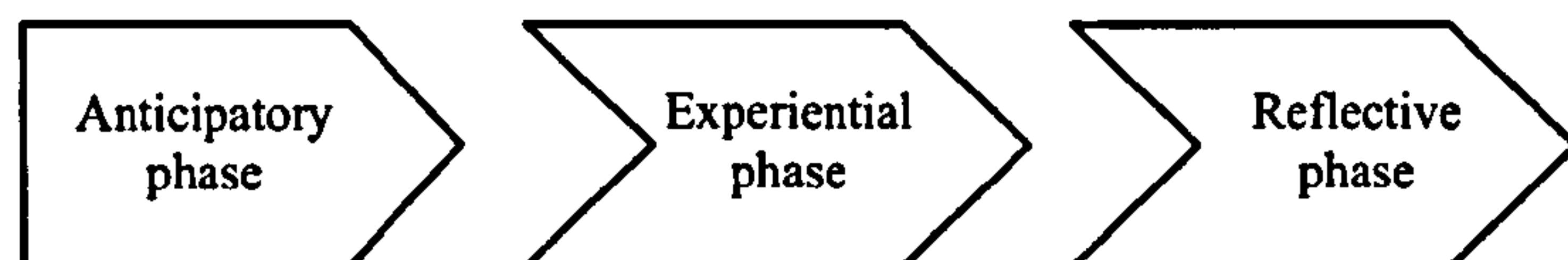


**Figure 6.3 The travel experience process [Killion, 1992 after Clawson's recreation model (1963)]**



To be possibly be understood in parallel with the travel experience process by Killion's (1992) shown in Figure 6.3, the dynamic nature of experience is depicted through the three-phase vacation experience introduced by Craig-Smith and French (1994) (Figure 6.4).

**Figure 6.4 the three phases of the vacation experience (Craig-Smith and French, 1994)**



Source: Craig-Smith and French (1994)

Additionally, Arnould and Price's (1993) study on the dynamic nature and benefits of the lengthy raft trip on the Colorado River suggests that during the trip, participants experienced huge mood swings, including appreciation, fear, frustration, and awe while McIntyre and Roggenbuck (1998) obtain real-time measures of the dynamic nature of outdoor recreation and report the changing nature of an adventure recreation experiences and the person-nature transaction by focusing on key variables including attention, mood states, feelings of connection with nature, and perception of risk and competence.

### 6.3 VISITOR EXPERIENCE

This section reviews visitor experience in relation to heritage visitation. The heritage experience is analysed through six different approaches and follows with the meaning of experience and authentication of experience.



### 6.3.1 Visitor Experience through Different Approaches

The visitor experience in tourism discussed using six different approaches including insider-outsider approach, expectancy-value model, typological approach, flow, hierarchical approach, and post modern of tourist experience approach.

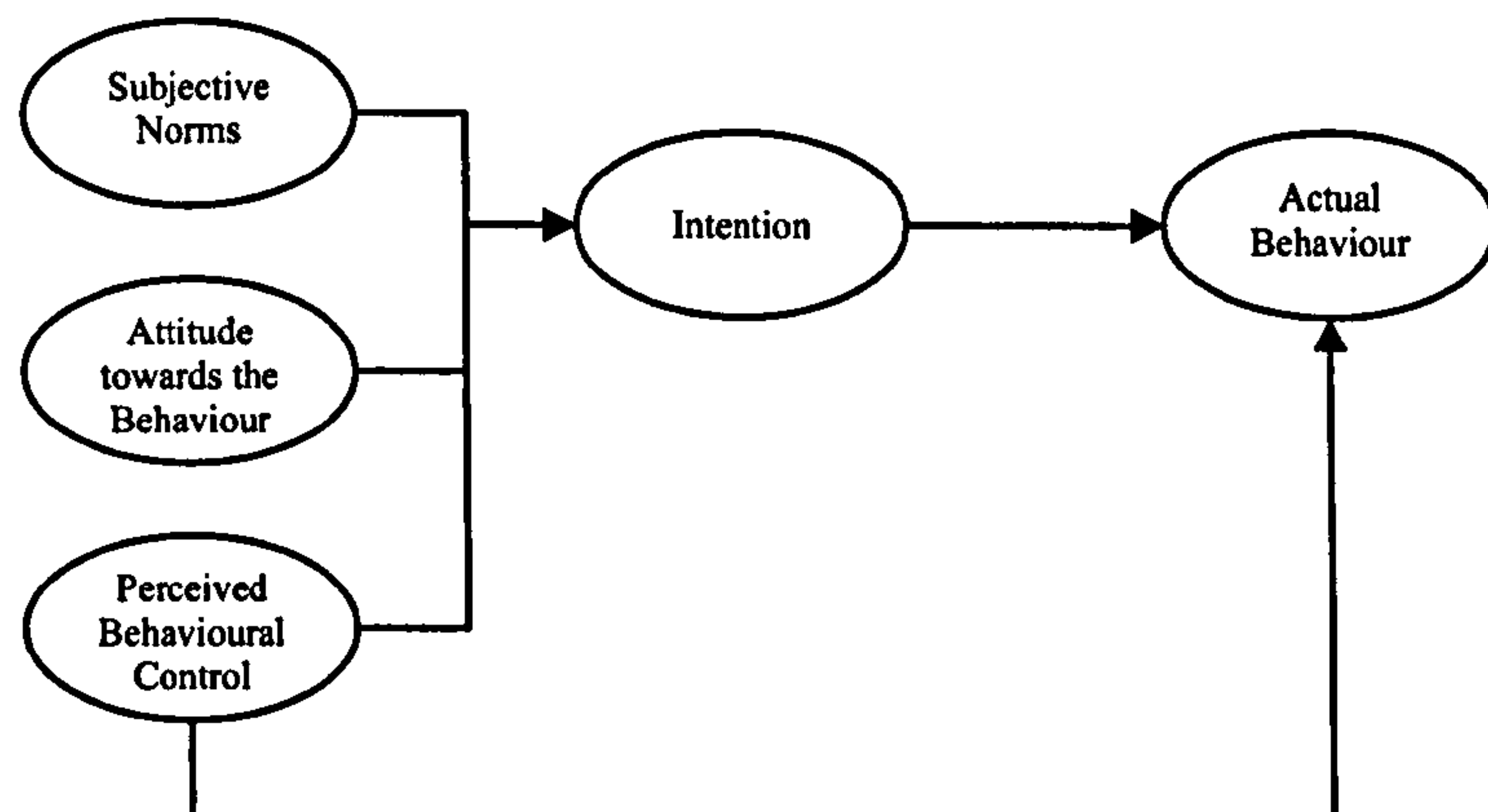
#### 1. The insider – outsider approach

The insider-outsider approach can be categorised by a distinction between experience of the 'insiders', which are natives to a particular destination, and the experience of the 'outsiders', which are normally tourists (Prentice, Witt and Hamer 1998). With this approach the symbolic meaning of recreational setting are combined with their multi-attribute use-appraisal (William *et al* 1992). It postulates that people may specialise in some leisure pursuits and other people may be place specialists with pattern of leisure focused on the experience of place (p. 43).

#### 2. Expectancy-value model

The model states that expectancy or likelihood of an action creates a certain outcome. Its value combined with the attractiveness of that outcome creates a motivation to pursue such an outcome. This approach can be explained by theory of plan behaviour which is suggested by Ajzen (1991) and shown in Figure 6.5. The theory suggests that behaviour may be predicted by one's intentions, and these intentions are, in turn, influenced by one's attitudes towards the behaviour. These behaviours include beliefs about social norms regarding the behaviour, and one's belief about his or her ability to carry out behaviour.

Figure 6.5 theory of planned behaviour (TPB)





The TPB seeks to predict goal oriented behaviour from behavioural, normative, and control beliefs. It offers potential to evaluate behavioural beliefs in terms of experience of benefit sought. The individual's intention to perform the given behaviour is placed at the heart of TPB. The theory asserts that intention to act is determined by the individual's attitudes towards performing behaviour, the subjective norms held by the individual, and the individual perceived behaviour control over the act. Indeed, the behavioural beliefs are assumed to influence attitudes towards a specific behaviour (e.g., a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of participating activities). The attitudes are informed by beliefs while the norms are informed by normative beliefs and motivation to comply. Further, the perceived behavioural control is informed by beliefs about the individual possession of the opportunities and resources needed to engage in behaviour. According to Ajzen (1985), an attitude toward behaviour is a positive or negative evaluation of performing behaviour. Nevertheless, the theory of planned behaviour does not specify the particular beliefs that are associated with any particular behaviour.

### 3. Typological approach

The typological approach is associated with the tourist typology described by several literatures including Cohen (1974), Smith (1978), Stewart *et al* (1998), McKercher (2002), Wickens (2002), Goulding (2002), Poria *et al* (2003), and Hayllar and Griffin (2005). The typology of tourists conceptualised by various criteria is summarised in Appendix F.

Cohen (1974) was one of the first sociologists to propose a typology to conceptually clarify the term '*tourist*'. The strength of Cohen's typology is that it recognised the tourist as a polymorphous consumer and attempts to specify types in terms of clearly expressed dimensions such as institutional/non-institutional, familiar and strange.

Smith's (1978) typology emphasises on what is consumed: the cultures of exotic peoples, vanishing but familiar lifestyles, past glories, and alien environments as well as demographic characteristics of tourists. Stewart *et al* (1998) categorises types of visitors by provisions of interpretation including primary interpretation (displays at visitor centre, audio visual, staff assistance, models, on-site panels, interpretive shelter, leaflet and guide book), secondary interpretation (form of verbal and written commentary offered on transport to and from the site and is typically auxiliary to the wider activity) and tertiary interpretation (advertising media including posters on and off-site, TV, radio, merchandise and pictorial books, informal conversation with park staff, other visitors, or accompanying friends and family) in order to enhance the sense of place.



McKercher (2002) conceptualises the classification of cultural tourists using two dimensions: the desire to engage in cultural activities or the main reason to visit the destination and the level of engagement with the destination. The study contends that there are different abilities to engage cultural and heritage attractions based on an array of factors including their level of education, awareness of the site prior to the visit, preconception of the site, interest in it, its meaning to them, time availability, the presence or absence of competing activities that vie for their time and a host of other factors. It is also argued that people travelling for similar motives may have fundamentally different experiences based on their abilities to engage the site as also illustrated by Kerstetter *et al* (1998) and McIntosh and Prentice (1999). These types of cultural tourist reflect the expected relationship between centrality of purpose and depth of experience in that people who are highly motivated to travel for cultural tourism reasons would also be expected to be the group most likely to have deep experience.

Wickens (2002) introduces classification of tourists by acknowledging the sacred and the profane in tourist experience of place characterised by choices of holiday, types of activities, and views about host community. These expectations are reflected in on-site experience of tourists. The qualitative analysis of British holidaymaker in Chalkidiki, Greece indicates that different tourist types experience the same host community in different ways. The motivation to travel is defined as the need to escape, the desire for pleasure, and ontological security. Wickens classifies mass tourists into five types: the cultural heritage, the raver, the Shirley Valentine, the Heliolatrous, and the Lord Byron Types. Goulding (2002) conceptualised typology of heritage visitors from six factors relating to consumer behaviour at the heritage sites including the presence of and intensity of alienation; the degree of cultural and personal identification with the interpretation; simulation of nostalgia through the experience; the desire for authenticity; educational motives; and the need for social interaction.

Interestingly, Poria *et al* (2003) conceptualise type of tourist travelling to heritage destination by investigating the relationship among four group of variables (personal characteristics, site attributes, awareness and perception) and behaviour of tourists of which the perceptions lie at the core of heritage tourism and that perceptions are associated with the visitation pattern. The study suggests that a definition of heritage tourism can be 'a subgroup' in which the main motivation for visiting is based on the characteristics of the place according to the tourist perceptions of their own heritage. The study identifies four segments of tourists visiting a heritage site. Finally, Hayllar and Griffin (2005) address three types of cultural tourist in the study of phenomenological approach to the precinct experience of tourist. Based on the combination of motivation and the way in which the precinct was used, three distinct types of visitors seemed to emerge.



#### 4. Flow approach

The Flow approach describes visitor experience in terms of state of engagement at a particular moment. Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1991) contend that there is a deep concentration and focus on intrinsic reward, one does not notice the passage of time, and one's self-awareness drops dramatically in an engagement. This engagement is associated with an optimal level of arousal in the human being, and thus has been most investigated in adventure, risk-taking, and similar forms of recreation and tourism. The approach also describes a state of engagement involving a loss of sense of time passing, a lack of self-consciousness, and the dominance of intrinsic rewards, intense participant involvement, deep concentration, and a transcendence of the sense of self. Further, Thompson *et al* (1993) add wonder and intellectual challenge into the list. Flow is an excellent model for studying a short period of time, as well as risk taking or adventure activities. Constructed by Hoffman and Novak (1996) construct, the flow experience is composed of the core experience of flow; close correlates of the flow experience (i.e., playfulness); antecedents of flow (i.e., skill, challenge, interactivity, focused attention, arousal); and consequences of flow (including positive effect, exploratory behaviour and control).

#### 5. Hierarchical approach

The use of the term '*hierarchy*' refers to the fact that, as a result of the experience, there are first-order outcomes that may lead to subsequent outcomes. Hierarchical models derive mainly from various studies (Brown, Strankey and Gregoire 1987; Driver, Tinsley and Manfreda 1991; Manning 1999). These studies were conducted to develop and assess specific management applications, such as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum – ROS (Prentice *et al* 1998). They represent a substantial North America outdoor recreation tradition, which has developed applications. Similar to the TPB, the hierarchical model, in management terms, is goal-directed. It applies management goals in the ROS as part of integrated project design and the end product of the recreation management is the experience people have. Hence, the goal in this case is experience. These benefits are typically grouped into the three categories of personal, societal and economic (Driver, Brown and Peterson 1996). This model leads to the '*experience-based management*', where managerial output translates into the output subjectively experienced by participants (Manfreda, Driver and Brown 1983; Bruns *et al* 1994). Later it has been advocated as a replacement for '*activity-based management*', where the provision of activities represents managerial end products. Hierarchical models of experience offer the potential for developing a '*benefit segmentation*' of tourists as an alternative to the more common socio-demographic or activity segmentations (Prentice, Witt and Hamer 1998). The benefit-based management describes these experience-based management outputs more explicitly as improved outcome of experiences



that is the *benefit chain of causality* links activities, setting, experiences, and benefit in such experience sequence (Driver, Brown, Stankey and Gregoire 1987; Haas, Driver and Brown 1980; Manning, 1986). The activities are undertaken in the setting to gain experiences that are regarded as beneficial which may vary by activities undertaken (Haggard and Williams 1991), for example, psychological benefits including affiliation, cooperation, nurturance, security, supervision, advancement, exhibition, independence, play and understanding (Driver, Tinsley and Manfredi 1991). Experiences also include enjoyment of nature, escape from physical stress, learning, sharing similar value and creativity. These experiences themselves may symbolise identities and images.

Most studies that attended to the tourist experience have adopted the hierarchical model. Regarding the RSR, hierarchical models cover all stages of time (before, during and after the visit). It allows for the identification of potential benefits, segmentation with few *a priori* constraints. The hierarchical model also offers the potential to segment tourists by the ultimate product of tourism and such segments can be appraised in terms of motivations and constraints (Davis and Prentice 1995).

## 6. Post-modern tourist experience

Post-modern tourist experience has added value to the tourism study by which the exploration of nature of tourist experience is induced from their perspectives. The approach involves the growing attention that is given to the role of subjectivity in the constitution of the tourist experience. It focuses on interaction of tourists and destinations. Post-modern mode of theorising is associated with a variety of characteristics, including deconstruction, subjectivity, scepticism, anti-empiricism, intertextuality, and relativity (Uriely, 2004).

There is a limited literature on the interaction between visitors and cultural heritage. Nevertheless, the seminal work of Ittelson *et al* (1976) develops a general understanding of natural environment experience. The exploration attempts to clarify the more phenomenological nature of experience illustrates modes of experiencing the environment which depicted the ways in which visitors experience environment consisting of five main modes. First, the environment is positioned as an external '*physical place*'. Second, environment is described in terms of the '*self*', wherein man is totally integrated with the environment. Third, environment is portrayed as a '*social system*', i.e. a place to socialise. Fourth, environment is presented as an '*emotional territory*' to be expressed by feelings. And fifth, the environment is depicted as a '*setting of action*'. Related to Itellson's model but presented in broader categories, Mausner (1996) used a kaleidoscope model and in-depth content analysis to reveal that human-environment interaction include physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual dimensions. Additionally, Webb (2002) investigates the structure of visitor



experiences in Western Australia and identifies six experience themes consisting of the educational and social expedition, the nature of the landscape and how participant perceived their relationship with the landscape, and the expressions of spiritual and affect.

The study of the Museum Experience by Falk (1982) provides interesting characteristic of museum experience of visitors. It explored recollection '*themes*' including social, geographical, temporal context of their visit. The length of time they spent in the museum and their mood, a few of the exhibit they have seen, and some aspects of the museum's architecture or feel were considered in the study. Regarding the themes, Falk and Dierking (1992) subsequently add a model that conceptualised the visit as an interaction between personal context, social context and physical context.

The Interactive Experience model from this study emphasises the '*recollection*' which represents a dynamic process of learning experience in museum that occurs at the interaction of three overlapping contexts – personal, social, and physical. Each of which influences a visitor's museum learning experience. The personal context represents expectations and anticipated outcomes each person has for his or her museum visit. These are social-recreational, educational, and reverential reasons for coming. The social context represents people with whom visitors come into contact while visiting the museum. These people could be companions, museum staff, and other visitors. Such social event as family bonding is also an important part of the visit. The authors argue that learning in museum is largely a social activity. The physical context represents museum environment including building structure and types of exhibits in various aspects of size, structure. It also involves an aspect of individual exhibits (i.e., the routes people tend to take, the time they spend, and the onset of '*museum fatigue*') that the overall learning experience. The memory and recall are considered as critical indicators of learning.

In addition to the interactive experience model, with a resemble of part of Falk (1998) and McManus's (1993) '*memory categories*', Hick (2005) divides participants account into four categories consisting of the context (social and temporal surrounding the visit), the ambience (the museum building and its external and internal environment), the exhibits (accounts of particular exhibits or displays) and the commentaries (participants' opinions, reflections and comparison). Hick (2005) contends that the recollections of mental states enlivened most accounts and feelings of pleasure and that the excitement and fascination are frequently expressed.

Falk and Dierking (1995) examine an exhibit perspective, which stresses the importance of quality exhibits to attract and hold attention through the visitor perspective. The study emphasises visitor's individuality and agenda as well as a setting perspective centred on environmental and social



factors (i.e., acceptable social behaviour and physical layout). It found that after an initial orientation period, most visitors followed a predictable pattern: a *learning mode* (serious looking at exhibits) and followed by *seeing the museum* mode (cruising around). Since this behaviour was consistent across subjects and exhibits, the authors conclude that the setting perspective best fit their data; that people come to museums to look at exhibits rather than to learn about a specific topic. Additionally, Botterill and Crompton (1996) provide a research finding from the perspective of individual tourists, which indicates that emotional stages are integral to understanding optimal leisure experiences.

McIntyre (1998) illustrates the aspects of a wilderness experience described by western wilderness philosophers. These aspects include solitude, primitiveness, oneness, timelessness and care. Of these, participants recorded high level of timelessness, moderate level of care and solitude, but low level of oneness and primitiveness. However, feelings varied considerably depending upon the level of activity. The feelings of care for the environment, oneness and primitiveness were reportedly highest during such active times as walking and canoeing. In contrast, timelessness scores showed highest levels during activities. Maintenance activities were least likely timelessness, solitude, and oneness with nature. An important factor in how individuals interpret their experience is the character or context of the interaction they are seeking (Andereck *et al* 2005). Cohen (1979) suggests that travel experience is, for many consumers, akin to a religious experience or pilgrimage, and offering more than the reward of just being there.

Falk *et al* (1998) provide a support for a notion derived from previous theories of learning that pre-visit agendas influence the learning. Agenda is a term used to incorporate both the motivations and strategies that visitors use in learning during the museum visit. Further, a visitor's motivation to visit has a large impact on what and how much they learn at the museum. The visitors with a high entertainment motivation showed high learning and spent a good deal of time in the exhibit. Therefore, the educational and entertainment goals should be connected. The study also explores demographic factors (i.e., age and education and psychographic factors (i.e., individual's attitudes towards leisure, education, personal and cultural history variables such as early childhood experiences, and environmental variables such as advertising and word-of-mouth recommendations). Among the demographic findings that are agreed upon generally, Falk notes that the museum-goers are better educated, more affluent, and hold better paying jobs than the average American and the museum-goers value learning, seek to explore new things, doing something worthwhile (loosely based on Hood's work in this area). The author claims that this is a fact that is true among art, history, science, museums and zoos as well as botanical gardens.



Crouch *et al* (2001, 2002, 2003) address the concepts of '*tourist encounters*' to understand the way tourists construct significance in places through dimensions of space, destinations and sites. The concept focuses on what individual tourists do and how they make sense of what they do when they are in a contemporary culture and society. It is conceptualised around a 'subject-centred' tourist experience of place by which tourists make their own sense of the tourism experience and draw upon available contexts in so doing but in relation to what they make sense of themselves. It is summarised as a process in which the subject actively plays an imaginative, reflexive role, not detached but semi-attached, socialized, crowded with contexts, resulting the knowledge that resembles a patina and kaleidoscope. The elements of tourist encounters consists time/space, intersubjectivity, expressivity and poetic. The encounter includes more explicitly moments of action. It is expressive, intersubjective and poetic, and mediates through the way the body is engaged actively in the space. Where the complexity of the encounter engaged in directly by the tourist, with reference to all sorts of contexts and representations, the visitor produces individual's own sense of things. The tourist encounter also relates to connections and disconnections in a contemporary society. Further, it is a complexity of multi-sensual surfaces that the embodied subjects reach or find the proximity and makes sense of imagination. This combination contains meanings of landscapes, fragments, spaces, whole and abstractions of the places (Crouch 1999). To this end, tourism may become verbalised, thus active, agentive, and subjective through the tourist in that tourists make his/her own sense of what's going on, drawing up on, and their own resources in encountering the world (Crouch *et al* 2001). Importantly, the concept suggests that the agency and subjectivity are crucial constituents of the process, in this case '*being a tourist*'.

### 6.3.2 Meaning of Experience

A number of scholars have exploited the consumption and experience of tourism from emotional basis to rational basis. The reviewed literatures in this section emphasise various criteria that lead visitor perceptions towards memorable and meaningful experiences. These literatures reveal antecedents, passive and active characteristics and multi-sensory of experience used for a comparison with the emergent theory.

Cohen (1979) develops a phenomenological typology of experience by analysing different meanings and appreciations of the culture, social life and the natural environment of others have for the individual traveller by which '*quest for the centre*' is the core of the analysis. A model of '*tourist typology*' is conceptualised according to modes of experience sought by the tourists. The typology relates to different points of a continuum of privately constructed '*world*' of individual travellers, which may not necessarily be identical with those prevalent in their culture. The



continuum ranges from the opposite poles of the conception of the space characteristic of modern tourism to that of the pilgrimage on the other.

Cohen's framework addresses that a type of tourist (or significance of tourism in one's life) is based on the person's centre that depends upon his or her world's view to society. Five main modes of tourist experience are distinguished on the basis of the types of experience they are seeking (Table 6.1).

**Table 6.1 Cohen's modes of tourist experience**

Modes of experience	Characteristics
Recreational mode	Tourists emphasise on physical recreation in a form of entertainment
Diversionary mode	Tourists are seeking an alternative experience from everyday life.
Experiential mode	Tourists quest for meaning outside the confines of one's own society.
Experimental mode	Tourists have the main desire to be in contact with local people and look for meaning of life of others
Existential mode	Tourists who are committed to an 'elective' spiritual centre phenomenological accepted to be closest to a religious conversion.

This typology represents different styles of consumption, including restoration of personal well-being, escape from boredom, search for aesthetic meaning, search for alternative lifestyles, and the embracing of alien cultures. In other words, heritage may be consumed with the intention gaining different benefits.

Pine and Gilmore (1998), in experience economy, conceptualise four sub-categories experience of tourism on the basis of traveller active and passive approaches when participating in the service event. Entertaining, educational, aesthetic and escapist dimensions of experience are recognised as experience categories. The participation can vary from an active merging with the product or merely by passive interacting with it. In other words, people may be actively involved in producing the experience or they only enjoy the interesting event. Mental and physical participation of people are presented in the conceptualisation of experience. The active participations in tourism involve the engagement of visitors with exciting and vigorous activities. Nevertheless, individual may only investigate the scenery or environment in multi-sensory manners.

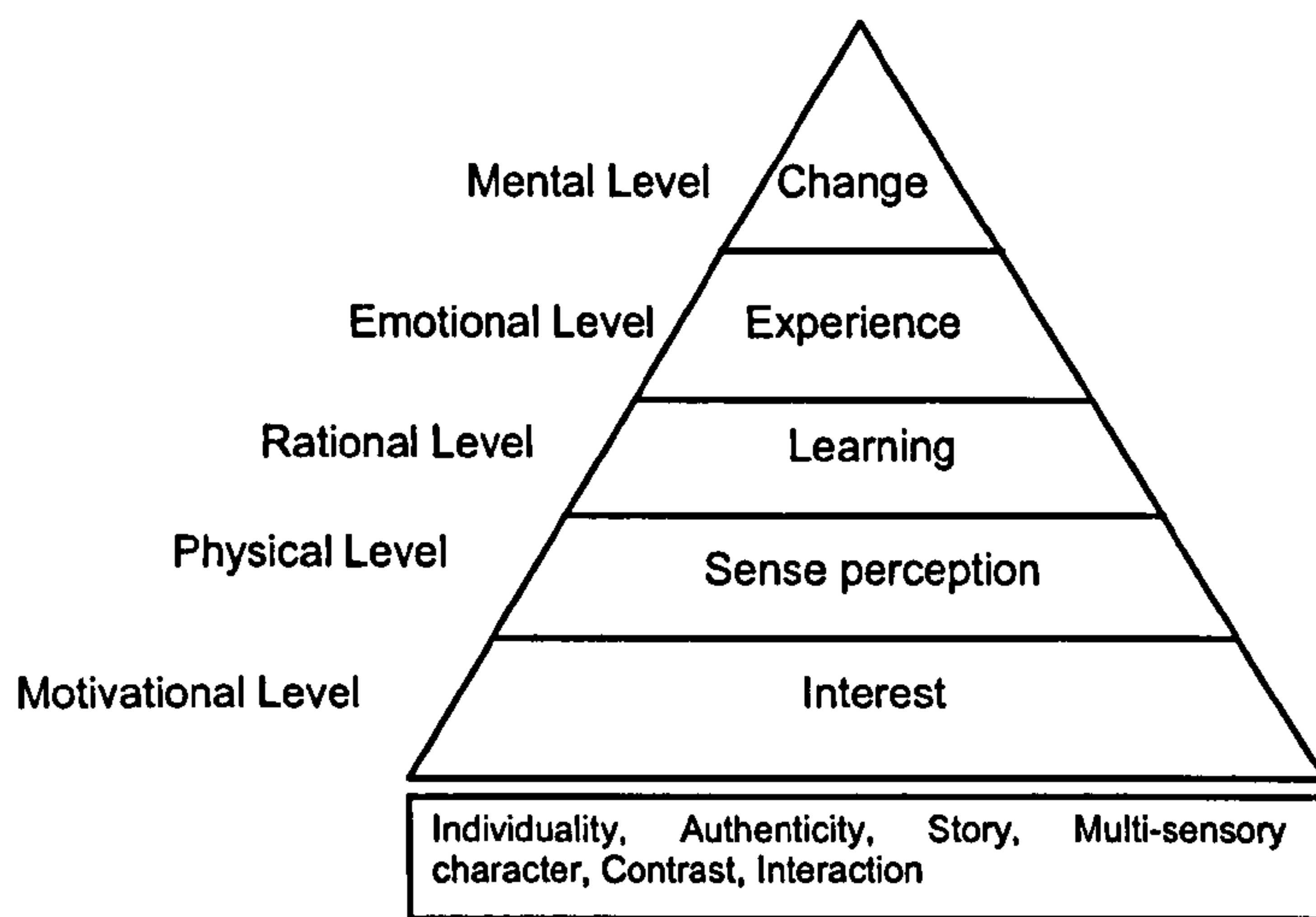
Roggenbuck and Driver's (2000) research on symbolic interaction suggest prospected beneficial outcomes of wilderness experiences including the potential developmental (self-concept), therapeutic/ mental health, physical health, self-sufficiency, social identity (kinship and recognition), educational, spiritual and aesthetic/creativity benefits. The research addresses 'inhibitors' to outdoor experiences with a focus on an issue of 'crowding' and acknowledged that meeting others while experiencing nature could result in positive interactions that are beneficial to



experience (Jonas *et al* 2000). This study reveals that the significant potential detrimental effects of 'social encounters' to the quality of environmental experiences.

Experience can be defined to be strong, multi-sensory, memorable and individual. Tarssanen and Kylanen (2005) conceptualise a model of product-related experience or experience triangle (Figure 6.6) from literature to ascribe levels of experience and elements of tourisms that offer particular experiences.

**Figure 6.6 Experience triangle**



The model is used to analyse experience aspect of tourism product and various virtual worlds in addition to entertainment as well as culture-based and design products. It represents an ideal type – the 'perfect product' in which every element of experience is reflected on both mental and physical levels. The model indicates the framework of 'experientailisation' of products.

The study examines experience from two perspectives: level of specific elements of product and on the client's own experience. The influential factors on client's experience are depicted on the base of triangle. The elements take a customer closer to strong emotional experience that can lead to one's personal change through an involvement with a product. *Elements of experience* consist of individuality, authenticity, story-telling, multi-sensory character, contrast and interaction.

*Individuality* referred to customer-oriented way-of-action in staging the products. It means the product has own superiority and uniqueness and the customer feels him/herself dignified and the one-and-only when the product represents individuality (p. 138). In addition, individuality can be experienced through communal situation. *Authenticity* plays a crucial part in the experience triangle. It has a close link with *the story* that includes tales of belief and historical narratives. *Story-telling links* the experience with reality and gives the content and a social meaning for it. It can be both



facts and dramatisation. The experience of product has a *multi-sensual character*. It can be visually influencing, appealing in the sense by odour as well as audible and capable for being tasted and recognised. Clients also have a perspective to product, which is *contrast* from everyday life as it should be something new, extraordinary, exceptional or exotic. In experience of travel-related product, there is also an *interaction* between the customers, the guide and other travel participants. *Interaction* includes a feeling of community or something that is experienced together as part of a collective, group or family.

Level of experience (Figure 6.6) is relevant to a procedure of experience process. The experience proceeds from an impulse via interest to actual undergoing and furthermore to conscious processing of an emotionally rich experience leading to a mental change. The *motivational level* refers to an interest in the product awoken in the client's mind. It indicates desire and readiness to participate in it and experience it. The *physical level* refers to the consumer experience of his or her environment through senses which product is received, tried, recognised, acknowledged and brought into consciousness at first-hand. The *rational level* is a process of sensory stimuli provided by the environment where customers learn, think, apply knowledge and form opinions. Consequently, customers make a decision whether they are satisfied with the product or not. The *emotional level* refers to customer response to the experience of product such as joy, excitement, contentment, the pleasure of achievement and learning new skills, a sense of triumph and affection. The *mental level* refers to, the highest level of experience. A positive and powerful emotional reaction to experience may lead to an experience of personal change that brings about permanent modifications to the subject's physical being, state of mind or lifestyle. Although the Experience Triangle Model is not empirically tested, the model is useful for the analysis of different contexts of experience production.

The most recent study on consumption of the past by Chronis (2005) defines six experiential benefits that motivate people to experience the past including experience of knowledge, cultural identity, cultural values, and escape in time, aesthetic appreciation, and narrative connection. These benefits are embedded on existing cultural narratives that are further enriched through consumption practices. The experience of the past also involves curiosity that motivates people to learn more about it and knowledge is an expected outcome. Cultural identity involves the comparison between life in the past and present. Consumers seek to experience a symbolic value associated with all remnants of antiquity. Value of the past involves the conviction that the past guides and enriches the present. This benefit encourages an admiration and preservation of the past, and desire to transmit these values to younger generations. Escape in to the past involves an opportunity to escape from everyday life into time and to act out their fantasies. Aesthetic appreciation involves



an impression towards the features of heritage or antique objects. Narrative connection involves the desire to connect the past to the present through the narrative of heritage.

### 6.3.3 Authenticity of Visitor Experience

This section reviews the concepts of authenticity used in tourism experience via different approaches. The concepts under this topic include the approach to authenticity and the authenticity in tourist experience. They are used to explicate the authenticity of visitor experience conceptualized in this study.

A search for authenticity is '*a search for 'the unspoiled, pristine and genuine'*' (McIntosh and Prentice, 1999). Being authentic is to '*exist wholly by the laws of one own being*' (Erickson 1995). One of the earliest formulations in the debate of authenticity concepts was the formulation by Boorstin (1964) and the discussion about thrive of tourists on inauthentic contrived attractions - '*pseudo-events*' and its significances in tourism. The author addresses an isolation of tourism experience from local environment and local people, with the pleasure of experience being taken from contrived attractions designed by tourists' entertainment. This makes people enjoy the pseudo event without regarding the real world. MacCannlle (1976), by contrast, argues that tourists are contemporary pilgrims seeking authenticity in '*other times*' and '*other places*' away from that person's everyday is life. Further, Urry's Tourist Gaze (1990) adds that tourism has searched for difference and authenticity so that the tourist gaze is contrast with everyday (non-tourism) experiences, and '*post-tourists*' enjoy in-authenticity and voyeuristic play. Cohen's four-type of '*touristic situation*' (1974) has also contributed notions for an understanding of authenticity by raising the pertinent questions about the role of authenticity in tourists everyday lives and whether tourists ever reflect on their own cultural construction and determine authentic elements within it. The typology of tourist experience is based on a notion of the '*centre*' (1979), '*emergent of authenticity*' (1988) and '*communicative staging*'. Furthermore, Bruner (1994) conceptualises that authenticity is based on verisimilitude, genuineness, originality and authority/ the visitor experience at New Salem includes a sense of meeting, identity and attachment – meanings generated in social context involving performance – culture is always created by its definition and therefore cultures are invented and reinvented constantly. Later, Wang (1999, 2000) introduces modernity, society and existential authenticity as particular types of authenticity. Similar to this, AISayyad (2001) conceptualises that consuming tradition, manufacturing heritage such as Las Vegas adequate to '*authentic fakery*' (manufactured heritage), and Santa Fe adequate to '*fake authenticity*' (represents consumed tradition).



The different concepts of authenticity range from the authenticity of toured objects to the authenticity of tourists. Therefore, the literature here presents main different approaches to authenticity – objective, constructive and subjective approach to enrich theoretical comparison. The second part explores concepts related to a relationship between authenticity and experience consumption in tourism context.

### 6.3.3.1 Approach to authenticity

#### (1) Objective authenticity

The '*object-oriented*' approach is well stated by MacCannell's *The Tourist*. The quest for authenticity is particularly based on ontological anxiety about '*reality of life*' in that a tourist is a modern pilgrim, seeking authentic existence and meaning to modern life's artifice. Additionally, based on Goffman's (1974) thesis, MacCannell claims that all tourist settings could be divided into either '*front*' or '*back*' regions. The thesis is based around the notion that performers never stop giving off expressions or impressions, so that a place or a person is a continuous source of expression. The front region is the place a performance is given which include setting (i.e. scenery, historic buildings or layout) and the personal attribute of performers including age, race, rank and speech. In essence, a performer is always playing a role in front region-broadcasting story into audience. To Goffman and MacCannell, the front region would be considered less authentic than the back region. Hence, tourist objects set for the show purposed could be considered '*staged authenticity*'. Tourists often attempt to enter the back regions because it offers an intimacy of relationship and authenticity of experience (MacCannell, 1979). However, this concept of authenticity does not elaborate on the relationship between the individual tourist and things they perceive. The author examines the dialectic of authenticity that genuine structure is composed of the values and material culture manifest in the '*true*' sights (i.e., real French country homes, actual Dutch towns and the Swiss Alps) (p. 155). This means '*real thing*' is something the tourists find in other cultures and historical periods (MacCannell, 1999). The early conceptions of authenticity view tourism as taking a '*passive role*' (McIntosh and Prentice, 1999) in tourist experience. In this sense, the tourists are not actively engaged in constructing authenticity. As previously addressed, there is a widely held notion that the authenticity is found in other culture and time periods. In this way, object holds meaning of authentic experience.

#### (2) Constructive authenticity

Despite objective authenticity conception, many scholars provide their view of authenticity that it is either constructed by society through time and never existed in the first place (Cohen 1988; Hughes



1995; Waitt 1999). Wang (1999) suggests the term '*constructive authenticity*' to describe this dimension of authenticity as it is a result of social construction. Salamone (1997) provides a good example of constructive authenticity of experience of Disney World that it is commonly seen as merely a theme park for entertainment that becomes an authentic American place. The authenticity of place is constructed through time despite it is first seen as an unauthentic place. In this sense, objects or settings appear authentic to visitors not because they are inherently real, but because they are so constructed by a point of view or belief of a culture (Wang, 1999). Indeed, the constructivist viewpoint suggests that a sense of the authentic can also flow merely from the passage of time and the evaluation of culture without the purposeful efforts of marketers. It can be concluded that a representation or remark of an authentic place could reach a level of authenticity in its own right (Salamone 1997). Based on a study of two different versions of the Mexican San Angel Inn, one of the inns was an original in Mexico and the other was its counterpart in Walt Disney World, the author hypothesises that the Mexican inn where real Mexican culture lives and thrives would be perceived authentic while Disney inn would seem fake and give visitors much less of an authentic feel. However, the results reveal that each inn '*serves its own socio-cultural purpose*'. That is the inn in Mexico was authentic and true for the Mexicans who went there whereas the inn in Disney World is an adequate and complimentary inn for tourists and is considered authentic by its clients. Hence, the constructive viewpoint allows for the authenticity of Disney inn because of time and a globalizing culture, which can be seen as forces that gradually construct an authentic feeling for a place.

### **(3) Subjective authenticity**

Subjective authenticity is seen as '*authenticity of the self*'. This viewpoint suggests that there never was anything intrinsically authentic; nevertheless, '*authenticity is entirely in the mind of observers*'. This concept contrasts with the objective and the constructive views. At this point, the authenticity is something felt, not found or out there to be received by the tourists. Subjective viewpoint is different from constructive view point in that only does it involves the subjective view of an individual rather than references to culture or any constructive forces. Thus, the authenticity does not cast upon the toured objects but existed in how individual feels. Wang (1999) suggests that many visitors may be searching for their '*authentic selves*' rather than an '*authentic place*'. During the process of experience, objects outside the selves do not matter at all time for these '*existential*' tourists. They could find their own authentic selves while engaged in activities in the park. Similar to Wang's statement, Erickson (1995) addresses that authenticity of the self some combination of both authentic and inauthentic. Authenticity can be thought of as a system of '*self-values*'.



The conceptualisation of subjective authenticity is relevant to the role of subjectivity. The current notion of the tourist experience as a diverse phenomenon is accompanied by another development in which attention is shifted from the displayed objects provided by the industry to the tourist subjective negotiation of meanings that determine their experience (Uriely 2005: 206). Feifer (1985) contends that the post-tourist subjectively construct their personal experience by taking fragments from different modes or products provided by the industry and reassemble them as they choose. Drawing upon Goffman's (1967) role theory, Wickens' (2002) study attempts to stress the subjectivity in tourism experience. It states that holidaymakers assign different meanings to their experiences and they assign themselves to one of the subjective roles which shape their experiences. Additionally, Uriely *et al* (2002) show that the Israeli backpackers subjectively construct their own experience in line with one or more modes of tourist experience suggested by Cohen (1979). This conceptualisation has challenged the notion that experience of tourism is carried out by passive consumers and has stressed the importance of the individual's practice in tourism experience consumption. Thus, the notion about the authenticity in tourist experience has shifted from the objects provided by the industry to the role tourist subjectivity in the construction of experiences. This concept is relevant with Wang's (2000) new approach, existential authenticity, which emphasises the subjectivity of tourist activities or corresponds to a potential existential state of being activated by the participant practices. According to this perspective, tourists may feel that they are much more authentic themselves when they engage in non-ordinary activities in which they are more freely self-expressed than in daily life (Uriely 2005: 207).

### 6.3.3.2 *Authenticity and experience consumption*

Cohen (1979) states that tourists vary in degrees of authenticity they seek. The author claims that the recreational and diversity modes of experience are more passive. These types of tourists are motivated by escape mechanisms and simply to seek a good time or seeking a mere escape from the boredom and the meaningless of routine. They passively pursue leisure; therefore, the experiences do not involve a quest for authenticity. Nevertheless, the experiential, experiment and existential tourists, nevertheless, seek authenticity in some level. Leisure and tourism are more profound and they are motivated by a quest for meaning, and have an interest in exploring the centre of others. The essence of experiential tourists is in experience of authenticity of the life of others. These tourists seek authenticity elsewhere, in other times or societies. There is no religious or spiritual conversion, and the tourist remains aware of the otherness of objects being toured. The existential and experimental tourists seek some sort of life-changing experience. The experimental tourists (i.e. drifter and hippies) seek alternative lifestyle. They are more engaged in another authentic life rather than simply taking joy in observing it. Finally, the existential mode of



experience is the equivalent of a religious conversion, a complete change in people's life on a more permanent basis. The person achieves a new centre and becomes part of a new society.

The analysis of tourism in the 1990s has also been strongly influenced by the work of Urry (1990, 1992) in *The Tourist Gaze*. Urry describes tourism as experience and as a free-time activity that contrast with daily routine and which can chiefly be identified by means of signs bringing significances to the attention of the tourist (for example, beauty, romance, nature). Hence, tourism is primarily a sensation of place and the social world, at a distance from the normal home environment.

Discussed of the rise of mass tourism in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Britain, the gaze is a concept comprising a way of looking at the world, which simultaneously forms what is seen and the way of seeing and the gaze can be used to interpret a whole way of life (Urry, 1992). Urry states in *The Tourist Gaze* that when we go away '*we look at the environment...we gaze at what we encounter...and the gaze is socially constructed*' (1990:1). The gaze varies temporally, across social groups and the concept of the gaze encapsulates visitors' experiences, and is an interpretation of the things they seek and do when on holiday and way from work. The framework has resulted in interesting and useful ways of thinking about the tourist experience.

Urry (1990) also provides a concept of tourism consumption that is tourism has search for difference; authenticity and tourist gaze are contrasted with everyday (non-tourism) experiences. The tourist gaze is conceptualised on the basis of MacCannell's concept that is all tourists embody a quest for authenticity and this quest is a modern version of the universal human concern with the sacred. '*Post-tourists*' enjoy in-authenticity and voyeuristic play. The gaze of tourists will involve an obvious intrusion into people's life. The tourist spaces are organised around what MacCannell calls staged authenticity. Tourist experiences are only important to the tourists because they are located within the distinctive visual environment. The unusualness of the visual sensation places contribute to activities within a different frame. The distinctiveness of the visual gives all sorts of activities a special or unique character. Urry also emphasises that visual consumption is not a simple and straightforward process because the views are not literally and tourism paradigmatically involves the collections of signs. There are two distinctive signs the tourists use to collect the unique objects. One, metaphor involves tourist images of places that it stands for or being taken. Two, metonym involves the substitution of some feature or effect or cause of phenomenon for the phenomenon itself. The development of an industrial museum is an example of a metonymic sign of the growth of post-industrial society. What people look for in the landscapes and townscapes that they are photograph are not given and fixed but alter over time. Urry has distinguished five



types of visual consumption: romantic, collective, spectatorial, environmental, and anthropological gaze as shown in Table 6.2.

**Table 6.2 Urry's five types of visual consumption**

<b>Romantic gaze</b>	- pleasure seeking - solitary - sustained immersion - sense of awe
<b>Collective gaze</b>	- gazing involving the sense of auratic landscape solitary - communal activities - series of shared encounter
<b>Spectatorial gaze</b>	- gazing a familiar with people who are so familiar - communal activities - series of shared encounters
<b>Environmental gaze</b>	- glancing and collecting many different signs of the 'environments' - collective organization - sustained and didactic
<b>anthropological gaze</b>	- scanning to survey and inspecting the 'nature' - solitary - sustained immersion - scanning and active interpretation of the 'culture'

Urry also argues that tourists in the real lives of others, which somehow possess the reality, which is hard to discover in their own experiences, show particular fascination.

An ethnographic and phenomenological study through the analysis of extensive observations of baseball spectators by Holt (1995) could be used for a comparison with the emergent theory grounded from this study. The study examines how people consume in systematic detail informed by the *constructionist* and *interactionist* perspectives found in sociology, consuming is viewed as a type of social action in which people make use of consumption objects in variety of ways. Holt conceptualised aspects of consuming by its structures purposes. In terms of structure, consuming consists of '*object actions*' in which consumers directly engage consumption objects and '*interpersonal actions*' in which consumption objects serve as focal resources where consumer interact with other people. The consumer's actions can be characterised as actions, which end in themselves (autotelic actions), and actions which mean to further ends (instrumental actions). By developing a typology of consumption practices, the author examines way in which consumers interact with the consumption objects. The result indicates four realms of a distinctive metaphor that consists of consuming as experience, consuming as integration, consuming as classification, and consuming as play. The consuming as experience metaphor (autotelic/ object actions) underlies research examining consumers' subjective, emotional reaction to consumption objects by the acts of accounting, evaluating and appreciating. The consuming as integration metaphor (instrumental/ interpersonal actions) describes how consumers acquire and manipulate object meanings through assimilating, producing and personalizing. The consuming as play metaphor is an autotelic and interpersonal actions, which involve using consumption objects as resources to interact with fellow consumers via communing and socializing. Finally, the consuming as classification metaphor



(instrumental/ interpersonal actions) views consuming as a process in which objects – viewed as vessels of culture and personal meanings – act to classified their consumers through objects and actions (ritual actions). In addition to this concept, Edensor's (2000) spatial study on performance and meaning at symbolic site at Taj Mahal illustrated discrete yet interlinked embodied inactions of tourists including walking, gazing, photographing and remembering. These experiences of tourist space were shaped by the temporal and spatial contingencies of their tour.

Consumer research has traditionally viewed this question as self-evident, assuming that consumption is structured by the properties of a consumed object which has been conceived differently from an economic and symbolic perspective (Holt 1995). Various studies on consumption and experiences from different perspectives have been reviewed. However, there is limited notion about consumption practice in tourism research.

#### 6.4 AN APPLICATION OF LITERATURE TO THE STUDY

This chapter examines a range of selected literature reviews in relation to the emergent theory and identifies the gaps between them. These literature reviewed are used for theoretical comparison with the theory grounded form this study. Aim of the process is to validate the emergent theory and stimulate theoretical sensitivity. The process will improves construct definitions, and therefore internal validity and external validity by establishing the domain to which the study's finding can be generated. The issues and objectives of the discussion are illustrated in the following table.

**Table 6.3 the literature reviews and the objectives of discussion**

Literature Review Topics	Objectives of Discussion
Experience process	comparison to the interactive experience model in terms of dynamic nature and complexity
On-site experience	comparison to the interactive experience model in terms of complexity
Visitor experience through different approach	comparison to experience consumption practices and experiential aspects
Meaning of experience	explanation of the rationales of visitor experience and to be used in the comparison with visitor experiential aspects conceptualised in this study
Authenticity of visitor experience	explanation and comparison to the authenticity of visitor experience conceptualised in this study

Reviewing the literature after developing the theory makes sense to access relevant literature as it becomes relevant (Dick 2004). Researcher can also reach a wider sample, in effect, by refining her findings in the light of the literature in slightly different but related fields. In short, a progressive accessing and reading of relevant literature can become a part of data collection procedure.



## **CHAPTER 7**

### **THEORETICAL COMPARISON AND DISCUSSION**

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

The process for developing a model of visitor experience at heritage sites in this study was discussed in Chapter 3. The explanation of concepts and themes emerging from the research process were discussed in Chapter 4 and 5. These explanations provide a contextual basis that can be developed into a framework of visitor heritage experience. In Chapter 6, previous research relevant to the inception of this study provides the researcher with a foundation to extend theoretical sensitivity and external validity throughout this research. This chapter synthesises the theory emerging from this study with comparisons to existing theories. It addresses the theory emerging from this study in comparison to relevant theories and the responses to the research questions rose in Chapter 1 in various aspects.

. In response to the first research question, this chapter discusses the components of experience as factors affecting visitors' on-site experience. In response to the second research question, the chapter discusses the perceived value of heritage and roles of heritage attraction in visitor experience, and the authenticity of visitor experience. Finally, in response to the third research question, this chapter presents a visitor heritage experience in terms of the dynamic nature, complexity and multiplicity of visitor experience. The finding on visitor interactive experience process, experiential aspects and experience consumption practices provides an answer to this research question.

#### **7.2 EMERGING THEORY WITH RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND THEORETICAL COMPARISON**

The aim of this study was to develop and identify visitors' on-site experience of heritage sites based on a case study from World Cultural Heritage sites in Thailand through the development of a theory grounded in a visitor perspective context. This leads to the investigation of, and response to, three research questions that examine the identification of visitor experiences and components of



these experiences. The research findings highlight the nature of the visitor experience which is dynamic, complex and multiple.

### 7.2.1 Response to the Research Questions One (RQ1) – The construction of visitor experience

Components of experience together with external factors and their relationship to the construction of visitor experience presented in the visitor heritage experience model (see *Figure 4.1*) and discussed in Chapter 4 directly respond to this research question.

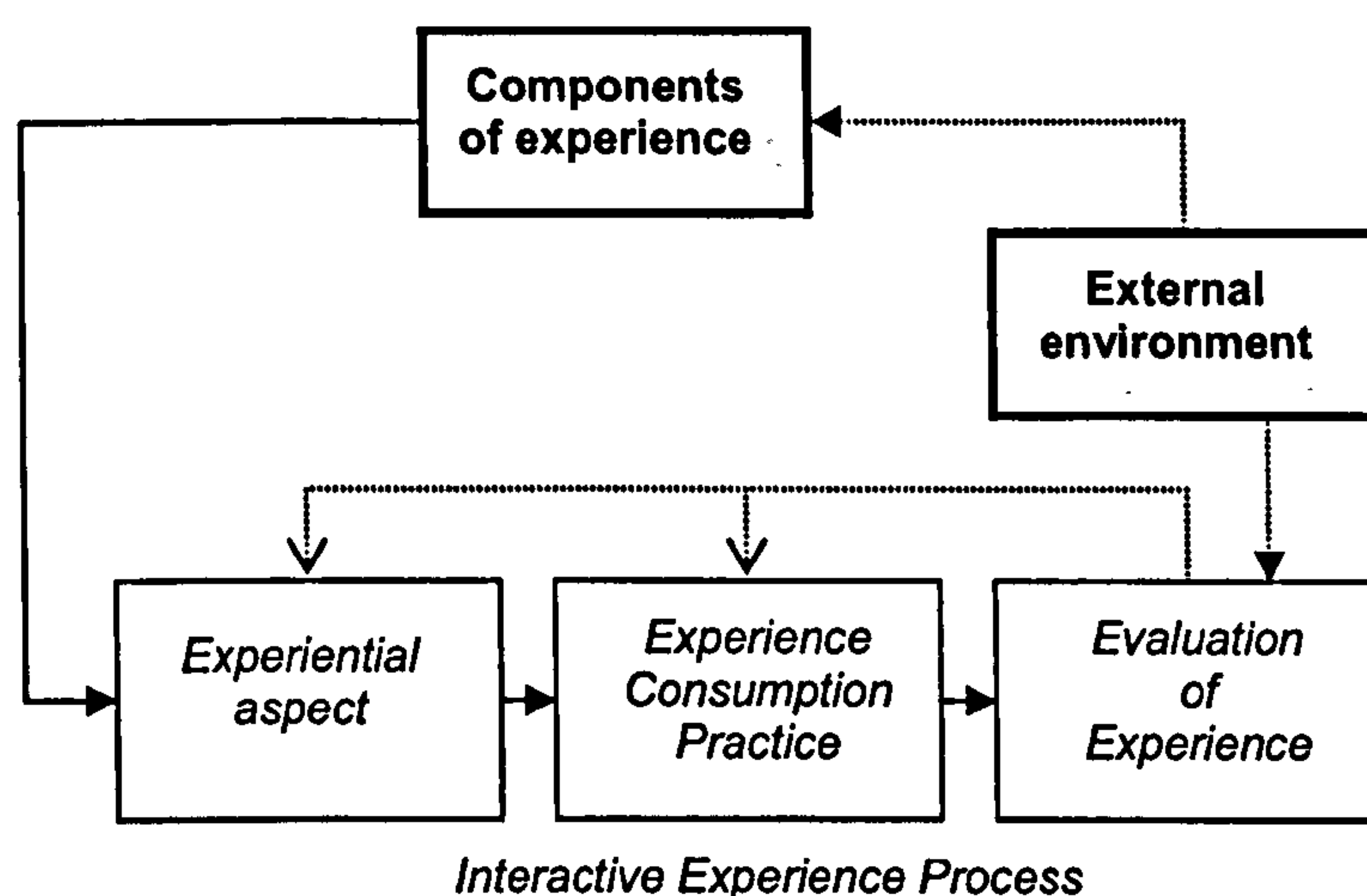
*RQ1. What are the factors related to the visitor experience at the cultural heritage sites and how do these factors affect the experience?*

Issues relevant to experience construction discussed in this section include the construction of visitor experience, the interactive experience process, influences of external factors, and roles of heritage in the interactive experience process.

#### (1.) Construction of visitor experience

This study demonstrates that the act of consuming is a varied and effortful accomplishment determined by not only characteristics of heritage objects but also the components of experience and external factors. Figure 7.1 Illustrates a relationship of factors related to the construction of visitor heritage experience.

**Figure 7.1 The construction of visitor experience**





The components of experience (intervened by external factors) have a role in constructing an individual negotiation of experiential aspects that shape experience consumption practices.

Individual visitors consume a heritage in various ways with varied aspects. The aspects of experience lead to multi-dimensions of experience consumption practices. This section explains the development progress of a framework of interactive experience through concepts of components of experience and external environment, and the roles of heritage in visitor experience.

The components of experience characterise the interactive experience. It represents internal factors a visitor brings in an engagement with heritage experience. This concept supports Mason (2005) in that the meaning of objects, images or sites will depend on what visitors bring to them and that this will change according to the personal knowledge and individual experience of visitors. It is also comparable with the interactive experience framework devised by Falk and Dierking (1992; 2000) which pinpoints three overlapping contexts (personal, social and physical) directing a visitor's learning experience and rendering the meaning of the heritage. Similar to Falk and Dierking's study, this study indicates that the *personal*, the *socio-cultural* and the *physical* contexts overlap, interrelate and are modified as the memory of the visit is revised over time.

The personal context represents what a visitor contributes to the construction of experience in terms of perceived value of heritage, involvement (which also relates to prior experience and knowledge, learning style, interests), perception of authenticity and quest of experience. It contributes to the expectation and anticipated outcomes each visitor has for a heritage visit. The socio-cultural context represents social, cultural and historical conditions of the visit including stimuli, the acquisition of knowledge, behavioural norms and conservation ethic. Similar to Falk (1982), the socio-cultural context represents what the visitor comes into contact with while he/she is at the heritage site. The visitor heritage experience model and interactive experience process generated from this study address other personal and socio-cultural contexts in addition to the framework of Falk and Dierking (1992, 2000). These personal contexts influence ways in which a visitor consumes a heritage experience. These components include the perceived value of heritage and perception of authenticity. The socio-cultural contexts that play influential parts in an individual's experience include matters of choice, conservation ethic and behavioural norms. The *physical context* represents how visitors interact with space and physical aspects of the heritage. It involves external factors including environmental condition, site setting and ambience, site management whereas Falk suggests that it stands for the museum environment that brings visitors to visit the museum.



Emerging from this study, the interactive experience of heritage is a process of individualisation in which identity or self-involvement plays a part in experience components. The complex process of individualisation is related to how visitors perceive the value of heritage, their existence such as existing knowledge (regardless of their level of education), sense of belonging (regardless of their nationality and religion) and personal interest. However, religion and nationality only characterise a certain consumption practice. Thus, the study cannot generalise these factors as components shaping visitor experience. This study has also found that individuals may simply invent meanings for heritage objects as they please, so the meanings of objects, images and sites are inseparable from both the context of displays and interpretations.

As in the interactive experience of museums, a visitor has anticipated motivations for their visits. However, this study has found that the motivation anticipated prior to the visit does not necessarily contribute to the anticipation of the on-site experience. An individual develops a quest for experience at the moment of engagement in the heritage visit. This study has also found that visitors' expectations are often impulsive. Visitor experience may be influenced by an aspect raised along the process of experience consumption. This characteristic could be supported by McKercher's (2002) concepts of serendipity cultural tourist. The concept indicates that cultural tourism may play little or no role in the decision-making process; however, while at the destination, the person participates in cultural tourism activity and ends up having a deep experience. The '*withdrawal*' behaviour from the interaction of a visitor is also comparable to the 'stumblers' typology provided by Stewart et al (1998). The concept explains that visitors may also seek to withdraw from the interactive (or even interpretive) experience process since there are some constraints or factors of distraction affecting the moment of engagement. They may be obstructed in the same way and are too frustrated to make an accurate interpretation of the place.

## **(2) The moment of interactive experience process**

This study analyses visitor experience as a subject. The experience consumption is complicated by the fact that there is a slippage between the 'actual, on-site, real-time nature' of this interior experience and its representation. Each experience is different for every visitor and is personally negotiated. This concept is supported by studies of several scholars (Horner 1990; Frey 1998; Garburn 2001). Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) also identify that the level of 'immediate conscious experience' is unique for an individual.

Certain tourism theorists (Graburn, Mannell and Iso-Ahola, and Wang) have considered the importance of the '*moment*' in their research. Graburn's (1989) hypothesis that tourism is comparable to a quest for a sacred journey supports the notion that 'temporality' is one of the



characteristics of visitor experience consumption where the ritual experience or religious practice represents a heightened period. Moreover, the process of ritual sacralisation begins in the ordinary and progresses to a state of heightened aestheticisation, and then returns to ordinary (Cohen 1974). Examples of such experiential aspects rising from this study include a quest for pleasure and a quest for a sense of place. In this case, visitors' engagement with the experience of a heritage is comparable to the concept of tourists '*losing themselves*' derived by Daniel (1996) from a study visitor experience of a Cuban dance class. The study states that the heritage setting or attraction becomes visitors' entire world at that particular moment. Time, tensions and the discrepancies of the real world are suspended allowing indulgence in near-ecstatic experience as quoted by participants:

*"When I got into the historical park...I saw chedis, ruined temples just in front of me. It just blows my mind. I forgot all about bad things happening to me this morning."*

and

*"It's like you just enter another world. You wouldn't care how crazy the traffic outside the temple is. I feel so calm and peaceful"*

The visitor interactive experience can also be impulsive. This isolating moment in which the visitor becomes entirely subsumed by the engagement of the heritage can be both serendipitous and epiphany. This moment represents a spontaneous experience of self-discovery and communal belonging (Ryan 1991). While Cohen (1988) claims that the instant is conditioned by the individual's background, this study supports that the visitor interactive experience or what Hom Carey (2004) calls the '*tourist moment*' represents a role of serendipity.

The serendipity in visitor experience is an element of unexpected discovery of something valuable that is perceived to be true at the time. Hom Cary (2004) asserts that given the temporary illusion of truth associated with serendipity – the quest to glimpse the real, it in turn becomes a mechanism for inventing an experience of authenticity and a person seeks to glimpse '*the real*' culminating in the representation of serendipitous moment – as both unexpected and extraordinary. In this study, the reaction towards awe-inspiration according to the beauty of heritage scenery, spirituality of the setting, and gigantic size of monuments could be considered a serendipitous moment.

Although this study focuses on types of visitor experience, it provides the explanation of experiential aspects individually constructed by visitors. Various authors (Cohen 1979; Pritchard and Morgan 1996; McIntyre and Roggenbuck 1998; Prentice *et al* 1998; Bricker and Kerstetter

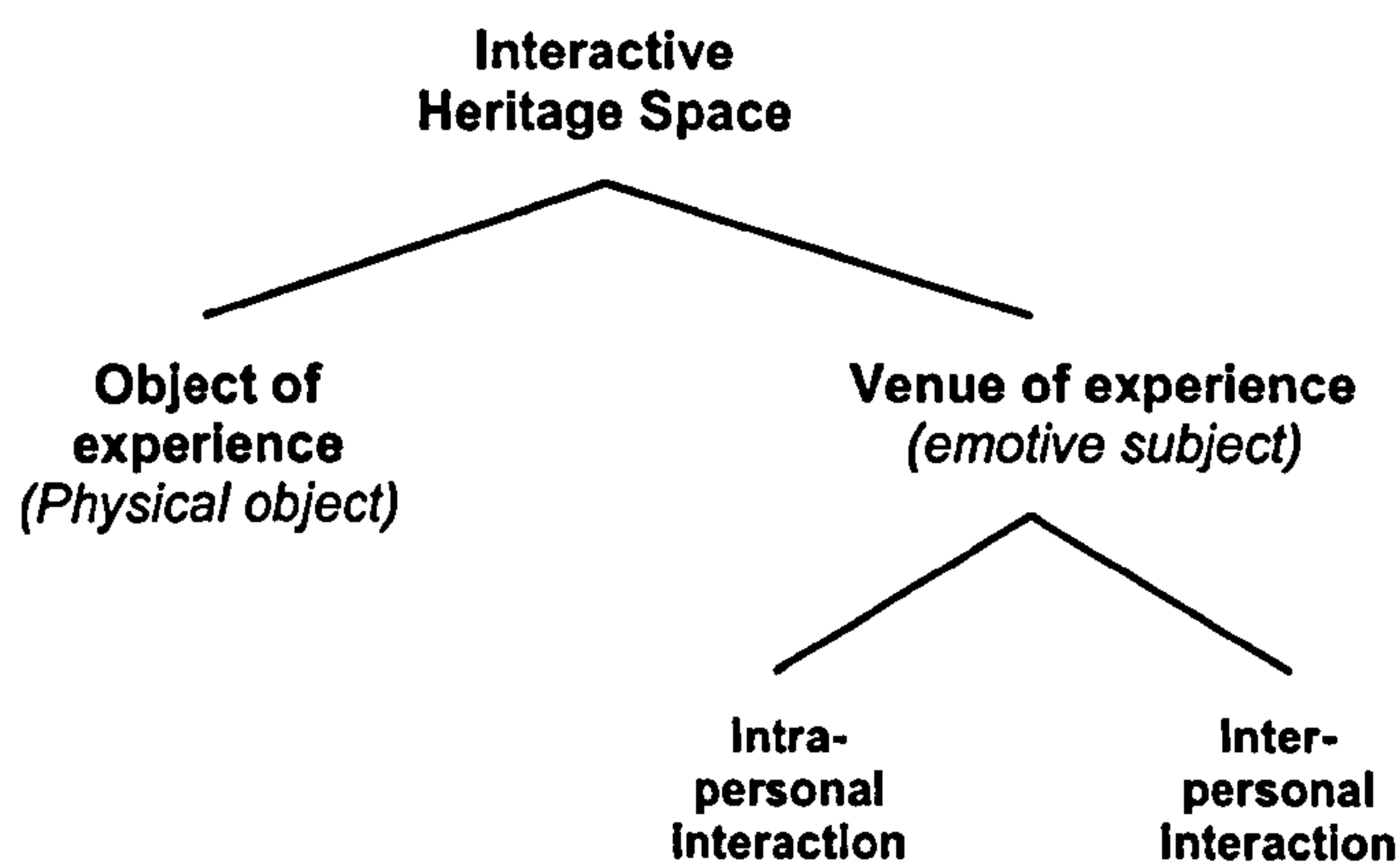


2002; Goulding 2002; Wickens 2002) lend a support for the external validity of this study in terms of the conceptual framework although their studies mainly explain about types of tourists. This study emphasises that there is an overlapping of contexts in experiential aspects. Visitors may be pre-occupied with an existential state of being driven by certain motivations to visit the sites. In addition to experiential aspects that are congruence of personal existence, the aspects of experience could be anticipated ‘*at the moment*’ visitors interact with attractions.

**(3.) The roles of heritage in interactive experience process**

This study illustrates that the heritage attraction also becomes both an interactive space and an objective attraction for visitors and it is the experience of heritage that is considered an outcome of experience consumption. Figure 7.2 illustrate the roles of the heritage in the visitor interactive experience of heritage.

**Figure 7.2 The roles of heritage in the interactive experience process**



Positions of the environment concept provided by Ittelson et al (1976), Mausher (1996), Botterill and Crompton (1996), Falk et al (1998), and Webb (2002) can explicitly describe roles of heritage emerging from this study. These studies explain that the perception of roles depends on how visitors perceive the heritage in their experience, the relationship with the heritage and the character or context of interaction they are seeking. As an object of experience, the heritage is seen as an external and physical place consumed for pleasure (i.e., sightseeing) and cognitive benefits (i.e., exploration and education). As a venue of experience, the heritage could be explained in terms of self, social system, emotional territory, and setting of action. First, the heritage is described in terms of ‘*self*’, wherein visitors are totally integrated with or immersed in the setting by practices such as ‘*soaking up the atmosphere*’. This also includes ‘*spiritual dimension*’ of a place that represents the expression of spirituality and affection. Indeed, a heritage experience could offer more than a reward of ‘*just being there*’ when heritage experience akin to a religious experience.



Supported by McIntyre (1998), the experience consumption practices are likely timelessness, solitude, and oneness or immersion in the setting. Secondly, the heritage is portrayed as a '*social system*'. In the heritage experience, visitors use the setting as a place to socialize. Finally, the heritage is presented as an '*emotional territory*' as it is expressed by feelings so that visitors consume the heritage by appreciation, expression, and imagination.

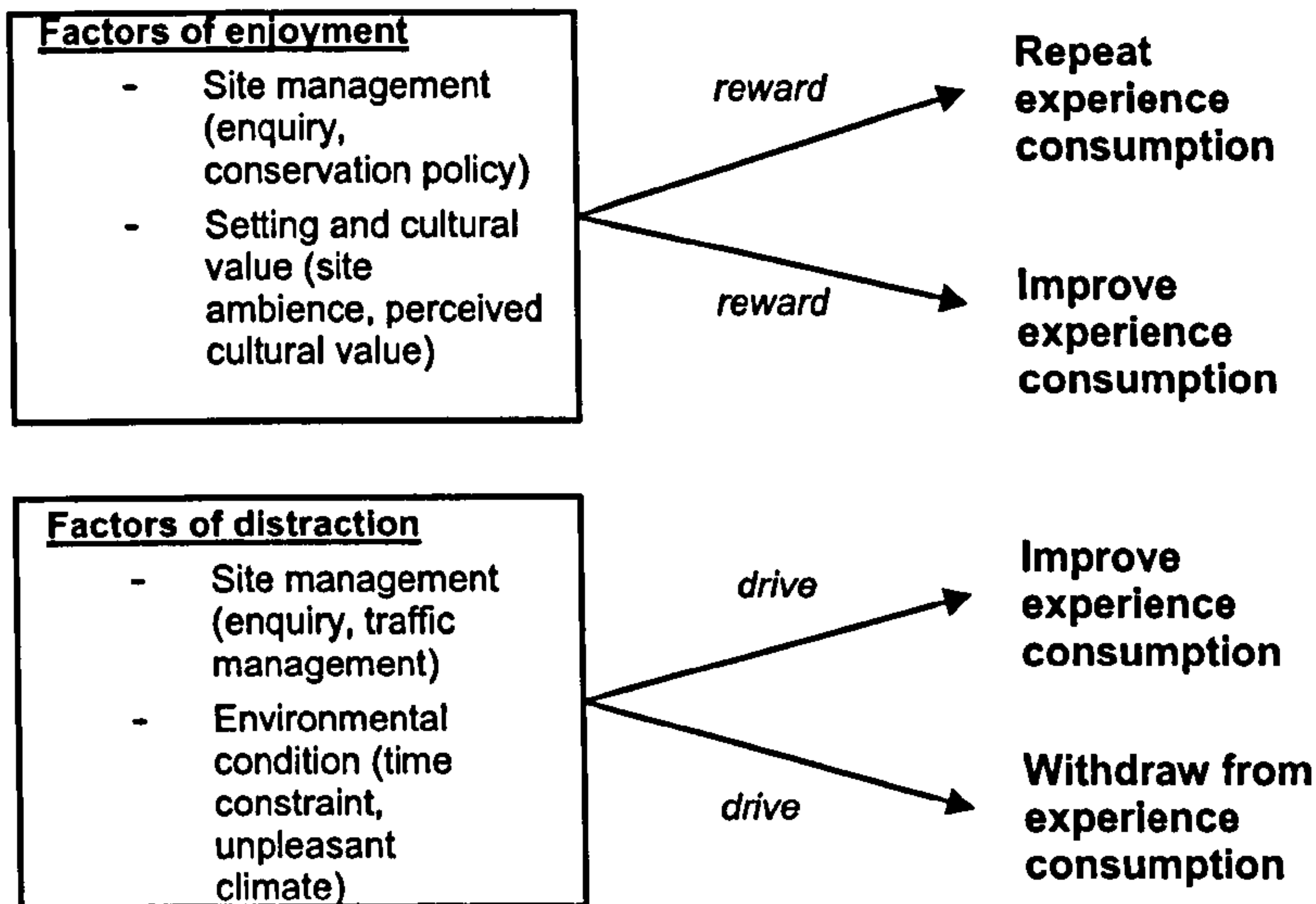
Visitors are recognised as the '*producers*' of their own subjective and interactive experiences through various experience consumption practices related to their personal meanings. The finding is partly supported by McIntosh's (1999) study in terms of beneficial value of the heritage experience. This paradigm identifies the distinctive personal element of individual heritage interaction. However, McIntosh (1999) focuses merely on the personal value that facilitates an insight into the tourist's mind through the '*emotive*' and '*subjective*' thoughts and imaginations involving mindfulness rather than embodied dimension of interactive experience actually occurring in heritage experience. In addition, the study has also contributed to the body of knowledge by exploring a diversity of visitors' personal agendas and contexts in which the heritage attractions are consumed. The knowledge from this study extends and strengthens the notions from various concepts of tourist typology, the gaze (Urry 1990); cultural imaginings (Falk and Dierking 1992; Macdonald 1992); mindfulness (Moscardo 1996) and modes of experience (Cohen 1979).

#### **(4.) The influence of the external environment**

The external environment has its role as a factor affecting the evaluation of experience or the recollection stage of an interactive experience process. It acts as a factor of enjoyment when the condition rewards visitor with a positive outcome of experience consumption and as a factor of distraction when the condition causes a satisfactory solution. Figure 7.2 summarises the construction and effects of external environment in the evaluation of experience.



**Figure 7.3 The construction and effect of external environment in the evaluation of experience**



The evaluation of experience indicates the way in which a visitor recollects the result of the experience and provides feedback to shape an experiential aspect and experience consumption practice. After the heritage experience has been consumed, the consequences of the evaluation are considered. Visitors use these factors to evaluate experience results from their interaction with the heritage (see Figure 7.1). Based on this study, different situations emerge from the data. There are three possible practices resulting from the evaluation process. On the one hand, visitors may consume the heritage experience by repeating an experience consumption practice when the heritage experience meets an experiential aspect. On the other hand, the visitors may consume the heritage experience by improving an experience consumption practice to increase satisfactory level of an outcome. However, they may delay or withdraw from the interactive experience process when the heritage experience is distracted.

This process involves how individuals reflect on their consumption experience. The finding indicates that the influence of the consumption experience depends on the evaluation method and the consideration of interaction effects. This result is supported by the concepts of environmental valuation provided by Gonzalez and Leon (2003). It contributes to the body of knowledge through the investigation and evaluation process of experience as it conceptualises strategies, which visitors use to handle the result of experience evaluation (see Section 4.2). The concept is also supported by the study of (Stewart 1992) on judgment recreation experience in that the preference of the experience changes over the course of the recreation endeavour. These factors of enjoyment and



distraction could be used as a criterion for an on-site experience preference assessment in future research.

Lending support to the study on the on-site experience of river floaters (Hammit, William, McDonald and Cary 1983), the finding of this study indicates relationship between on-site experience and the perception of the management of cultural heritage sites. The perception consists of the visitors' perception of the cultural environment disturbances, the need of management to control adverse socio-cultural impacts and the well-being of heritage. Moreover, this concept provides a clue for the management regarding building a good perception on site and visitor management to increase conservation ethic and reduce tension of time constraint and unpleasant climate conditions. The formation of the evaluation of experience in this experience consumption process indicates the dynamic nature of experience. This issue will be discussed later on in this chapter.

### **7.2.2 Response to the Research Question Two (RQ2) – The Rationales behind Visitor Experience**

As discussed in the earlier section, the result of this study indicates that the construction of interactive experience is influenced by two major elements: experience components and external factors (with an intervening role). The meaning of place perceived by visitors and visitors' perception of authenticity has the closest relationship with the meaning visitors associate in their experiences of heritage. The emergent themes and concepts directly respond to Research Question 2.

*RQ2. How do visitors perceive cultural heritage as some specific types of activities and how do they interpret their interaction with the sites?*

There are four important issues to discuss on how visitors perceive cultural heritage and how they interpret their interaction with the heritage sites including the perceived value of heritage, the meaning of heritage in experience consumption, perception of authenticity and the contribution to knowledge of these concepts.

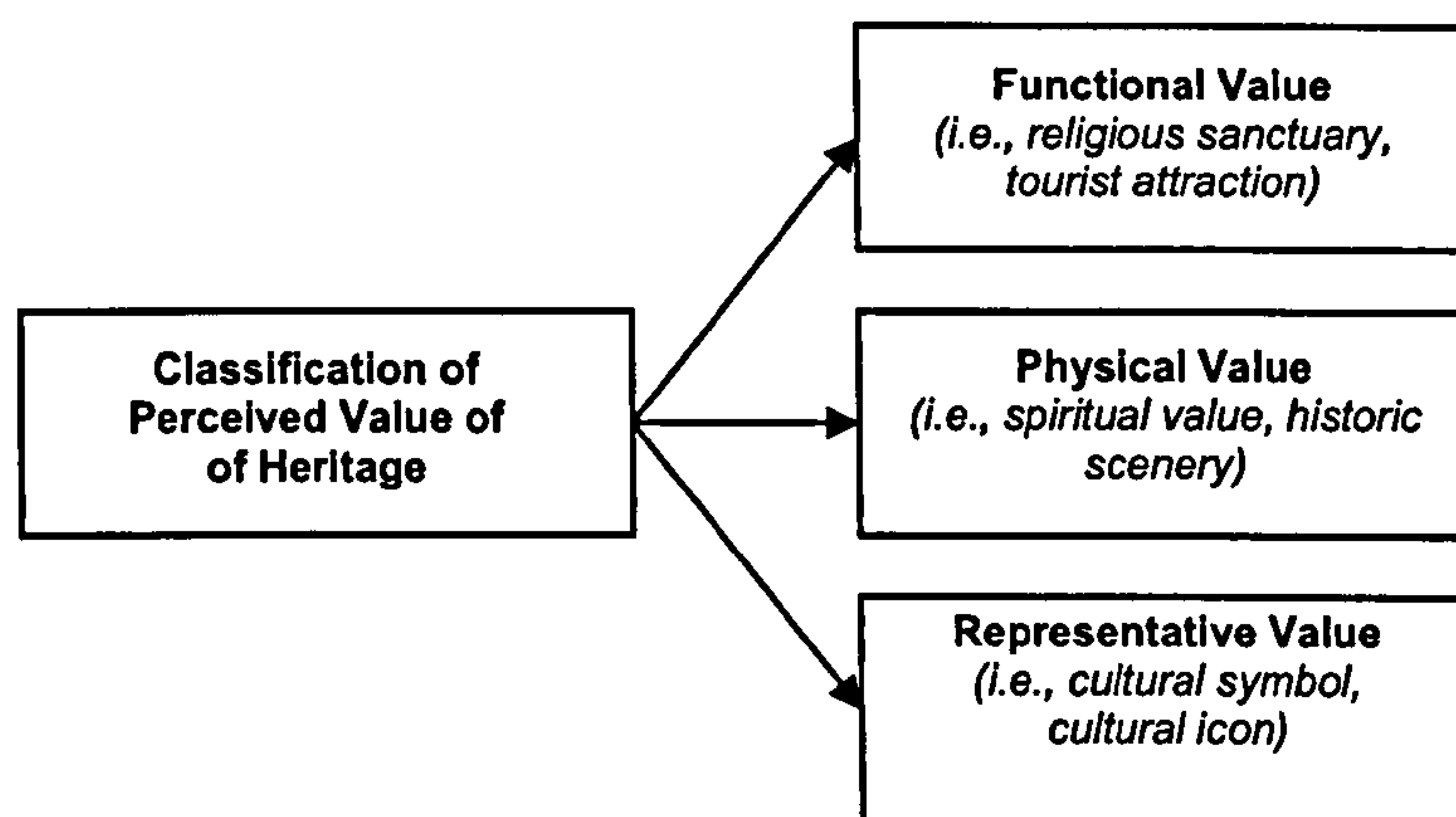


### (1) The perceived value of heritage

This study explores the value of an attraction as a unique space within which multiple interpretations of a cultural heritage experience can be constructed and consumed by visitors. The analysis aims to determine the capacity of the heritage in generating its unique values perceived by visitors when they are engaged in experience consumption. The findings illustrate the differences in the construction of meanings when visitors connect to the heritage.

The sites in this study are generally classified as historical sites; however, individuals may perceive each attraction or heritage object differently. The meaning visitors assign to these historical sites pertain different values including cultural, symbolic, religious and historic values as well as historic attributes (*See section 4.2*). In other words, the cultural heritage can mean different things to each visitor from the sacred (a sacred site) to the profane (a tourist attraction). The classification of heritage value perceived by visitors is summarised in Figure 7.4.

**Figure 7.4 Classification of heritage value perceived by visitors**



The meanings assigned by a visitor are based on functional, physical and representative values. How a visitor perceives the value of a heritage or an object in which he/she interacts interplays with an experiential aspect in leading the way visitors participate in experience consumption.

The functional value represents the perceived value that is relevant to its usage or '*what heritage is used for*'. A visitor may perceive the value of a heritage as a religious sanctuary because it has been used for religious practices. The person may also perceive it as a tourist attraction because it is used as a place for tourists to visit. The physical value is associated with how the features of a heritage are appealing to visitors. Indeed, the heritage could be perceived for its spirituality or scenic features. The representative value is relevant to the symbolic and iconic significance of a heritage; for instance, religious symbol or cultural icons. This study suggests that the value of a heritage site



is not necessarily perceived as assigned or created by the tourism industry or marketing communication.

The significance of heritage or personal that embeds the visitors' consumption experience has been explored in this study. This concept lends support to McArthur and Hall's (1996) concept of a 'sense of place' in which the authors state that a cultural heritage is generally perceived as having substantial educational significance and is an important determinant of a 'sense of place', whereby people feel a particular attachment to an area in which local knowledge and human contacts are meaningfully maintained. However, beyond studies of factual recall has sought to measure visitors' learning against museum educational mandates. Supporting concepts of tourism experience provided by Horne (1994) and Chronis (2005), the findings of this study indicate that the past or cultural heritage is not similarly perceived and consumed by all its attendees. Individuals assign their own meanings to their interaction with the heritage. Indeed, they turn the intangible and tangible past into meaningful experience. Each visitor anticipates, and thus consumes different experiential aspects. How a visitor perceives the heritage site when he or she engages in the experience could be different from the anticipation. It depends on how the visitor rates it and does not necessarily depend on the assigned meaning. Hence, at the moment of the interaction, the individual may experience the heritage differently from what he/she anticipated before being engaged in the on-site experience. The individual may also anticipate various experiential aspects and consume the heritage experience using various practices. This circumstance depends on the perceived value of the heritage and the knowledge the visitor acquires.

*"I went inside. I saw the big ancient chedi robed with yellow chiffon. It looks very spiritual. It was spectacular. I spent some time on my own to soak up the atmosphere and appreciate the ancient chedi situated in the middle of beautiful green grass. Then I went to the inner area which was called vihara luang (royal ordination hall). There were around 200 small Buddha images among the ruins facing the main chedi. This sight made me feel so calm. ..can't help to think that there were hundreds of foot prints on this floors time after time...and in the past...its would be such blessing for anyone who came here and worship the spiritual chedi. This chedi was built to celebrate the great king's victory over the battle with the Burmese. Ayutthaya could celebrate it freedom. It's believed that there're some sacred spirits here."*

The statement above shows that a visitor seeks to get an impression of the heritage by soaking up the atmosphere and appreciating it when he perceives the value of a heritage attraction for its historical sentiment. Later, the person develops a quest for religion as he/ she perceive the heritage



for its religious value when he experiences some knowledge that enhances a belief. Hence, he/she seeks a blessing experience from the heritage visit.

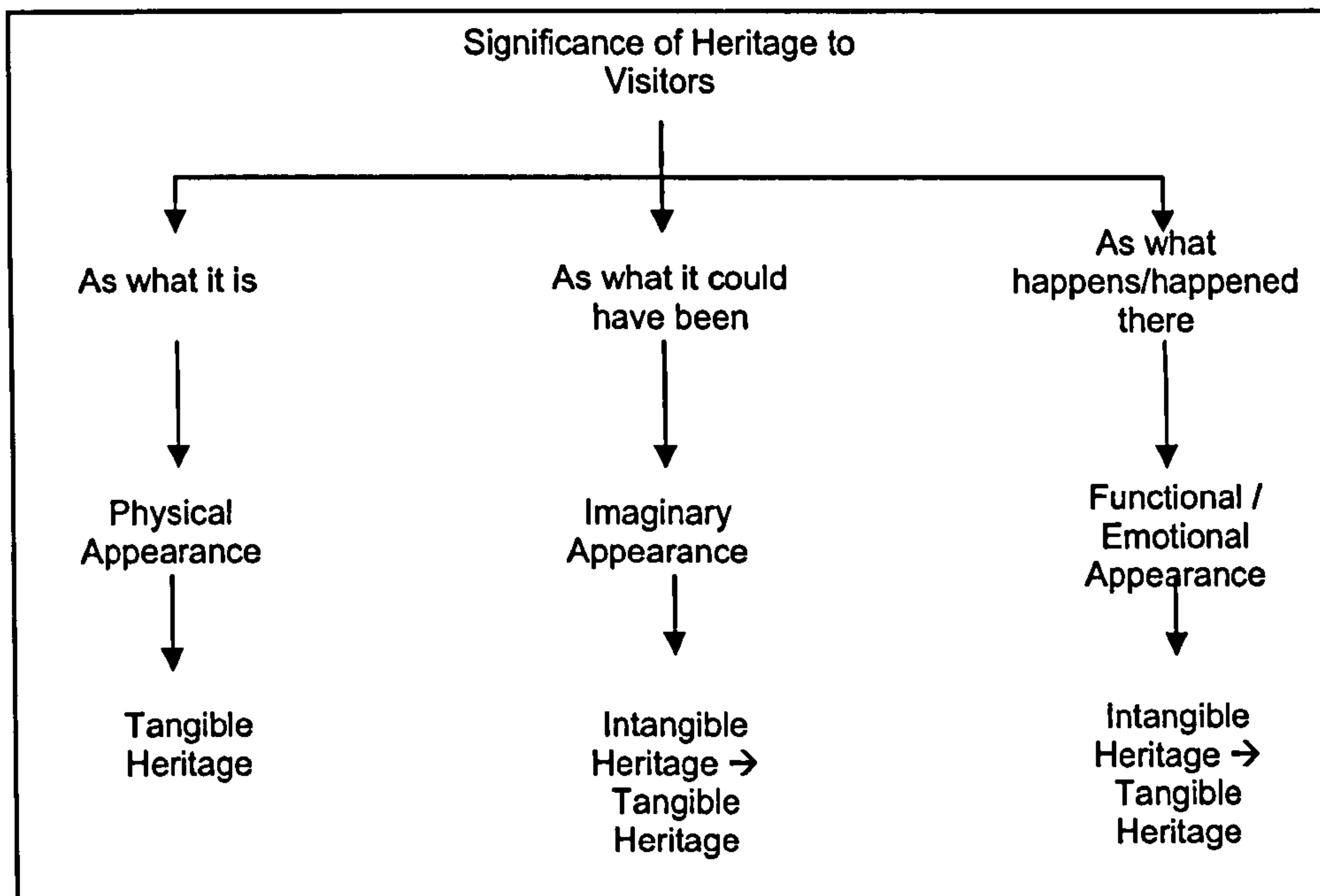
Additionally, consumption of heritage, in this case, can facilitate a spiritual experience. The finding is supported by various scholars in that a cultural heritage can be seen as '*experiential products*' facilitating feeling, emotion and cognition for visitors (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Lofman 1991; Arnould and Price 1993). Heritage may be perceived as a place visitors can engage in '*feeling*' of fun, enjoyment, sharing valuable time with family and friend (i.e. enhancing togetherness), appreciation and imagination; '*emotional*' (affective) experience of freedom and serenity (i.e., enhancing well-being, opportunity for relaxing); '*cognitive*' experience of knowledge apprehension, manipulation and orientation (i.e., educational value, cultural knowledge, heritage trails and information) ; '*spiritual*' experience of sacred and pilgrimage journey. It can be assumed that these cognitive, affective and existential dimensions serve to conceptualise interactive experience of a heritage which comes to be valued by visitors. The perceived value of heritage is, therefore, the core component in its management, interpretation and preservation. As such, the understanding of experience consumption will be advocated as providing a useful analytic perspective for successful visitor and marketing management.

## **(2.) The meanings of heritage attractions in experience consumption**

The value of heritage can be recognised through its significance in relation to visitor consumption experience. Visitors interact with the original or genuine value of heritage when heritage imparts a place where local cultures and beliefs are valued. Cultural heritage can be seen as a place to experience and learn culture, and a sacred site or a religious sanctuary of which some degrees of faith and admiration related to religious practice are based. Figure 7.5 depicts the relationship of perceived value and ways of experience.



Figure 7.5 Significance of heritage to visitors



The perceived value of a heritage is both tangible and intangible and the heritage is important to visitors in different ways. Visitors experience heritage as what it is, as what it would have been and as what happened there.

Tangible heritage is perceived as *'what it is'* when the heritage is thought about as to how this was created. Beside the tangible value of heritage, the nature of the intangible heritage means that the essence of heritage tourism involves the consumption of an *'experience'* which heritage attractions provide for their visitors through their site interpretation. This statement is supported by studies of Goodall (1993) and McArthur and Hall (1996). Intangible value is an immaterial value in which there is a relationship between the heritage and visitor who evaluates it. The study finds that intangible value could make the background for tangible cultural sites in visitor's mind; for example, religious architecture has been constructed with the existence of religion.

Visitors have emotional responses to heritage and may perceive it as a place for contemplation and relaxation. However, in addition to recognising this, the visitor who interprets the site aims to draw out the significance of a heritage through interpretation so that the person recreates intangible images and turn them into tangible heritage. For example, a visitor could develop his/her own belief regarding the spiritual or ancient character of the site which somehow begins to live again. The spirit of place, therefore, remains and returns to the monument as visitors (and local people) recreate the picture of the past; they *'feel'* and *'smell the wind of ancient times'* in the original place rather than in the new place chosen for the reconstruction. Therefore, the intangible heritage, at the source of intellectual, is cultural and spiritual education that can guide a visitor's creativity towards



sustainable uses of heritage and local resources. The management of heritage has a significant role to provide resources to facilitate a visitor's reproduction of tangible heritage from an intangible one.

The experience can be considered as a *'product'* of heritage consumption. This study is supported by Otto and Ritchie's (1996) statement that experience can be defined as *'the subjective mental state felt by participants'* during the experience encounter. Visitors' experience clearly proves the existence of the special intangible value of heritage monuments or ruins. This study has found a close relationship between tangible and intangible values of cultural heritage, which can be defined into categories. First, the intangible value of heritage is materialized by the tangible value of cultural heritage (with physical appearance) so that the deep understanding of such intangible culture will give higher value to the heritage sites. Secondly, an intangible value of heritage plays a vital role within the establishment of the tangible value of heritage (with imaginary appearance).

### **(3.) Perception of authenticity in visitor heritage experience**

The discussion focuses on sources of authenticity and visitor experience versus objects of experience. It is made to elaborate further on the aspect of authenticity. It, therefore, focuses on visitor experience and demonstrates how individual visitor intimately interacts with the objects being experienced.

This study ascribes characteristics such as *'real'* or *'genuine'* to an experience of visitors and heritage objects being experienced and how *'authenticity'* is perceived by visitors. The visitors' perception of authenticity also relate to how a heritage plays into conveying an *'authentic experience'*. Authenticity comprises different aspects and dimensions. Therefore, this study suggests that the aspects of authenticity should be considered in describing the authenticity of visitor experience. According to Crouch (1999), the aspects of authenticity involve *'time'* - when the experience being consumed, *'space'* - where is the experience being consumed and *'perception'* - kind of thing being experienced in heritage tourism. The dimensions of authenticity involve *'objective'*, *'socio-cultural constructed'* and *'personal'* authenticity.

The explanation of the perception of authenticity here bears some adaptation of Wang's (1999, 2000) and Jamal and Hill's (2002) frameworks. Table 7.1 depicts dimension and aspect of authenticity discussed in this section.



Table 7.1 Dimensions and aspects of authenticity

Aspect of Authenticity	Dimension of Authenticity (authentic perspective of authenticity)		
	Objective	Socio-cultural Constructed / emergent	Personal/ Subjective
Time	'The stopped clock'  <i>Historic Time</i>	'The rewind clock'  <i>Heritage Time</i>	Heritage/Visitor time interactive space  <i>Visitor Time</i>
Space	Historic Time MacCannell's and Goffman's ' <i>back stage</i> '	Heritage Time Production  Socio-political landscape	Interactive Space
Perception of Authenticity (result of the study)	<i>Pure Ruins</i> 'as what it is now'	<i>Hedonic Spectacle</i> 'scenic, event and object spectacle'	<i>Pure Ruins</i> 'as what it is now'  <i>Hedonic Spectacle</i> 'scenic, event and object spectacle'  <i>New &amp; Then</i> 'as what heritage would have been'
Experiential Perspectives	Sight/ Interpretive, Emotion, Perception, and Narrative	Sight  Per formative-based approach	Interpretive, Emotion, Perception, and Narrative  Interpretive-based approach  Meaning-based approach
Typology	Objective Authenticity	Emergent Authenticity	Personal Experience  Authentic Experience of Fake  Existential Authenticity
Experiential Concept	Realistic  Authenticity is a property of a heritage object or attraction.  Original/ Unique	Social constructionist  Meaning negotiated and emergent; Space is mediated by ideological and technological force	Visitors situated in interpretive encounter
Related Literatures	Boorstin (1964); MacCannell (1979, 1989)	Salamone (1997); Cohen (1988); Burner (1994); Erickson (1995); Richter (1999); Urry (1990)	Moscardo and Pearce (1986) Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1997); Sharpley (1999) Wang (1999, 2000); Wickens (2000); Kelner (2001); Uriely <i>et al</i> (2002)

Table 7.1 attempts to move beyond the concepts with such limiting binaries as authentic – inauthentic, true – false, real- show and back stage – front stage and some points of view that are emphasised by Burner's concept '*broaderzone*.' Important points about the perception of authenticity are discussed below.



### **(1) The perception of authenticity is subjective.**

The emergent theory indicates that visitors contribute a meaning of authenticity in their own terms. This study illustrates ways in which individuals authenticate heritage experience through different practices of meaning-making by designing the indicators (perceptions) that denote authenticity rather than passively accepting appearances provided by the heritage sites. It also illustrates a diversity of visitor experience and emphasises that the different versions of culture and heritage can be authentic in their own way. Indeed, this study emphasises the visitors as legitimate agents in the consumption experience of tourism rather than conspicuous travellers in a quest for elusive authenticity. It analyses visitors' experience consumption not as representations, metaphors or texts of something located elsewhere, but as social practice to be studied in its own right at the point of interaction. Consequently, the visitor experience, hence, is the product of heritage tourism. It is an essence for visitor management in heritage sites to consider various appropriate methods to provide an authentic experience related to different visitor perception of authenticity.

The visitor experience of heritage found in this study is self-constructed and subjective. This study confirms the consumption found in some recent studies (Wang 1999, 2000; Wicken 2000; Meethan 2001; Coleman and Crang 2002; Crouch 2002, 2004; Suvantola, 2002; Uriely *et al* 2002; van der Duim 2005) there is recognition on an '*active role*' of tourists in tourism and a complex process of interactions. It shows that the visitors subjectively construct their own experience in line with one or more of experience consumption practices. This conceptualization has challenged the notion that the experience of tourism is carried out by passive consumers and has stressed the importance of the individual's practice in tourism experience consumption. Thus, the notion about the authenticity in tourist experience has shifted from the objects provided by the industry to the role of tourist subjectivity in the construction of experiences (Uriely 2005). Supporting a study of Methan (2006), this study indicates that there is a need to account for individual actions rather than seeing them as mere reflections of discourse. The simple reproduction of a dominant value system which prescribes what may or may not be viewed, and what is therefore, truly authentic. These concepts will assist the appropriate and effective branding and marketing communication strategies for a cultural heritage attraction.

### **(2) Authenticity in visitor experience**

The finding of this study illustrates the changing nature of the notion of authenticity constructed by visitors in the experience consumption. This study finds that apart from the '*actual*' crumbling or the ruined monuments or artefacts at the heritage site, visitors may perceive traditional performances (i.e., Buddhist monks walking around the ruins, Buddhists praying at the front of a



Buddha statue and traditional venue or live performance) as being genuine or authentic. Moreover, the site decoration reconstructed to enhance the theme of heritage or garden decoration in the surrounding area in historical parks can be considered a genuine setting. Additionally, stories or narratives contribute to visitors' authentic experience. These incidents make heritage look real, as they stimulate an amiable feeling, sociability, and the kinaesthetic of live performance or incidents that assist visitors' sensation of impression, pleasure, joy or fun (Daniel 1996).

Contrary to McConnell (1986), this authenticity aspect not only relates to a search for meaning and authenticity in other (usually more primitive) societies, but also relates to the everyday life of visitors. Visitors may use their own hobbies in search for some fun or well-being when they pursue an experience in a heritage setting. Setting themselves in a historical park in manner such as meditation and bird watching offer a genuine experience related to the heritage. Hence, the real experience of heritage lies in the individual visitor's daily experience. This study argues that the individuals could perceive their activities related to everyday life as authentic while being engaged in heritage experience. Therefore, the finding of this study could also lend support to the concept '*de-differentiating the experience*' suggested by Uriely (2005) to add a new perspective to tourism experience to early conceptualization of the tourist experience (MacCannell 1973; Cohen 1974, 1979; Turner and Ash 1975) that emphasises the distinctiveness from everyday life and tourists' quest for strangeness and novelty.

When a visitor perceives the authenticity related to the '*now and then*' heritage, the person may perceive a '*fake*' object such as a model of an ancient temple, which represents how the ruined building could have been in the past, as a real sight of the ruins. Heritage experience consists of images, feeling, desires, thoughts, and meanings that emerge in visitors' consciousness; as well as stories, history, series of photographs and other forms of expression. Thus, the experiential moment can be simultaneously in the past at present and even in the future. Moscardo and Pearce (1986) support the perception of the authenticity framework grounded in this study in that authenticity is very important to visitors travelling to historical sites, and that visitors vary in their perceptions of authenticity. The approaches to authenticity in this study can be summarised as '*interactive-based*'. Therefore, authenticity should be determined not only by the discourses but also by the methods by which the experience is provided and perceived. Based on the '*interactive-based*' approach presented in this study, heritage sites can be an interactive, experiential, emotive and interpretive space among visitors, heritage objects, local and other visitors.

The authenticity of visitor experience should be seen as a negotiable concept, not inherent in nature, depending on how the individual visitor perceives it. It is not a given, measurable quality, applicable to a particular event or product, nor is it a fixed, static concept. It can change over time



(Sharpley 1999). Authenticity could be framed by researchers as a self-referential concept – a construction of culture, or a state of being (Cohen 1988; Bruner 1989; Erickson 1995). However, it is not necessarily applied for every case. It also involves personal and intersubjective feelings activated by the liminal process of tourist activities (Wang 1999:351). In other words, authenticity in the tourism experience context is defined by the self in that it is something individually felt and shaped by visitors.

The concept of experience authenticity in this thesis is a combination of the structural approach (MacCannell 1988), emergent authenticity (Cohen 1988) and existential authenticity (Wang 1999, 2000). This authentication manner also has the closest relationship with meaning construction of visitor experience. It indicates the subjectivity of visitor experience. Hence it suggests that it is necessary to distinguish the differences between the authenticity of the attraction and the authenticity of what the visitor's experience. Therefore, the interpretation of authenticity should be well concerned in the visitor management in all sensitive cultural heritage sites.

### 7.2.3 Research Question Three (RQ3) – Visitor Heritage Experience

The development of the visitor experience model began to emerge with the identification of practices and the interaction of visitors and heritage within the visitor experience of those who participated in this study. The theory generated from on-site experience has assisted in filling this gap in literature and extended the notion of what constitutes experience consumption of a heritage. The emerging theory provides a strong foundation for future research to extend this substantive theory of visitor experience of heritage into a formal theory. Nevertheless, a goal of this study is to explore the nature of emerging experience consumption in particular attractions rather than to fit the themes into existing tourist typologies. Hence, the emergence of the visitor heritage experience model directly responses to Research Question 3.

*RQ3. How do visitors experience heritage sites and what meaning do they associate with the sites and their participation? How do visitors construct and shape their experience of heritage sites?*

The finding of this study indicates that heritage experience is an interactive process and is made up of experience components and a set of external factors (see Figure 4.1). It is a complex process that involves multi-components and factors which evolve overtime. The experience consumption practices are interconnected to experiential aspects and evaluation of experience in the heritage setting. Experience consumption practices illustrate the ways in which visitors consume the



heritage while the experiential aspects illustrate the meaning associated with those practices. In other words, it indicates the types of experience. Additionally, the true meaning or value of an experience is derived from a process a visitor goes through when attempting to pursue a heritage experience. The process of an interactive experience also reveals the dynamic nature of visitor experience. This dynamic process involves individual interactions as discussed in Chapter 4. This section will provide a discussion of visitor experience. The dynamic process involves individual interactions as in Chapter 4.

This section will provide a discussion of visitor experience initially in relation to the visitor interactive experience process via the complexity and dynamic nature of visitors' heritage experience.

### **(1) The complexity and dynamic nature of visitor experience**

In this section, the complexity of the visitor experience is discussed through the structure of the proposed model. The dynamic nature of the visitor heritage experience is discussed through the visitor interactive experience process and the roles of heritage in visitor experience.

#### ***The complexity of visitor experience***

In addition to the tourism experience models, this study indicates that an experience evolves through a complex process that has positive and negative components to it and is interactive. The visitor heritage experience model suggests congruency among experience dimensions (goals), condition indicators, and coping behaviour (actions) in wilderness recreation whereas the interactive experience model suggests experiential aspects (goals of experience), experience consumption practices (actions) and evaluation of experience indicates how an cope with the result of the interaction. In terms of on-site experience, this model is also comparable to a framework suggested by Shafer and Hammit (1995) for wilderness experience (*See Section 6.1.2*). Both models indicate condition indicators involved in the actions. The wilderness experience model lends support to the proposed model in terms of the process of experience construction. In addition to the wilderness experience model, the proposed model illustrates the components of experience which are elements of the interactive experience process. It also indicates that experience dimensions or experiential aspects reflect the components and conditions of experience, and in turn, the experiential aspects are congruent with the construction representing experience consumption practices (*See Section 4.2, 5.2, 5.3*). These perceptions then influence the behaviour that feeds back to experience meanings, changing way the lens that might order and focus the perception in the future.



Outcomes of the visitor interactive experiences are often due to personal expectations that have an impact on the experience interpretation of an individual as they assign value to the experiences and carry it away afterwards. The finding in this study lends support to LaSelle and Britton (2003) and Pine and Gilmore (1999). For example, visitors may appreciate the cultural, spiritual and religious context of a place and they aim to learn more about the place as well as obtain deeper knowledge about a religion, and may even take it into their own values and routines. In this vein, an experience is a product or service that when combined with its surrounding, it enhances or brings value to a visitor's life. The evaluation stage of interactive experience is the way a visitor expresses the experience through his/her recollection. It has also shown that external factors have an influence on the meaning and outcomes that visitors attribute to his/her experience.

***Multi-phase process of heritage experience - the dynamic nature of the visitor heritage experience***

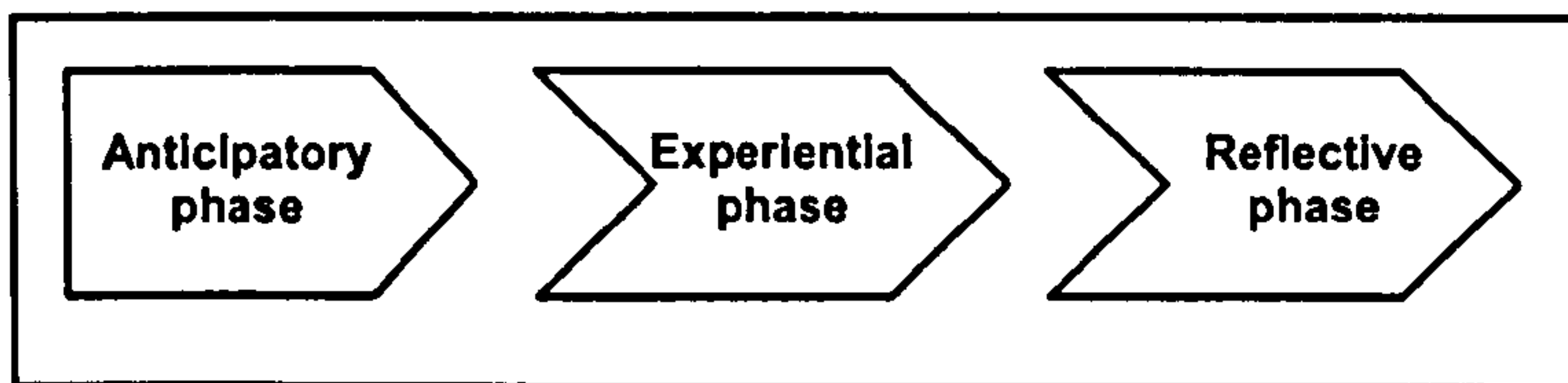
Heritage experience is derived from an interaction or a series of interactions between the visitors, the environment and the attraction. It is constructed from the components of experience with an intervention of external environment. The construction process is named '*Visitor Interactive Experience Process (see Figure 4.1)*'. It consists of three phases: experiential aspects, experience consumption practices, and the evaluation of experience. The '*Heritage Interactive Experience*' is seen as a product or output of the heritage tourism. The anticipation of experiential aspects in this process indicates that heritage experience is goal-directed and individual visitors participate in an experience consumption practice to achieve the goal. This concept is explicitly confirmed by the theory of recreation and leisure that the choices made by human are reasonably rational (Driver, Brown, Stankey, and Gregories 1987). The first phase of the process could be considered the input which leads to an experience pursuit by an experience consumption practice in the second phase. This interaction leads to a reaction to the 'results in the recognition of value' (LaSalle and Britton 2003) in the third phase, the evaluation of experience.

The result of this study shows '*the dynamic nature*' through a multi-phase interactive experience process. This concept is one of the main emerging themes. Importantly, the study results indicate that the heritage experience is dynamic and meaningful and is interpreted differently by each visitor. Moreover, the interactive experience process is considered to be relevant to '*the core consumption experience*', the third stage in experience consumption that includes the sensation, the satiety, the satisfaction/dissatisfaction, the irritation/flow, and the transformation (Arnould *et al* 2002). The experience also fluctuates over the course of the interaction. Various studies of tourism experience (Driver and Toucher 1970; Hull *et al.* 1992; Killion 1992; Lounsbury and Polik 1992; Craig-Smith and French 1994; Mannell, 1999; Borrie and Roggenbuck 2001) explicitly support this concept.

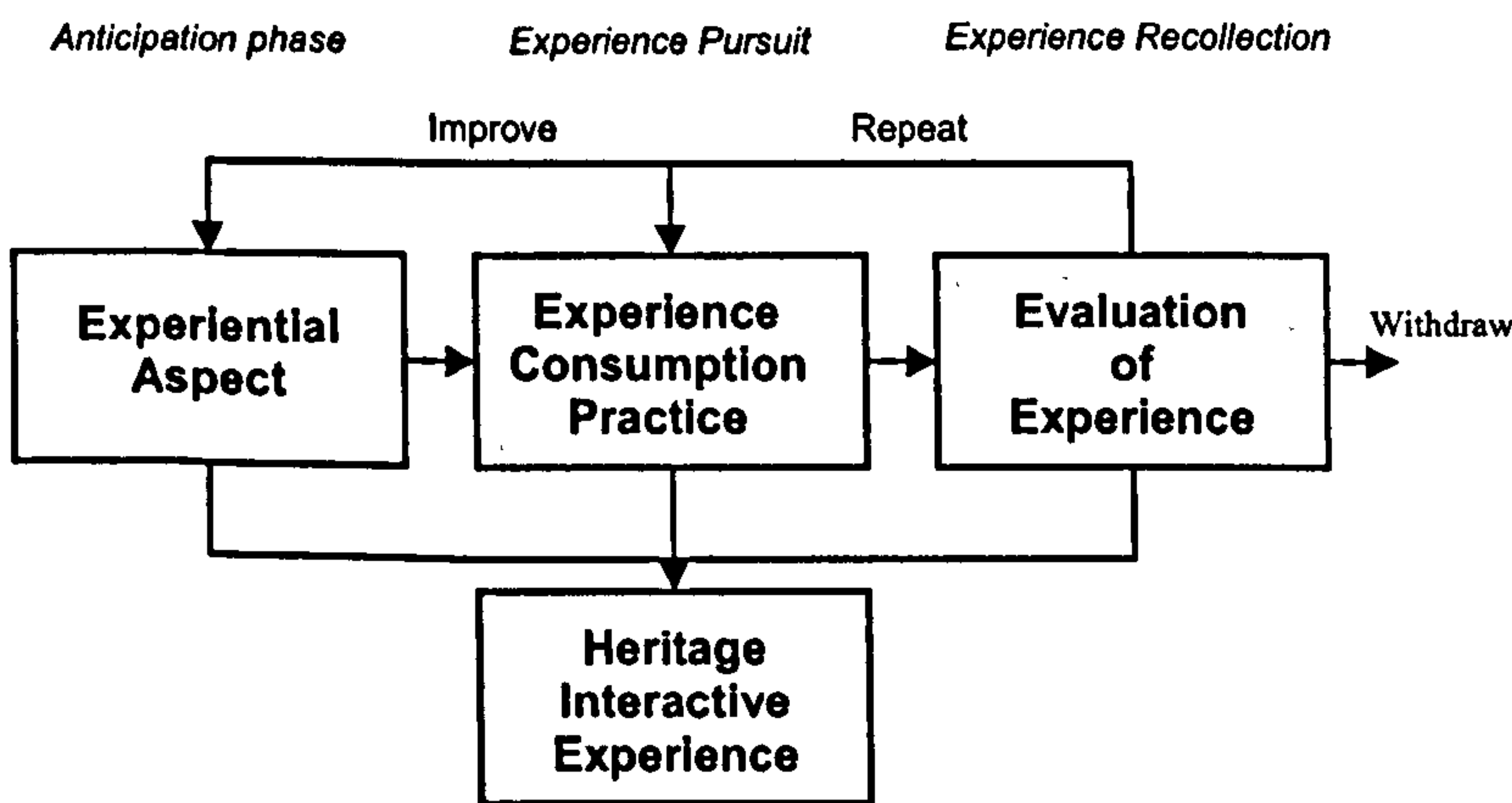


Further, the study provide a notion that the feelings and cognitions of leisure or recreation may not only be dynamic during the course of the total process of tourism engagement, but may be also dynamic, emergent, and multi-phase while visitors are engaging or interacting with the on-site experience consumption. Similar to existing theories, in terms of 'process', the grounded theory can be compared with the three phases of the vacation experience introduced by Craig-Smith and French (1994). Moreover, the dynamic nature of experience can possibly be understood in parallel with the model of the travel experience process (Killion 1992). Figure 7.6 illustrates the dynamic nature of the visitor interactive experience process in comparison with existing models.

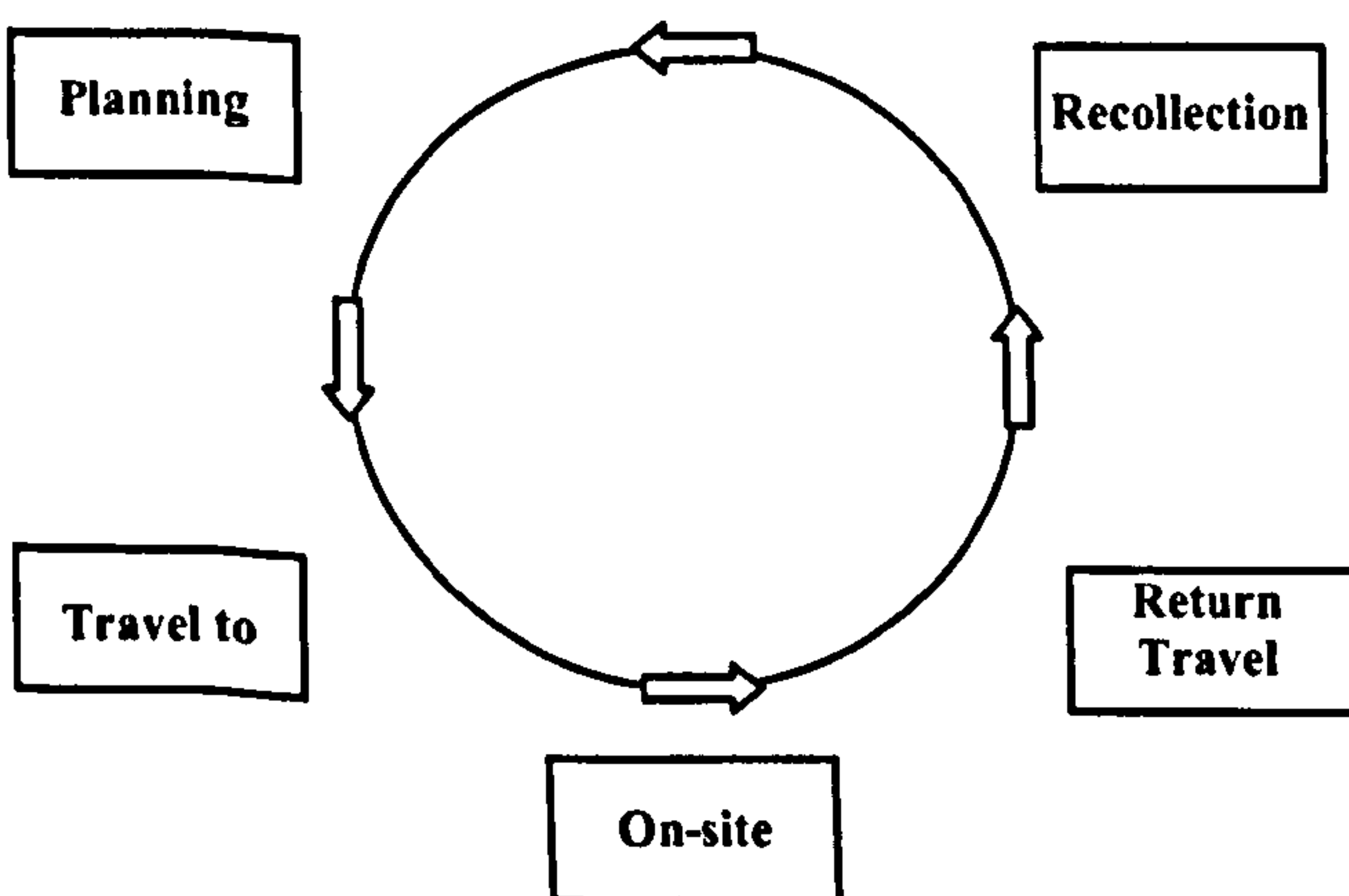
Figure 7.6 A comparison of experience models



The three phases of the vacation experience (Craig-Smith and French, 1994)



The Interactive Experience Process



The travel experience process [Killion, 1992 after Clawson's recreation model (1963)]



The findings indicate three stages of the interactive experience process. The process is comparable to an entire travel experience (Craig-Smith and French, 1994). It is an experience based on intrinsically rewarding engagements and yields the heritage interactive experience as an outcome. At the first phase of the interactive experience process, visitors anticipate an experiential aspect that leads to an experience consumption practice in the next phase. Hence, the visitor interactive experience involves an experiential aspect (needs, preferences and motivations) that guides an individual to experience the heritage in a certain way. The visitor experience is goal-directed and driven by needs and desires to achieve certain outcomes or benefits. Physical, emotional and cognitive forces can motivate these anticipations. In the second and third phases of the process, an individual encounters attributes of the setting, engages in activities and begins to experience and evaluate the quality of activities they are engaged in. Driver *et al.* (1987) suggested that the important variables for the recollection phase are physical, social and managerial. The study identifies more specific factors such as setting conditions, facility conditions, use and user conditions, environmental conditions and interpretation and service conditions.

The interactive experience model presents its dynamic nature. This interactive process is a compilation of the anticipatory, experiential (experience pursuit) and recollection phases. It is comparable to Clawson's travel experience process adapted by Killion (1992). However, the visitor interactive experience differs from Clawson's model in that it specifically represents the process of on-site experience rather than the whole travel experience process. It can be argued that there might be a common pattern of gaining enjoyment, satisfaction and benefit from the *experiential aspect* (anticipation) through the *experience consumption practice* (experience pursuits or participating in activities) and then considering recovering the experience through the *evaluation of experience*. Furthermore, visitors gain satisfaction/dissatisfaction from each phase of the experience including on-site experience consumption. This is similar to the three phases of wildlife experience entry, immersion and existence studied by Borrie and Roggenbuck (2001).

There is a difference between the two frameworks in that the visitor interactive experience process has a reflection phase that contributes to visitors' participation in the whole course of their visit to heritage sites. Visitor experience at heritage sites is dynamic and emergent and it can be described as having three distinct responses: repeat, improve and withdraw. If the visitor is satisfied with the result of experience consumption practice, he/she would repeat the practice by anticipating a similar experiential aspect. However, the output of experience evaluation may return to the starting point if the experience consumption engages distractions. In that case, visitors would change experiential aspects to improve their experience. This dissatisfaction drives the visitors to withdraw from the interactive experience process. Hence, the heritage experience model indicates a dynamic



view of visitors on-site experience while the focus of existing studies limit their usefulness for understanding the experiential state of the travel experience process.

## **(2) The multiplicity of visitor experience**

This section discusses the multiplicity of meanings constructed for visitors experience through multi-dimensions of experiential aspects. It also illustrates the theoretical comparison of the concept emerging in this study and some related concepts. Further, this section makes points out the moment of interactive experience process. Finally, the contributions to knowledge are addressed.

### ***Multiplicity of meanings constructed for visitor experience – Experiential aspects***

Experiential aspects are a result of the experience or the first outcome that leads to subsequent outcomes. This could be explained by an expectancy-value model states that the expectancy or likelihood of an action creating a certain outcome and value combined with the attractiveness of that outcome to create the motivation to pursue such an outcome, provides a support for external validity of this concept. Additionally, the construction of the experiential aspects as a phase of the visitor interactive experience process can be explained by the theory of planned behaviour suggested by Ajzen (1991) that behaviour may be predicted by one's intentions, and these intentions are in turn influenced by one's attitudes towards the behaviour. However, as a general theory, the theory of planned behaviour does not specify the particular beliefs that are associated with any particular behaviour.

Although the heritage attractions in this study are classified as archaeological sites, within the interactive experience process the interaction provides various meanings to heritage experience as visitors anticipate several dimensions of experiential aspects (simultaneously or separately). These aspects include a quest for culture, a quest for a sense of place, a quest for pleasure, a quest for religious value, a quest for history trails, a quest for nostalgia or even withdrawal. The experiential aspects define the essence of the visitor experience of heritage, the visitors' aspirations and the strategies visitors adopt in order to meet the goals (experience consumption practices). Visitors participate in the experience consumption in different manners depending on the level of interaction anticipated. The level of experiential aspects determines the intensity of the experience consumption practices ranging from interacting to involving (*as discussed in 5.2*).

This study suggests that the way in which visitors consider and reminisce about their experiences when they interact with a heritage leads them to participate in activities for the purpose of



consuming the heritage experience. Indeed, involvement is one of several components that construct the meaning of visitors' experience of heritage. This result is supported by Csikzentmihalyi and Csikzentmihalyi (1988) in that meaning behind experience has an influence on visitors' seeking optimal experience through which they may feel deep involvement, intense concentration, lack of self-consciousness, and transcendence of sense of self that leads to an intrinsically rewarding experience.

### *Comparing the experiential aspects to related concepts*

The concept of experiential aspects is also comparable to Cohen's (1979) mode of tourist experience in that experiential aspects also guide the types of experience sought by the tourists. However, this framework relates to the classification of tourists whereas the concept of this study relates to the classification of visitor experience consumption practices. As well as recreational mode, with the quest of pleasure, visitors put an emphasis on physical recreation in a form of entertainment akin where visitors enjoy their visit because it restores their physical and mental powers and endow them with a general sense of well-being. However, this study extends this concept to a greater detail that pleasure aspect of the visitors' interactive experience also includes an enjoyment of fiesta, where the visitors hang out with others as well as the exotic disclosure, which yields an awe inspiration and novelty. On the one hand, the visitors may seek to immerse themselves in the setting and the heritage environment (derived from spiritual feature of heritage) with a general sense of well-being without interacting with heritage objects. In this case, the heritage is considered a venue of experience since the visitors anticipate the aspects of activities within the heritage setting as the heritage experience. This sub-divided aspect is comparable to Cohen's *diversionary mode* where the visitors seek an alternative space from the routine. Hence, this study argues that the experience aspect yields the pleasure of entertainment whilst authenticity is also relevant.

On the other hand, the visitors may also be distantly related to the sacred values of the site, as they perceive heritage attractions as just a tourist attraction or a place to recreate fun. The visitors also seek 'exotic' experiences rather than 'pseudo events'. This aspect is comparable to Cohen's *experiential mode* where the visitors quest for meaning outside the confinement of one's own society. This quest is generally developed through discovering something new, encountering and understanding different cultures. This quest may drive the visitors to strive for excitement by being engaged in extraordinary physical challenges such as climbing the height or exploring the myth, a motivational force referred to as the '*Ulysses factor*' (Pearce 1988). Because the heritage visit is not necessarily a holiday circumstance, experiential aspects not only emphasise two motivational forces, that is, escaping everyday life situations and/or searching for different conditions (Cohen



1979, Urry 1990), but also adopt everyday life into the heritage experience. Beside a *quest for exotic disclosure*, a *quest for culture* (cultural assimilation) is also comparable to Cohen's *experiential mode*, which states that visitors search for the meaning and attempt to transform their society through revolution and observe meaning in life of others.

Quest for culture is also comparable to Cohen's *experimental mode* where visitors are engaged in local cultures as well as the trails of adventure. Like the quest for religious interest, visitors may adhere to the spiritual centre of a local society and traditions (and even a belief); however, at a particular moment visitors may not fully commit themselves into it. Whilst the *existential mode* indicates that visitors would commit to an elective spiritual centre phenomenological accepted as a religious conversion, described by the insider-outsider approach. This mode also includes pilgrim's experience in which visitors are fully involved and committed to the beliefs and values symbolised by the centre. Visitors totally immerse themselves in the culture and religious practices of the heritage attractions as they sense sacred or spiritual kinship with the heritage objects. The *quest for sacred journey* and *the quest for religious practice* are also comparable to this concept. Lending a support to this study, Prichard and Morgan (1996) addressed '*spirituality of place*' as a meaning behind visitor experience.

Moreover, the quest for sense of place (lost in space and escaping) found in this study is comparable to the *existential mode* as the visitors immerse themselves in a setting. However, the quest adheres both sense of spirituality and primarily aesthetic. On the one hand, to sense a place the visitors could get lost and take a journey back into time by engulfing their minds in a place despite the crowds (emotional escape). On the other hand, the visitors look for solitary confinement by escaping from the crowds (physical and emotional escapism). Both of these quests share characteristics with Goulding's (2002) *existential visitor* that involves alienation in the present and the search for meaning and temporary control in the past as well as aesthetics that involves the consequent idealization of previous eras and vicarious nostalgia. The visitors, in this sense, have a desire for authenticity and quest for imagery escapism. Additionally, quest for literary place is also an existential mode of experience where a visitor adheres to spirituality, sacredness, history and nostalgia for the heritage.

Arnould *et al* (1997) explore magical aspects of the river rafting experience and indicate that some aspects of experience that they described as magical have been identified as aspects of the sacred. Both magic and sacredness have associations with special times and special places, and they involve ritual and mystery. The authors addressed descriptions of both the sacred and the magical and highlight the intense involvement and commitment of the individual. In this situation, '*communitas*' is created through participation in the sacred. This statement also provides an



explanation to the quest for religious values. Through experience consumption, the visitors create a sense of community that transcends typical social norms and convention in which they share a common bond of experience when the visitors mingle in a group when they participate in a spiritual rite at the heritage place. The individual also experiences ecstasy and '*flow*'. Indeed, the flow involves the centring of attention and absorption in an activity (Hopkinson and Pujari, 1999). This statement explains the special significance that leads to forms of consumption practices which are extremely potent in the realization of '*the extended self*' (Belk, 1988).

Additionally, the finding is comparable to previous studies of tourists' experience providing evidence that tourists articulate three dimensions of meaning: the social aspects of experience, the environmental aspects of experience and the aspects of activities within those environments as the experience (Prentice et. al, 1998; McIntyre and Roggenbuck, 1998; Pritchard and Morgan, 1996; Bricker and Kerstetter, 2002). *The quest for pleasure* (a good day out and hanging out) conceptualised in this study could be compared to the *social aspects* of experience. *The quest for history trails, quest for nostalgia* and *quest for culture* could be compared to the *environmental aspects* of experience. Additionally, the quest for sense of place and religious values could be compared to the *aspects of activities within the environment* as the experience. These dimensions of aspect of experience also indicate the roles of heritage attractions in visitor experience.

In terms of the multiple dimensions of expectation, this study lends support to and extends several perspectives of experience of the past to the concept of experiential benefits of the past (Chronis 2005). He identified six experiential benefits found prevalent among consumers in their contact with the past including the experience of knowledge, cultural identity, cultural value, escape in time, aesthetic appreciation, and narrative connection. Similar to this study, these benefits are embedded in the cultural heritage narratives that are further enriched through experience consumption practices. However, the experience of the past is mediated not only by imagination but also by pleasurable glance, embodiment and interpretation. Moreover, value connected to the interaction with past could involve '*pleasing to the eyes*', and this value is not necessarily related to cultural narratives.

### ***Multiplicity of visitor experience*** – experience consumption practices

Experience consumption practice is the process by which are individual visitor produces heritage experience which has meaning to his/her experiential aspects. In other words, it is a mode of action in which the visitor makes use of heritage in a variety of ways. The experience consumption practices constructed in this study provide a comprehensive framework describing different ways in which the visitors consume heritage experience. With different experiential aspects individual visitors construct when they consume the heritage object or attraction, they consume heritage in



eight ways. These could be conceptualised and summarised into a relationship of the structure of experience and the dimension of experiential aspect.

### **(a) Structure of experience**

The structure of experience is classified into interpretive, sensual and integrated (interpretive/sensual). The dimension of experiential aspects is classified into instrumental, existential/affective and pleasurable aspects.

#### *Interpretive experience consumption practice*

This structure represents the ways in which visitors make use of information to produce knowledge and understanding of heritage. The visitors consume heritage experience through the interpretive practices by comprehending the heritage that represents an intellectual interactive experience process where the visitors act to pursue knowledge and understanding about heritage. The visitors interpret the cultural heritage by instrumental practices: orientating themselves, analyzing heritage and assimilating heritage sights to existing knowledge, past experience or their own history and culture. They employ a variety of knowledge resources in their consumption activities. Resources include a variety of cultural and historical genre ranging from word of mouth to specialised texts related to Buddhist art, Buddhism and the history of that heritage. Therefore, meaningful, informative, contextual and factual enquiries are crucial for facilitating visitors' experience consumption.

#### *Sensual experience consumption practice*

Visitors also consume the heritage by non-interpretive or sensual experiences. This is a subjective experience. McIntosh (1999) confirms an experiential perspective on heritage consumption, that is, that reported experience could be classified by the thoughts, feelings, emotional reactions and imaginations sensed by visitors, and more prominently, by how these experiences may be seen as beneficial. In this respect, the behaviour of heritage visitors is sensory complex and emotionally laden than has been reflected in the traditional approach to marketing research. Visitors consume heritage experience in sensual experience consumption practice including *ritual experience*, *enjoying the sight and doing the park*.

Visitors also consume heritage experience through the integration of interpretive and sensual consumption practices, including appreciating the heritage, idealizing the past, exploring the heritage and transforming the sight.



**(b) Dimensions of experiential aspect***Instrumental Dimension*

An instrumental experiential aspect is a cognitive aspect. This dimension is described as a concept of benefit-based experience. Inherent in such an approach is the benefit chain of causality, linking activities, setting, experiences, and benefit in such sequence (Driver and Brown 1980; Manning, 1986; Driver, Brown, Stankey and Gregoire, 1987; Haas,). Activities are undertaken in settings to gain experiences that are regarded as beneficial which may vary by activities undertaken (Haggard and Williams, 1991). In this study, the experience is relevant to intellectual and instrumental practices. This practice is derived from an intended purposive and functional result. Visitors acquire and interpret information to assimilate it with existing knowledge and produce an understanding about heritage.

An example of beneficial or instrumental practice in this study involves comprehending the heritage. This notion of active experience consumption is partly supported by the concept of 'mindfulness' (Moscardo, 1996) as visitors are sensitive to context, actively process information and question what is going on in the setting. The successful facilitation of a mindful experience for visitors at heritage attractions, and the subsequent understanding and appreciation of heritage resulting from this experience, is vital in aiding successful management and conservation of heritage sites, thereby achieving sustainable tourism. In particular, increased knowledge of a heritage resource is said to result in heightened support for preservation of the resource. This mode of consumption practice describes how consumers acquire and manipulate the meaning of through self-extension and self-development processes. In these excerpts the essence of an attraction visit is oriented towards an instrumental or intellectual task, which is in contrast to previous research statement indicate that holiday benefits are non-verbal, elusive, and multi-sensory experiences, and their processing is hardly based on rational thought (Ryan, 1997). This study extends these studies by refining existing descriptions and adding an institutional dimension that is missing from current formulations in the tourism consumption.

*Affective/ existential dimension*

An affective/existential component of experience consumption requires that valued dimensions of the visitor experience be produced in part by the visitors themselves through their personal thoughts, feelings, and imagination and the unique 'context' or backgrounds (including personal interest, value, experiences and motivation) which visitors bring with them to the setting (Falk and Dierking 1992; Macdonald, 1992). Such personal constructs serve to mediate and personalize the



nature of the interaction between the visitors and the physical context of heritage attractions, and consequently the interactive experience is derived from such an interaction (Figure 7.1). However, individuals may interpret heritage in an entirely different way from what is intended (See 7.2.1.2). Inherent in this finding, the visitors may interpret through memory-prompts as well as cognitive insight. The emergent theory provides recognition that visitors are actively engaged in interactive experience consumption. The dimensions of visitor experience are found to include '*affective emotion*' and '*affective learning*', in addition to effective behaviours as responses to the heritage settings.

The affective/ existential dimension is likely to be relevant to the serious leisure (Stebbins, 1993) in that experience involves the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist and expression of combination of its skills, knowledge and experience. The experience practices may involve special personal interest and background, and a durable outcome is realized from participation (i.e., self-actualization, self-expression, enhancement of self-image and social interaction and sense of belonging). Goulding (2002) concludes perception of the past in relation to art, art architecture, the consequent idealization of the past, vicarious nostalgia, and a desire of authenticity, and a quest for imagination escapism is also relevant in nostalgia consumption. Pleasure and learning are also compulsory for this experience dimension as this involves the use of heritage for both leisure and education (edutainment). Affective experience, such as religious practices and appreciation of the past, can result in immediate on-site benefits such as the enjoyment of sharing memories, potential longer lasting off-site benefits such as enhancing perspective of life (appreciation on religion), wider educational value and increased support in preserving and recording the past for posterity.

### *Pleasure experience*

Considering the flow concept (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) as the basic principle to explain aspects of experience, pleasure quality has no relation to the task that the visitor wants to accomplish with heritage consumption. Pleasure consumption is motivated by the desire for fantasy, visual attractiveness, sensual pleasure and fun. This dimension can be defined as the doctrine that pleasure is the highest good and the pursuit of pleasure. This dimension of experience indicates that although the desire for some degree of learning or understanding may be apparent, this does not necessarily mean that visitors do learn from their interaction with heritage sites similar to an explanation of mindlessness in tourism consumption (Moscardo, 1996). It is also related to an aspect for experiencing an aesthetic beauty, exotic disclosure and socializing.



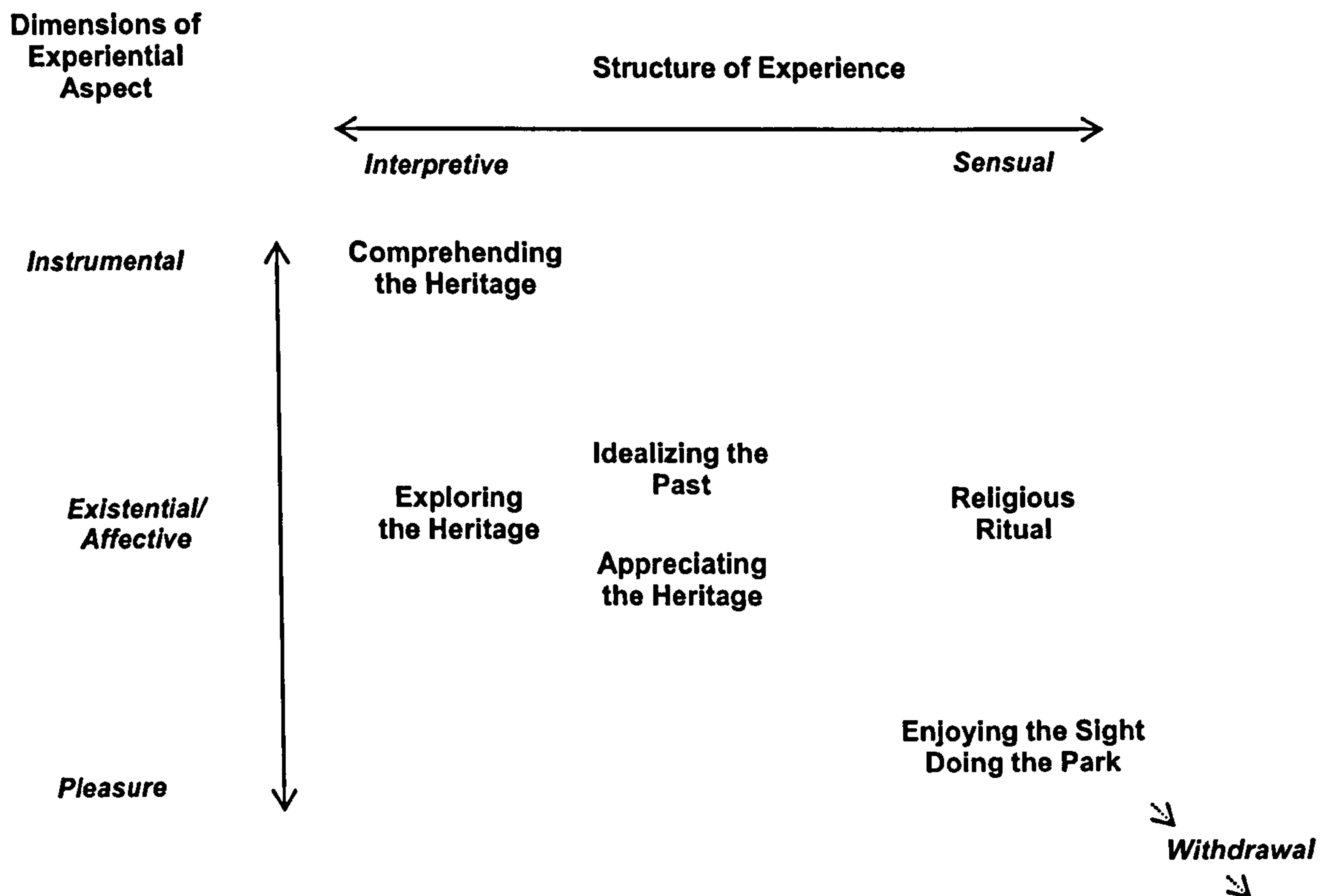
### **(c) Continuum of experience consumption**

The emergent theory lends support to the idea that experiences depend on how individuals sense, think, feel, behave and relate (Schmit, 1999) to and within the cultural heritage environment over time. Throughout the on-site visit, many experience consumption themes comprising a number of ideas were identified. An overview of key themes is presented in the continuum of consumption experience wherein the experiential aspects range from instrumental, existential to aesthetic. The structure of experience range is divided into interpretive and sensual dimensions.

Since the goal of this study is to detail specific aspects of consumption, there exists a need for a comprehensive framework that describes the universe of actions that constitute the experience consumption. The study describes experience as encompassing all aspects of the visitor's interaction with the system. In this study, the researcher extends, refines, and synthesizes structures of experience and three dimensions of the experiential aspect. The researcher defines this processing of consumption practices as the central part within the visitors' interactive experience process. This experience consumption processing is constructed by the quality of interactive system: structure of experience (interpretive – sensual). The experiential aspect leads to various consequences of experience: experience consumption practices ranging from instrumental to pleasure outcomes. Heritage experience consumption practice in this study is addressed as involving instrumental (cognitive/reflective), affective/existential and pleasure or hedonic dimensions in the conceptualization of the visitors' interaction with the heritage attraction. These concepts are integrated as experience dimensions and summarise the continuum of experience consumption (Figure 7.7) which depicts classification of practice regarding the contingency of structure and aspects of experience.



Figure 7.7 Continuum of experience consumption



The concept of experiential aspect could be explained by benefit-based approach. The figure illustrates three main categories of experiential aspects prevalent among visitors. These benefits embedded in cultural heritage narratives are further enriched through experience consumption practice. This study classifies the structure of experience into interpretive experience on one end and sensual experience on the other end. There are multiple and often overlapping aspects and structures of experience of the cultural heritage. The visitors’ experience of heritage in this case could also be constructed by both interpretive and sensual ways of experience consumption.

The dimension of experiential aspect axis refers to the level of intensity of the visitors’ anticipation towards consumption ranging from pleasure to instrumental experience whereas the structure of experience axis refers to the propensity of interpretive and sensual manners constructed in the visitors’ experience consumption.

*(I) Interpretive – instrumental heritage experience*

At one end of the continuum, ‘*comprehending the heritage*’ is the consumption practice constructed with *interpretive - instrumental* dimensions. Within this practice, contextual enquiry is significant since visitors seek to produce knowledge and understanding about the heritage.



Additionally, the '*cognitive dimension*' of experience typically includes a '*learning aspect*'. Roggenbuck, Loomis, and Dagostino (1991) conclude that people engaged in leisure activities in a leisure setting grow in knowledge of facts and/or concepts and develop framework for organizing knowledge. Along with learning, the improvement of attitudes towards perception of park resources and conservation can also be achieved through leisure activities as well as an increased desire to visit historical sites.

(ii) *Sensual – pleasure heritage experience*

At the other end of the continuum, '*doing the park*' is a sensual experience consumption practice that accounts for pleasure by which the desire for experience of fiesta and enjoyment of hanging out with peers and sightseeing is usually required (*sensual – pleasure dimension*). Additionally, visitors may pursue leisure from visiting a heritage site – go and see, and have fun through '*doing the park*'. It is an interpersonal and bodily experience consumption in which heritage is seen as an object of experience for glancing over the heritage and a venue of experience for hanging out. Visitors aim to relax and have good times via a heritage encounter. Glancing over the heritage involves viewing, surveying, and watching the ruins for pleasure. Visitors may also gain a social excursion of friendship through reunion or social activities like picnics, through the heritage setting. They also exchange general information such as how to get there and get around, recommend attractions and touring plans. There is group cohesion among visitors where social excursion is practiced. However, doing the park may dilute the value and image of culture heritage when visitors do not concern themselves with behavioural norms or appreciate the cultural value of the site. For example, many visitors sit on the grass drinking canned beer and dropping rubbish without any regard to the impact on the site and other visitors. Socializing may also cause noise pollution distracting other visitors from heritage interaction. This practice is comparable to the concept of collective gaze (Urry 1995), which involves a communal encounter, and shared encounters. Doing the park also involves a series of brief encounters, glancing and collecting of many signs of environment. This practice could be considered to share most characteristics of 'gaze' with the concept of tourist gaze.

*'Enjoying the sight'* is a sensual experience consumption practice undertaken by visitors to accomplish a pleasure aspect of experience. It involves an aesthetic appreciation (Chronis 2005) as visitors interact with the scenic feature and atmosphere of the heritage sites. It is the pursuit of pleasurable experiences, mostly influenced by un-interpreted stimuli such as heritage settings and scenery which stimulate an inspiration and peace. This does not necessarily involve historic, cultural or religious aspects of the site or the acquisition of knowledge. The visitors do '*roaming the ruins*' or '*strolling the park*' for pleasure. They 'liberate themselves' and seek escapism by



following remote paths away from other visitors. This can create a semi-spiritual experience. In this case visitors are more likely to interact with the environment of heritage than with the heritage itself. Visitors sometimes introduce aspects of their personal daily life into their experience as often mentioned “*I brought a mat and a book I like...chilled out and read my book. It was wonderful*”. Pleasant heritage could sometimes be harmful to the heritage where visitors who do not understand the cultural and sacred aspects of the sites behave inappropriately.

This consumption practice, *‘roaming the ruins’*, is comparable to *‘romantic gaze’* (Urry 1995) in that the individual sustains the immersion and sense of solitude as his/her gaze involves the sense of auratic landscape. Consuming heritage by *‘liberating self’*, visitors immerse into a solitary environment of heritage to absorb romanticism and freedom. In this sense, nature and freedom are the main components a visitor uses to authenticate his/her experience. This practice is also comparable to spatial consumption of *‘remembering’* at the Taj (Edensor 1990) whilst liberating self could refer to what John and Clarke (2001) state as *‘sit and doing nothing’*. This practice is also an act of healing and rejuvenation. The study by Paffenberger, Hyde and Dow (1991) reveals some of the beneficial impacts of recreational engagements on the well-being of individuals. The pleasurable experience in his case is often mentioned as *‘ancient retreat’* and *‘solitary refinement’*. Ulrich *et al* (1991) also states that the temporary escape from life’s pressure can reduce stress, and the restorative properties of leisure allows for stress reduction. An active activity such as exercise or passive recreation such as sitting and enjoying a natural landscape works to produce a sense of control to overcome stress. Indeed, visitors’ experience is more sensual but less attentive to a particular attraction.

### *(iii) Interpretive/sensual – affective/existential heritage experience*

This type of experience consumption could be explained by what is called extraordinary or memorable experience by Schmitt (1999) as it provides absorption and integration, personal control, joy and valuing, and a spontaneous letting-be off the process (Arnould and Price 1993). Idealizing the past is a practice to pursue the *‘envision’* and *‘enchantment’* of heritage sights or to bring the ruins to life. It is constructed to accomplish an inspirational benefit. Visitors view heritage monuments through an interconnection of knowledge and emotion, such as *‘thinking’* of what the ruins were like in the past, or where important history took place. They enchant the ruins through the simulation of pictures or stories of heritage *‘now and then’*; for example, the mapping of the layout of temple ruins through transparencies that depict what the ruins would have looked like in the past. In idealizing the heritage, visitors employ history and the sight of historic ruins believed to be true as key resources in engendering emotional engagement. Idealizing heritage is a key experience consumption practice that visitors use to bring the experience to life and make it



meaningful. The heritage consumption in this sense is subjective. Historic fiction and visual aids are often required for making sense of the sights while facts are also required for idealizing the past. The experiential act also reflects an imaginary process from which visitors draw comparisons between the past then and now. In this sense, visitors interpret information about the heritage and make sense (abstraction) of it. This practice is therefore an integration of interpretive and sensual structures.

*Appreciating the heritage* is a consumption experience which visitors use to achieve an ambition of affective and existential experience. Visitors pursue an experience by *'feeling the past'* where the history of heritage stimulates their experience, or *'blow their mind'* through impressions of the historical sense of place. Inspired by the size and spirituality of the sites, visitors may unconsciously 'blow' their minds with the sights and experiences of heritage ruins. The purity of the ruins in 'the way it is broken' is a powerful sight that stimulates their impression of the sites. Visitors' sensual/emotional connection with heritage is extremely powerful, as visitors said *'I like the ruin that is completely broken...when you don't really know what it was. It is fascinating to use my imagination'* and *"when I walk through this ruined temple, I can smell the past"*. The visitors interact with heritage objects and its sentimental values such as spirituality and size. Pleasurable expression is a semi-spiritual experience that visitors immerse and lose themselves in the sense of a spiritual place. Experiencing the heritage this way, visitors find themselves in another world in another time. Visitors generate an effort in order to accomplish an experiential aspect such as a quest for a sense of place, escapism, nostalgia and even romanticism from consuming site ambience.

*(iv.) Interpretive/ affective-existential heritage experience*

For visitors, exploring the heritage can be an opportunity to pursue what has been dubbed edutainment; a mix of education and entertainment. Visitors interact with the heritage through an aesthetic perspective of experience as well as an aspect for self-fulfilment through increased knowledge. Visitors learn about heritage from the experience. In this sense, visitors' object manipulation accompanied by a moderate level of learning relates to specific interests such as history and knowledge about historical architectures. In addition, exploring the heritage is a practice of pleasure through the pursuit of exotic or adventurous heritage experiences - something that is new to them such as myth or spiritual aspects that inspire a sense of awe and wonder. Visitors consume certain heritage objects or attractions that interest them; for example, a visitor investigates a heritage site to *"go there to prove the legendary myth of the speaking Buddha"*. Heritage exploration also involves bodily interaction. To experience heritage by exploring it is a gateway of anticipating more interpretive heritage consumption. Visitors make sense of heritage



and synchronize it with some existent knowledge to produce an understanding about things while adventurous entertainment is also pursued.

*(v.) Sensual – affective/existential heritage experience*

The *ritual experience* is usually derived from existential aspects of the experience led by individual faith and admiration towards heritage. The practice is most closely associated with religious views and other beliefs that are important to the visitors. The visitors seclude their mind from the outside world when they perform sacred ceremonies and worship. They insulate themselves during long engagements with particular heritage objects or locations. It is also found in this study that ritual experience is highly complex, spiritual response and that it involves emotions, thoughts, sensation, behaviour, and self-reinforcement. The practice could be constructed by both sensual and interpretive structures.

*(vi.) Withdrawal*

Visitors could withdraw themselves from the interactive experience process due to several constraints (*See 5.3.1*). The practice begins to construct at the evaluation stage of the interactive process as the visitors may choose to set an emotional distance from a heritage attraction by either stopping its consumption or departing the heritage place. Along with the results of this study there are some studies that examined how experience consumption could be interrupted by environmental constraints. Hull (1991) also notes that the leisure-related cause of mood can have many consequences; for instance, certain moods can increase attention and cognition among participants.

Jacob and Schreyer (1980) define a conflict situation in recreation as '*goal interference*' attributed to another individual's behaviour. Gramann (1999) provides the conflict affected by mechanical noise. In fact, it is an integral part of the visitors' experience in park attractions, and it creates a strong memorial value. However, mechanical noise in the park is undesirable. Conflict is not objective. Yet, it can be the result of an individual's evaluation of past and future social contacts.

Service experiences have been classified into the subjective and emotional (affective) dimensions (Arnould and Price 1993; Arnould and Tierney 1995; Otto and Ritchie 1995). In museum studies, there is a focus on the museum setting including the physical and interpretive context, which facilitates satisfactory experiences and learning among visitors as well as experiential or affective dimensions of the visit (Loomis 1993; McManus 1993; Roberts 1993; Uzzell 1993). Experiences are also divided into three psychological dimensions: affective, reflective and cognitive. The



personal value of heritage visiting studied by McIntosh (1999) was found to include affective emotions and affective learning, in addition to affective behaviours, as responses to the heritage settings. 'Mindfulness' and 'mindlessness' have been conceptualised and applied to the visitor heritage experience by Moscardo (1996) where visitors are rendered mindful, they are sensitive to context, actively processing information and questioning what is going on in the setting whereas visitor's mindless state achieves little understanding about the setting. Heritage consumption in the benefit-based approach may be seen as something more '*beneficial*' than the immediate 'hedonic' experiences (Wickens 1994). The hierarchical framework of experience introduced in this study extends the explanation of these dimensions of experiences.

### **(3) The subjectivity of experience**

This study indicates an active role in the heritage experience and suggests that the individuality is a critical element of visitor experience. The concept of tourist encounter (Crouch *et al* 2001) describes heritage experience by what the visitor does and how the visitor makes sense of what she or he does as an active individual constructing the significance of place, connection and disconnection in society. Further, the relationship between production and consumption as they are enacted is a set of practices. It involves more active forms of participation or visitors' interactions with the place through embodying and enacting social relation. The values and meanings derived from the imposed forms of experiential aspects indicate that different interests create and consume different forms of knowledge built on a more existential, unique and individual condition, most likely regardless of demographic factors. Unnecessarily predefined, those components of experience anticipate the outcome of heritage visits or heritage consumption. Additionally, this study suggests that the meanings of heritage depend on what visitors bring to them and that this will change according to personal knowledge and individual experience of those visitors or their own context. Each visitor's personal agenda is unique and will include varying degrees of experience and knowledge of the content of particular heritage sites/ attractions combined with other components mentioned above. Such factors will ultimately tailor which experiences people enjoy or appreciate, how they interact with attractions, artefacts, and which experience will fulfil the satisfaction of heritage consumption. The experience of heritage in this study is therefore seen as an output subjectively experienced by visitors. Tarssanen and Kyllanen's (2005) also state that an individual should be seen as a customer-oriented way of action in staging the product that, in this case, is experience of heritage. Moreover, a visitor can experience through communal situations; for example, visitors who visit the heritage with a group could anticipate personal experiential aspects and experience the heritage their own ways.



In effect, through their consumption, individuals reach heritage experience with their personal agenda related to the components of experience especially perceived value of heritage, perception of authenticity, involvement, acquisition of knowledge, perceived behavioural norms, and quests of experience. They are also affected by the heritage setting, site management, cultural value and environment conditions. Unnecessarily predefined, those components of experience anticipate outcome of the visits. Supported by Prentice and Behoos' (1997) conceptualised experience of heritage tourists, each visitor's personal agenda are unique and include varying degrees of experience and knowledge of the content of particular heritage sites/ attractions combined with other components mentioned above. Such factors will ultimately tailor which experiences people enjoy or appreciate, how they interact with attractions, artefacts, and which experience will fulfil the satisfaction of heritage consumption.

Furthermore, this study confirms experiential and benefit based segmentation in several ways (Prentice, Witt and Hamer 1998). First, the same heritage attraction can be experienced in different ways, particularly in terms of the interest motivating visitors to come to the attraction. Secondly, the study suggests that a visitor would also undertake several different ways to experience a heritage attraction. In this study, experiential aspects play an influential role in constructing experience consumption practices by each visitor. Thirdly, the benefit chain of causality is applicable to the understanding of industrial heritage visitation in that the determinants of experience are multi-attribute in quality. The concept of components of experience could extend this explanation. Finally, the analysis has shown that socio-demographics are largely irrelevant in the understanding of tourist experiences. A focal point found in this study suggests that socio-demographic factors (*i.e.*, nationality, religion, age group, and education background) are irrelevant to on-site experience consumption. For example, a Buddhist visitor may perceive a religious ruin as a beautiful park at the moment he/she is engaged in experience consumption so that he/she constructs an aspect which is not related to religious value and consumes it in a particular way, such as picnicking or glancing, whereas a Christian adheres to its religious value so that he/she worships the heritage. It can be argued that consumption experience is relevant to the concept of experience- and benefit-based management in that activities are undertaken in a heritage setting to gain experiences whose patterns are regarded as beneficial and may vary by activities undertaken (Driver et al., 1991; Haggard and Williams, 1991; Prentice, Witt and Hammer, 1998).

This study also argues that more appropriately, visitors should be seen as creative, interacting '*choristers*' (Wearing and Wearing 1996) rather than itinerant '*gazers*'. Hence, the personal context of the interactive heritage experience becomes an essential element in the explanation of heritage consumption. To this end, heritage experience may become expressive, thus active and subjective through the visitors. Visitors are recognised as '*the producer*' of their own subjective experiences



through multi- sensory practices and varied experiential aspects, which imbue objects in the heritage setting provided with their individual perceived values of heritage. The individuals directly and actively engaged in a heritage experience by making their own sense of '*what's going on*', drawing upon their own meanings and resources in interacting with the cultural heritage. This can be explicitly described by concepts of the tourist encounter (Crouch 1998, 2001) and experience- and benefit-based management (Prentice *et al* 1998). This study shows that subjectivity is a crucial constituent of the interactive experience process and the components of experience, especially, the perceived values of heritage, perception of authenticity and involvement, indicate the subjectivity of experience. Hence, the heritage tourism focusing on the interaction between visitors and places should be conceptualized around a subject-centered visitor experience.

### **7.3 CONCLUSION**

This study highlighted the dynamic nature, complexity and multiplicity of visitor heritage experience. This chapter has provided verification of the visitor heritage experience and responded to RQ3 (*How do visitors experience heritage sites and what meaning do they associate with the sites and their participation? How do visitors construct and shape their experience of heritage sites?*), which is the focus of the study by developing a model of visitor heritage interactive experience. This model comprises three main interrelated elements: components of experience, the process of interactive experience and external environments. This chapter highlights the dynamic nature of visitor experience through the interactive experience process in comparison to the general tourism experience process, the complexity of visitor experience through the meaning of experience constructed by visitors and the multiplicity of visitor experience through a discussion of a continuum of consumption experience conceptualised from visitor experience consumption practices.

The conceptualization of the model also responds to research question one and three (RQ1 and RQ3). RQ2 (*How do visitors perceive cultural heritage sites and how do they interpret their interaction with the sites?*) was then addressed through the discussion of the perceived value of heritage in terms of the roles of heritage in the visitor interactive experience and the authenticity of visitor experience in terms of both consensus and opposite to existing theories. Finally, the chapter discussed the components of the visitor interactive experience shaping the characteristics of visitor experience in response to RQ3 (*What are the factors that influence the visitor's experience at the sites and how do these factors affect the experience?*) The discussion in this chapter, consequently, leads to the development of an implication for visitor management in Chapter 8.



This study emphasises the value of experience-based approaches to provide a deeper understanding of experiences as it requires visitors to report the ways they participate in certain experience consumption practices and what they actually mean by doing such practices. In this case, experiences are treated as the windows into participants' ongoing constructions of the reality, their places in it and the ways they engage in the heritage experiences. In this way, total emergence of the researcher into the setting (*i.e.* participant observation and ethnographic interviews) allows her to elicit life-enriching experiences told by visitors.



## **CHAPTER 8**

### **CONCLUSION:**

## **THE RESEARCH EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

While Chapter 7 discusses the achievement of the study to the research questions, this chapter aims to evaluate the proposed model (the objective of this study) and the grounded theory approach used in this study, and to discuss the recommendations for management of visitor experience at heritage sites. First, the chapter evaluates the study through its contributions in terms of theoretical and methodological contributions. Then, the chapter discusses the implications based on the result of this study for sustainable management of cultural heritage sites. It begins with a consideration of crucial elements for visitor experience management arising from the study and follows by a suggested framework for visitor management.

### **8.2 THE RESEARCH EVALUATION: CONTRIBUTION OF THE THESIS**

This section discusses the contributions which this thesis has made to the body of knowledge in terms of theoretical contribution on experience consumption of heritage tourism and address praxis towards the enhancement of theory of visitor experience in heritage tourism and the methodological contribution.

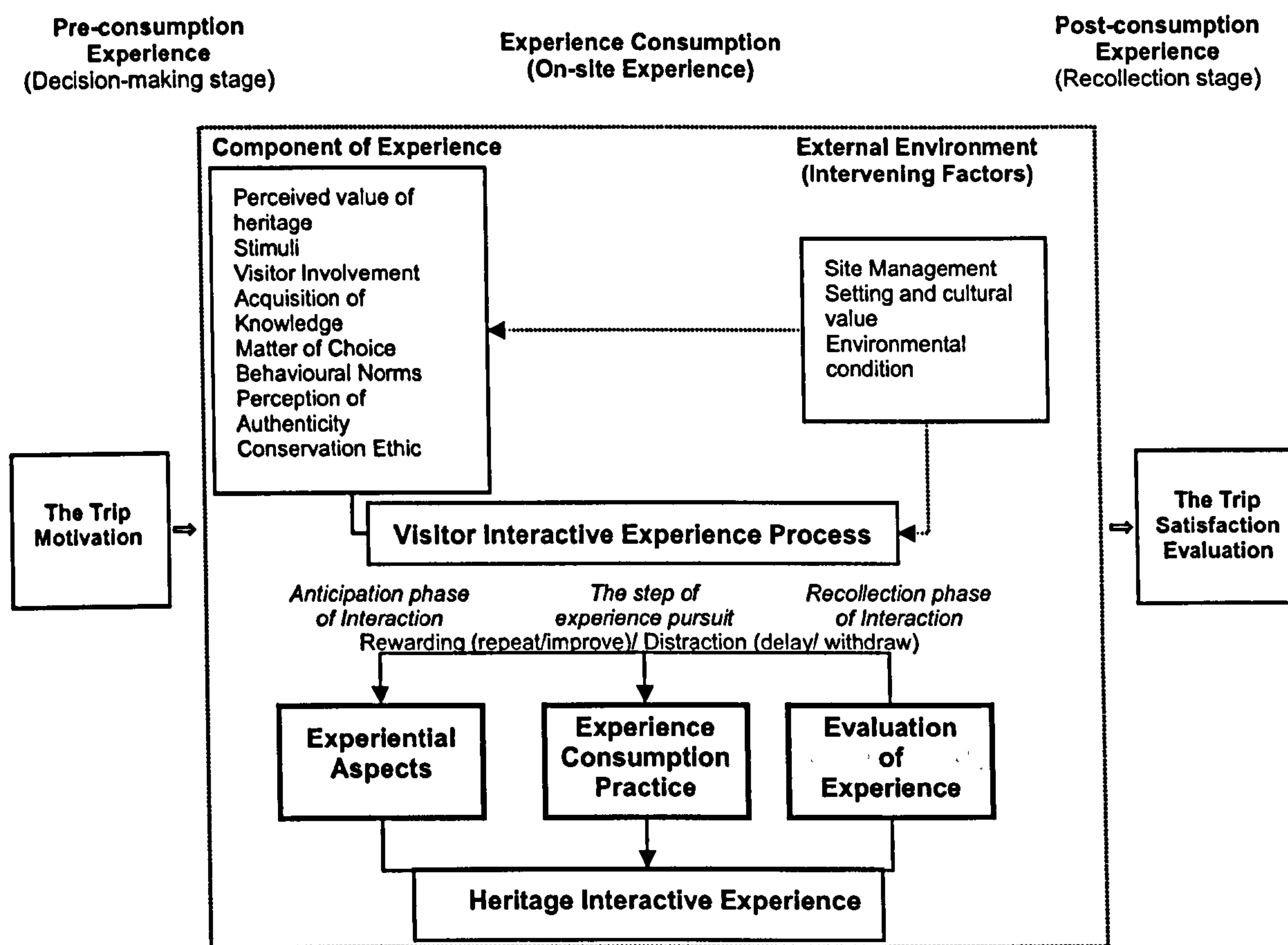
#### **8.2.1 Theoretical Contribution**

This study has put the emphasis on heritage experience from a visitor perspective. The *Visitor Heritage Experience Model* (Figure 8.1) emerging from this study has provided an achievement of the study's objective as well as various contributions to the tourism research area. This knowledge contributes to tourism literatures that previously emphasise economic generation (Edwards and



Llurders 1996); heritage management through preservation and sustainable development (Alfrey and Putnum 1996; Hall and McArthur 1996); heritage interpretations (Light 1995; Uzzell 1989), motivation in heritage tourism (Silberberg 1995; Prentice *et al* 1997) and typology of tourists (Cohen 1979; Urry 1990; Goulding 2002). Most importantly, this study has extended the notion about multiplicity, dynamic nature and complexity of experience consumed by individual (McIntosh 1999) to the field of service encounter research.

Figure 8.1 Visitor Heritage Experience Model



According to theoretical comparison and discussion presented in Chapter 7, three main issues raised from this study and theoretically contribute to knowledge in the field of tourism study can be summarised and discussed as follows.

### 1. On-site experience

While much research has been conducted elsewhere and particularly in natural environments, very little direct research has been conducted in cultural heritage attractions as to the content and structure of experiences enjoyed by visitors to heritage sites. The study answers the under-explored key question – an understanding of how visitors construct experiences, how these experiences vary



across cultural heritage settings and likewise, what this information means for natural resource and tour manager alike. Thus, this study would be considered as a contribution to the development of a deeper understanding of experiences through experiential aspects. Moreover, it explores the experience and the relationship with that which is experienced, including artefacts, the built and natural environment.

The theory developed from this study addresses the gap of the limited information on 'on-site' or 'real-time' experience consumption, especially in heritage tourism where there has been lack of such knowledge (Uriely 2005). Researchers have noted the multi-phase nature of tourism and leisure experience (Clawson 1963, Kelly 1987, Tinsley and Tinsley 1986); however, the majority of existing studies examining tourism and leisure experience have not attempted to explore the complexity and dynamics of the real-time experience on the site. Indeed, Hull *et al* (1992) provide some important insights to on-site real-time perceptions of a day-hike activity. Nevertheless, consumption and experience patterns have not yet been well understood. Hence, verification of the visitor experience model extends to the recognition of the process of assimilation of heritage-based tourism consumption framework whilst the area of study is dominated by research on cognitions/motivations to visits the tourist destinations. In the light of this, it defines the individual's experience consumption patterns in terms of the dynamic nature of the heritage experience. As it particularly focuses on the interaction of visitors with the attractions when they are there, this study is therefore able to contribute to the body of knowledge on the on-site experience, or experience of attractions, through the development of substantive theory (proposed model) and recognition of the representation of experience and interactive processes experienced by visitors in cultural heritage attractions. In turn, the recognition and validation of this study provides the literary support for initiating future interpretive research in this area. The study also builds on research that is more recent where the perspectives of visitors are the centre.

Additionally, the thesis has put an emphasis on the role of the on-site experience. It supports and extends the notion of park experience preference (Mugica and Vicente De Lucio 1995) and the concept of 'out-there-ness' (Lengkeek 2001). The thesis suggests that the importance of providing more opportunities for visitors to interact with the heritage's perceived values associated with its representation and symbolism (*See 4.3.1*) given the interaction has positive effects on visitors' attitudes towards the site. Indeed, identifying the meaning behind the differences in experience anticipation (*See 5.2*) and experience consumption (*See 5.3*) of heritage is a valuable tool to be used in activities directed at determining conservation attitudes. Supported by McArthur and Hall's (1996) statement, this study suggests heritage tourism development is experience-led and the heritage experience should be considered a 'product' of heritage tourism. Visitor perspectives have been advocated as essential in achieving a symbiotic relationship between the visitor and the



resource. Indeed, the study has extended and deepened knowledge of the experience of visitors, particularly the on-site experience at attractions that leads to the extending of framework for visitor management.

## **2. The subjectivity of visitor experience**

Acknowledgement of the dynamic nature and complexity of the interactive experience process (discussed in Chapter 7) reveals the subjectivity of heritage experience. It emphasises the fact that visitors actively construct their own choice of activities (*experience consumption practices*) while visiting the sites depended on the constructed and differentiated anticipations (*experiential aspects*). The proposed model shows that through the heritage experience, individual visitors create an experience with their personal agenda related to the components of experience especially the perceived value of heritage, perceptions of authenticity, involvement, acquisition of knowledge, perceived behavioural norms, and quests of experience. They are also affected by intervening factors (*external environment*) including the heritage setting, site management, cultural values and environment conditions.

According to the existing theories related to the consumption of place, the findings in this study contribute knowledge which goes beyond the notion that tourism consumption is an activity that is solely governed by visual consumption. Although gazing is significant, the study has highlighted the significance of other aspects of consumption which encompass forms of multi-sensual and interpretive interactions and the active role of visitors. This study shows that subjectivity is a crucial constituent of the interactive experience process and the components of experience, especially, the perceived value of heritage, perception of authenticity and involvement indicate the subjectivity of experience. Hence, heritage tourism should focus on the interaction between visitors and places and should be conceptualised around a subject-centre visitor experience. The findings from interpretive perspective strengthen and extend existing frameworks addressed by Crouch *et al* (2001), Kearns (2001), Crouch and Desfourges (2003), and Uriely (2005). More broadly, the study confirms Leiper's (2005) contention that the elements of attraction systems are highly differentiated in that the visitors construct a wide range of different aspects of experience and organise their activities in different way. It also extends the notion of experience of heritage tourists conceptualised by Prentice and Behoos (1997) and tourist experience of place conceptualised by Suvantola (2002) in a more specific '*on-site*' experience.

## **3. Multiplicity of visitor experience**

A number of leisure research studies and the literature illustrate various dimensions of experiences. Nevertheless, the existing literature does not indicate the multiple dimensions of expectation



individually anticipated by visitors. These findings broaden the existing conceptual developments of experiential benefits in terms of the multiple dimensions of experience, authenticity, the perceived value of heritage, experiential aspects and experience consumption practice. This study supports the work of Holt (1995) and Prentice *et al* (1997) in terms of dimensions of experience, and the views of LaSalle and Britton (2003) that we have entered into a new economic era – the experience economy – an era in which consumers’ demands an inherently personal and experience based and are growing such that the expectation of customized relationships is commonplace (Baker 2003). Within the interactive experience process, the interaction provides meaning to experience as visitors anticipate several dimensions of experiential aspects. This concept extends the notion of modes of experience (Cohen 1974, 1979), motivation addressed by Kaplan and Kaplan (1989), Silberberg (1995), Botterill and Crompton (1996), Belk (1997), McIntosh 1999, Falk and Dierking (2000), Poria *et al* (2003). However, the findings of this study emphasise the experience of the individual rather than types of tourist and of these, they do not address the multiplicity of experience dimensions consumed by individuals. This study therefore contributes to the notion of multiplicity, complexity and the dynamic nature of experience, the perceived meaning of attractions, and the factors articulating experiences.

Additionally, there is little understanding of what experience actually means to individuals (Andereck *et al* 2005). The findings of this study should be considered as an effort to develop a deeper understanding of experiences through the explanation of experiential aspects (*See 7.3*). Despite a number of previous studies on the experience process, they have seldom influenced the development of leisure experience theory and research (Andereck *et al* 2005). It also broadens the conceptual developments of visitor experience in terms of its multiplicity (Chronis, 2005), and dynamic nature and complexity (Csikzenmihalyi and Csikzenmihalyi 1988; Borrie and Roggenbuck 2001; Andereck *et al.* 2005). This study contributes an innovative and comprehensive theory grounded in the dynamic nature of the experiential stage or process of experience in tourism consumption, especially within the heritage tourism area.

#### **4. The notion of experience consumption in tourism – *from tourist typology to experience consumption***

The interactive experience process (*See Figure 8.1*) provides a transition of thought in tourism consumption which is shifted from the ‘*tourist typology*’ to the ‘*experience consumption*’. The visitor interactive experience process addresses the quality and benefits of visitor experience. The proposed model suggests that experience is shaped by the component of experience visitors construct when they consume the heritage experience, the activities they engage on the site, and experience recollection. Visitor interactive activities relate to intellectual, thoughts, feelings,



emotions, imaginations, expressive behaviours, evaluation and ultimately stimulation through multi sensations.

This study argues that the consumption practices are varied and effortful accomplishment underdetermined by the experiential aspects (See 5.2) by which a visitor develops at the anticipation phase of the interactive experience process. Additionally, this study adds that heritage attraction can be considered as either '*object*' or '*subject*' of consumption. This variation in visitor consumption practices suggests an important tourism research stream for the discipline of tourism consumption research. This describes the variety of ways in which visitors consume, understand differences across situations and explain the unacknowledged conditions that structure how different aspects consequence different patterning (See 5.3). The visitors experience in this study has confronted both economic and symbolic perspective of the heritage experience as a product. Whilst a number of previous studies (Halle 1992; Bourdieu 1994; Holt 1995) claim that the character of objects underdetermines the act of consuming and different groups of tourists (Cohen 1979; Smith 1978; Amex 1989; McKercher 2002) typically consume object in a variety of ways. The result has led heritage tourism into the realm of experiential consumption and implications for attraction development and management of the heritage tourism product.

The interactive experience process makes specific contributions to tourism literature consumer research of which the process of consummation is the fundamental subject (Holbrook and Hirschman 1987). Firstly, it extends existing descriptions of visitor encountering attractions, especially from visitors' accounts. The finding of this study lends a support to Holt (1995) in that consuming is a mode of action in which visitors make use of consumption objects in a variety of ways. The typology of experience consumption that has emerged in this study describes important aspects of how visitors use heritage attractions as consumption objects and subjects. Further, it provides a comprehensive framework describing the different experience consumption practices in which visitors consume attractions. The concept was explained by the continuum of experience consumption (See 7.2.2.3). Modes of experience range from producing (production of knowledge; reproduction of image; enchantment of image; enhancement of self), restoring (engagement in leisure experience), and entertaining (engagement in socializing). Drawing upon the experiential and potentially utilitarian nature of the value gained by visitors as evidence of survey findings, heritage consumption can potentially be viewed beyond that of '*gaze*' (Urry 1990). The gaze represents the anticipation of sightseeing or gazing upon familiar or '*out-of-the-ordinary*' places (which involves looking at the environment with curiosity and sensitivity). Tourism consumption involves the '*capturing of the gaze*' (Urry 1995) and this is an aesthetic and remains a focus on visitor anticipation. Secondly, it develops the neglected inter-subjectivity characteristic of experience consuming (i.e., how visitors use heritage attractions or objects interact with others while engage in experience). Thirdly, it describes the institutional structure of experience



consumption by the model of visitor heritage experience (Figure 8.1). Fourth, the thesis has supported and pinpointed the shift of thought about the authenticity of experience which moves beyond objective and social constructed authenticity to subjective authenticity. Indeed, the principles of visitor management would aim at '*consumer empowerment*'. Finally, it specifically provides a framework describing linkages among components of experience and intervening factors that construct the ways visitors interact with the attractions rather than a broad description of destination experience. The identification of themes emerging in the study assisted with the progress towards filling gap in the limited literature on the nature and characteristic of experience consumption in tourism contexts and the interrelationship of experience components and activities settings in which they are manifested. This has been accomplished through a grounded theory analysis of interaction between visitors and attractions and visitors' consumption activities and practices. By studying visitor interactions with attractions closely, the researcher gained insights into how their practice can be shaped by this system, and how in turn the sustainable attraction system can be reproduced through visitors' experience consumption. In summary, this study suggests that the tourism experience study should move beyond the typology of tourist to typology of experience in order to facilitate the effective implementations for managing the heritage attractions and the quality of visitor experience. Indeed, the emergent theory provides opportunities for future research in heritage tourism conducted elsewhere and other consumer research fields to examine and test the theory.

### 8.2.2 Methodological Contributions

The study adopts a grounded theory approach rooted in the interpretive social science paradigm, interpreting lived experience in context to describe the social world in a way that is relevant to the participants (subject of the study). Throughout the study, an inductive approach is adopted, where theory generation is grounded coherently within the data and is not influenced by existing theories. In this study the impetus for future research and implementation is enhanced by requirement in grounded theory approach to bring about the paradigm shift for research in which the visitors or the tourism industry main players' perspectives are at the centre. This section discusses and addresses the methodological contributions and implications for ongoing and future research.

The methodological contribution is discussed in terms of its epistemology, ontology, trustworthiness of the research methodology, and applicability for future research.



## 1. Epistemology – Subjectivity

The figure of the tourist has often been analysed as an '*object*' in a marketing campaigns, sightseeing attractions, environment impact studies, economic development, etc. (Bolla 1990; Pi-Sunyer 1989; Pritchard 2001). However, these object analyses have not considered in depth and gaps between tourist experience and the representation of experience. As a *subject*, few analyses have considered when and how tourists constitute a collective subjectivity (MacCannell 1976, 2001; Urry 1990; Couch et.al 2001; Suvantola 2002). To close the gap, this study was designed under an interpretive social science paradigm. Visitors in this study are the subjects that create understanding about their behaviour in their own perspective and at the real-time consumption experience.

The relationship between researcher and participants in this study was subjective. In this approach, the researcher was obliged to enter the social setting and become one of the social actors in that social setting. In other words, the researcher became an '*insider*' and subsequently experiences the phenomena, or becomes one of the participants within the tourism system studied. This subjectivity was balanced by interacting with a wide range of visitors and people involved in the subject studied and using a range of data collection methods. Indeed, the researchers and participants could share insights throughout as well as mutually reflected each other's perspectives. This insider's view was perceived as providing the best lens to understand the phenomena and in this case the visitor's experience of heritage. This resulted in rigorous grounded theory on visitor experience consumption. Although the people studied are not representative of the wider population and the findings of the study may be specific to the contexts of the study, undertaking research using the grounded theory approach allows depth understanding about the phenomena. This understanding was expressed in text-based rather than numerical representation. Hence, the research using this approach yields not only a grounded theory with explanatory power about the phenomena but also a starting point for a wider range of future research.

The figure of the tourist has often been analysed as an '*object*' in a marketing campaigns, sightseeing attractions, environment impact studies, economic development, etc. (Bolla 1990; Pi-Sunyer 1989; Pritchard 2001). However, these object analyses have not considered in depth and gaps between tourist experience and the representation of experience. As a *subject*, few analyses have considered when and how tourists constitute a collective subjectivity (MacCannell 1976, 2001; Urry 1990; Couch *et al* 2001; Suvantola 2002). To close the gap, his study was designed under an interpretive social science paradigm. Visitors in this study are the subjects that create understanding about their behaviour in their own perspective and at the real-time consumption experience.



## 2. Ontology – exploration of multiple realities leading to new knowledge

In this study, the data were collected from the visitors' real world and in natural settings of heritage sites so that the methodology allowed the researcher to explore multiple realities and multiple explanations to explain a phenomenon rather than one causal relationship. The research approach also allowed many interesting viewpoints or new notions to emerge in the study as the research assumed an inductive approach. These generalizations are used as the basis for theory building and generation (Jennings, 2002). To gather knowledge from the empirical world, the researcher was able to use multiple data collection methods including observation, participant observation, ethnographic interviews, and visual multimedia (video recording/ photographic recording, photographs taken by participant, visitor journal via internet). Although the potentially small population size available for an investigation may provide a challenge for a grounded theorist, the multiple data collection methods used in this study allowed the researcher to conduct in-depth, unstructured interviews while doing participant observation to collect rich and meaningful data. This also necessitates data analysis during participant observation so that the researcher can revisit the participant if clarification is required. This approach enables the researcher to work towards understanding the phenomenon which lies in and the participants' perspectives. Hence, the theory is grounded from multiple realities. In turn, this supports the study's reliability and validity. In this study, the researcher is able to compare participant definitions of experience consumption and make informed decisions about how these definitions fit with the research query, and the researcher is able to document the path and reasons for the evolution. Indeed, the grounded theory approach is flexible to accommodate re-evaluation of the research and refocusing of the study so that the approach lets theories emerge from data not from their deductive pre-conceptualization.

Without a pre-identified conceptual framework, the inductive tenet of the grounded theory approach allowed concepts and themes to emerge from the analysis of data gathered. Moreover, the flexibility of research approach in the diversity of characteristic of participants involved in this study, for example cultural background, age, residential location provided authentic information relevant to the individual's life context. It is noted that authenticity is important to the advancement of behavioural research especially in pro-environmental and pro-cultural value research as it allows a wide range of individuals from different cultures or backgrounds to express, for instance, how they perceive and know about the cultural heritage in their own perspective and manner. The study could explain an interesting viewpoint in similarity of behaviours amongst visitors from different religions, countries and levels of education. This means the demographic factors may be irrelevant to the construction of on-site experience.



Multiple sources of data allowed the researcher to investigate holistic aspects of consumption experience, how it is constructed and investigates visitors' perspective on their experiences by asking them to articulate what is going on in the experiential constructed process in their heritage consumption. By using grounded theory approach, the study addresses the original research concerned and provides validity. Throughout the survey period, the researcher was able to reinvent and apply instruments for data collection to fit the conditions of the setting. These data collection methods provided the researcher great opportunities to understand phenomena from the inside, from visitor perspectives (emic perspective) that allow for the identification of multiple realities. As well as discovering and understanding the meaning of individual or group lived-experience phenomena, grounded theory is concerned with explaining a socially construct process of experience by presenting a substantive theory or a proposed model.

### **3. Trustworthiness of the research methodology**

A grounded theory approach provides methodological cohesiveness for this research as it fits with the research query. Methodological cohesiveness refers to the consistency of the approach and solid description of data that lead to an understanding of the meaning of experience under the study (Stake 1995) which, in turns, answer the study's research questions. It therefore strengthens reliability, validity and generalisability. However, there are several terms used to describe the context of qualitative research and reflect the trustworthiness of the data and findings including '*fittingness*', '*comparability*', or '*transferability*' The followings issues are relevant to the methodological cohesiveness contributed by the grounded theory approach.

#### ***Comparability - reliability***

Grounded Theory approach allows for a wider range of relevant data which fits the study. Conformability is created through the use of a variety of data sources (in terms of varied survey sites and data collection methods) for the research providing different cases, which heightened the ability to identify differences in the information gathered. Hence, using multiple methods or methodological triangulation in a single case enhances reliability of the study because it reached the same conclusions despite through broad research questions and an establishment of systematic coding.

It is found in this study that the discursive and reflexive style of grounded theory approach specifically data collection and analysis process allows for the verification of theoretical themes. It was a recognition and inclusion of participants in this study, in all stages of the research information collection, reflection and analysis, as active collaborators in the meaning making



process that was consistent with the nature of this research approach. The interactive process of grounded theory approach suggests that the number of participants required is indicated as data collection and analysis proceed. The research findings can be strengthened in this way by synchronising participant observation with unstructured interviews and documentary sources (Hammersley and Atkinson 2004). Corroboration of themes emerging from this study was also found in the variety of cultural events and activities that occurred separately in this study.

### *Fittingness – validity*

In essence of the grounded theory approach, validation is an interpretive understanding of truth (Angen 2000). It considers a study as a single case. Indeed, triangulation is an alternative to validation in the context of this study (Denzin and Lincoln 2003). The triangulation of data is particularly important in order to fortify validation in the absence of cross case analysis in a single case (Kelliher 2005). In the light of this, validity of the study can be strengthened by using multiple data sources and establishing an identification chain of evidence. Additionally, the use of theoretical sampling guided by data collection and analysis is concerned with building theory so that sampling has the benefit of an evolution that preserves the study objective of investigating and explaining a socially constructed process since theoretical sampling used by grounded theory is an important tool for recruiting participants who have had the experience of interest and are willing and able to articulate the experience. This preserves the validity of the study because the researcher would have information about sampling choices.

The systematic analysis process of grounded theory approach also strengthened the validity of this study. In order to enhance the internal validity of the data, grounded theory includes open coding in the development of concepts, categories, properties and axial coding in developing connections between categories and sub-categories. Finally selective coding was used in integrating categories to build the theoretical framework. The process continued until it reached closure of the emergent theme. The process ended at the point when improvements to the model were increasingly small and the benefits of further analysis become marginal. This was the stage where theoretical saturation was achieved and internal validity had been tested. During the iterative and cyclical process, ideas emerging during data collection were confirmed or disconfirmed via continuous dialogues with the survey. It confirmed the statement that *“there is no need for preconceived theorizing, because all the theoretical explanations are already present in the data”* (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 34). The researcher interprets and constantly compares bits of raw findings in order to establish a coherent theoretical structure. Throughout the study process, theory is both created and verified and hence has a close correspondence with reality. Having achieved theoretical saturation, comparison with the extant literature took place. In this comparison stage, emergent



theory was compared with existing theory and the extent to which there was consistency, divergence and conflict was explored. Indeed, the theory is emerges simultaneously with empirical data collection and analysis (theoretical sensitivity). This process improved construct definitions, and therefore internal validity and it also improved external validity by establishing the domain to which the study's findings can be applied. The maturity of the grounded theory process is developed through a dynamic process and substantiated by the equally dynamic process of theoretical sampling. Each reflective stage of the theoretical sampling provides the context for reflecting on the initial analysis (open coding), and results in the validity of main themes arising from the axial and selective coding stages of grounded theory approach. This process reaffirms the research finding as theory grounded in the context in which it is generated (Dey 1999; Pidgeon and Henwood 1997).

### ***Transferability*** – generalisability

The interpretive social-science paradigm is concerned with gaining an in-depth understanding of the reality of participant's perspectives and experiences. Indeed, constructivism perspective of grounded theory approach leads the researcher uses analyses that support the current research questions as well as theory building (Charmaz 2000). It expects the researcher will proceed with data collection and analysis by constantly comparing data to data, data to categories, and emerging theory with existing theory. Thus, the transferability or generalisability for this study is possible by using indirectly-relevant literatures for a theoretical comparison to examine the relevance of findings of the study (Dick and Swepson 1997) (see *Chapter 7*).

The iterative and concurrent nature of data collection and analysis coupled with the comparison to existing literature helps the researcher to identify the key issues to address in a substantive theory aimed to provide explanation about how visitors consume experience heritage when they are on the sites. For example, the original question asked about how visitors experience the heritage. The grounded theory approach is promising for a more insightful understanding experiences so that the finding has provided the extension and reconsideration the notion of tourist experience of place such as Cohen's Modes of Tourist Experience (1979) and Tourist Gaze (Urry 1990) (*See 8.2.1*). The substantive theory emerging from this study can explain the phenomenon and present the relationship between components of experience, external factors and interactive experience process. Hence, research can then make suggestions for problem solving. Additionally, the constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz 2000) collects '*factual*' and '*subjective*' information about the research questions. This provides insight into the best way to refine or build the theory that explains how to understand visitor's experience and its meaning, according to visitor's perspective. Hence, the use of research approach has contributed to the study generalisability which is,



according to Robson (2004), the extent to which the findings of the enquiry are more generally applicable outside the specifics of the situation studied.

The replication of the research process for theoretical development, undertaken in this study, was made possible through the flexibility design of applied grounded theory approach and the methods utilized for data collection. The richness of data provided by participants and all possible sources of information on the reality of visitors' experience enhances the transferability of their information. That is, their explanations are able to provide others with information that could be useful to them in making judgments on how that information was applicable to their own specific situations. For example, information on experiential aspects could be utilized in analyzing experience consumption in other types of attraction (i.e. the extent to which the findings can be applied to other settings and locations). The reflective insights provided on heritage experience consumption process and practices in the contexts of participants and attractions in this study provides impetus for transformation on a wider scale through the recognition and validation of these alternative experience framework in tourism contexts. Furthermore, the descriptions and explanations of complexity of the interaction of visitors with attractions provide groundwork for replication of the research in other tourism consumption contexts.

The original research concern asked about visitors' perspectives on their experience at heritage sites. The grounded theory approach comes to this study to discover and explain the meaning of the live-experiences and some aspects of experience consumption. This further the understanding of the meaning visitors attach to aspects of their experience consumption and provides directly applicable theory that can be used to facilitate integration of visitor experience management plan. The approach also appears to be self-contained in that comparison takes place between data and categories as well as comparison of data to literature. As such, grounded theory approach has methodological cohesion with the research query and is appropriate for an understanding and interpretation of individual cases. Therefore, the emerging theory from this study is applicable to explain the phenomenon (experience at tourist attractions) in other heritage sites as well as other settings. The application of research approach used in this study can also be applied to a wide range of tourism experience and management research.

#### **(4) Applicability for future research**

##### ***Methodological applicability***

The Grounded Theory approach is rich and robust because differences in application can be accommodated. The creativity and reflexivity of the application of the approach used in this study provides a recommendation for a successful future research in four main issues.



First, the collaborative process between grounded theory and multiple ethnographic data collection methods would benefit the research design for future studies in any areas involving the participation in subject studied. In terms of methodological recommendation for the future research, the issue of validity is an essence for a qualitative case study. This application involves the triangulation of data that will enhance the validity of the research findings. Further, the participatory form of ethnographic data collection process (i.e., participant observation) could enhance the body of knowledge in that the use of dual methodological process provide a framework for the future research that seek to explore problems which may not be obviously seen. Indeed, the use of the methodology for this purpose could bridges the gap the gap between the structural and interpretive social science perspective by recognising that the studies make and remake social structure through the course of everyday life (Giddens 1993).

Second, grounded theory uses theoretical sampling and the need for sampling of specific data sources continues until the conceptualisation reaches the saturation. Indeed, the theory closes out by saturating the concepts generated from available data sources. The further data collection and analysis can change the emphasis of the theory and produce new dimensions and interrelationships. This could be a limitation in terms of trustworthiness (validity) for the study using grounded theory approach. Thus, it is clear that the future research should be concerned with the multiple available sources of data. The interview data may not be sufficient for generating a valid theory. The grounded theory researchers should seeks further interviewees and sources of data to add to the fullness of the understanding of the phenomena.

Third, it is a concern that before the researchers begin to collect and analyse the data, the researcher has no evolving theory which can act as a guide for further theoretical sampling (Cutcliffe 2000). Indeed, the emergent concepts or categories should be ensured that it originates from the participants' experiences or perspectives rather the researchers' own experience or beliefs. It is therefore important to have the mechanism for checking the authenticity or representation of such concepts and categories within the grounded theory approach. In this vain, the trustworthiness is achieved by exploring the possible or emerging concepts or categories in further data sources.

Fourth, it is well documented that the researchers should avoid conducting a literature review prior to commencing data collection and analysis when they use a grounded theory approach in the studies (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Strauss and Corbin 1994; Hickey 1997). However, there may be a need for a literature review in order to clarify the gap in the field of knowledge, clarify concepts, define terms, and provide a rationale for the research questions (which are raised from the real world and literatures). Therefore, it should be acknowledge that a review of literature could occur



at the first stage of the research study; nevertheless, it would not proceed beyond the detailed and comprehensive level at this stage. The researchers should only aim to *'feel'* a general idea about subjects studied.

Finally, the systematic analysis process of the grounded theory approach has an applicability to analyse and interpret the interview data. This approach use codes to categorise data rather than quantify it. Hence, the number of times an individual comment is categorised is less relevant. Grounded theory is useful regardless of the granularity of analytical focus, the coding method, or the method of data generation. Although all grounded theory research uses a data coding system which consists of open coding, axial coding and selective coding, the researchers are flexible to create analytic tools that are appropriate to each study. From the experience of using grounded theory approach, the research would recommend that different method of coding are effective in different contexts and types of research questions. The researchers can use either multiple coding protocols to relate multiple groups of interview data or single coding protocol for one-on-one interview data. Further, the application of analytic used in this study can be applied to this purpose (*See Chapter 3 and Appendix E*).

### ***Theoretical applicability***

The development of model of visitor experience provides the foundation for other research projects to investigate the suitability of this theory in their specific attractions and settings. This process also provides the foundations for the continuation of the research into future participatory research projects designed to investigate experience consumption practices. The possibilities for undertaking tourism research using this approach are diverse.

First, this would be a starting point for future research that emphasises social interaction/ community perception of the development of heritage tourism/ negotiation between host and guest.

Second, to gain a more insight and depth of result, grounded theory can be applied with action research for the research and development in tourism industry especially behavioural and collaborative management area. The future research can also adopt the strategies of grounded theory approach used in modelling visitor experience (Daengbuppha, Hemmington and Wilkes 2006).

Third, the research approach is very practical for special area where structured instrument cannot extract the insight perspectives and views from participant.



Fourth, this approach can be applied to research study that find out whether there is relationship between motivation to visit and aspect of consumption, or there is any different circumstances and antecedents affecting the decision-making in consumer decision process and experience consumption process.

Fifth, the flexibility and applicability of the approach allow researchers to design the most suitable method for particular settings or sites such as action research and longitudinal case study. Using the grounded theory approach is time consuming. Therefore, the research design should focus on the iterative process of data collection and analysis. It would be benefit to use all available data collection methods as well as properly analyse the data at the same time.

Finally, there is an opportunity for future research related to further testing the proposed model by using approaches that are more deductive. Further, the thesis provides opportunities for the future research with related issues, for instance, visitors' levels of environmental and cultural awareness and interests, the impact of heritage visitation on visitors' conservation learning, and the comparisons of the perceptions of the importance of various elements of the visitor experience of both cultural heritage and other types of tourism.

### 8.3 VISITOR EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT IN HERITAGE SITES

This study focuses on experience of which its emergent theory provides a thoughtful viewpoint for visitor experience management in the heritage sites. Identifying and managing the common features that unite visitors in enjoyment, comprehension and appreciation of cultural poses significant challenges on sustaining the visitor experience while the cultural heritage is preserved. The establishment of reliable and detailed connections between individuality-based experiential aspects and experience consumption has relevance to the management of the heritage sites. Experience consumption clearly articulates the need for heritage tourism to be a learning, self-development and self-transformatory experience in which the visitor is '*immersed in the heritage setting*' resulting the development of consciousness and knowledge about heritage and its culture, that encourages the visitor to develop or be involved with a conservation ethic by the appropriate anticipations and experience consumption practice. The exemplifying characteristics are that heritage experience consumption or heritage tourism activities participated by all agents should minimise negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts on the sites and host destination and that they should be culturally sustainable. Hence, the experience consumption of heritage is a particular form of tourism dependent upon the high quality of experiences in the heritage setting during which the visitors is provided with opportunities to have fun, to learn and to understand about the cultural heritage (through an appropriate interpretative and sensual activities) and as a



result becomes more involved with heritage preservation. The experience can be both intellectually and aesthetically stimulating in order to influence visitor's perception and behaviour relating to heritage conservation and protection. The visitor management for heritage site should emphasise the collaboration of all agents and incorporate both a strong commitment to heritage and a sense of socio-cultural responsibility. Therefore, the key to sustainability of both the visitor experience and the heritage tourism is that the management of heritage sites should emphasise the planning for interpretive and sensual experiences as a mechanism to sustain its value and visitors' experience quality. Exploration of experiential consumption provides the opportunity to create a practical plan for managing visitor experience to achieve sustainability

The findings of the study have significant implications for the design principles of an effective and efficient and sustainable visitor management program for sensitive cultural heritage sites. This section aims to discuss implications for sustainable management for cultural heritage sites. It begins with consideration of crucial elements for visitor experience management arising from the research study and follows with recommendations for visitor management planning with visitor experience at its heart.

### 8.3.1 Crucial Elements for Visitor Experience Management

There are several crucial recommendations of engagement for how visitors, heritage attractions and communities can best interacted with emerging '*experience consumption*' along with commoditization as well as cultural implications for how the heritage experience can be best realised.

The key challenge for the exploit of the experience consumption at tourist attractions is the need for a radically different mindset and approach for how attractions, visitors and communities should relate to two following questions.

(1) What lies inside the visitor experience?

This refers to the following issues:

This refers to the elements of experience consumption of heritage attraction (*See Figure 8.1, The Visitor Heritage Experience Model*).

It is important to appreciate that the true engagement with an attraction is not only about experience that is created, but crucially about what visitor individually makes of the experience he/she has. To manage visitor experience, the management should not only be concerned with the creation and the



content of experience, but also with the context within which it is to be authenticated and the planned consequences of what it has been designed to make visitors to intellectually think, expressively feel and emotionally do.

(2) What sort of things visitors interact with when they are visiting heritage sites?

This study suggests elements by which visitor management planners should realize and understand when creating strategies for the heritage site includes:

- roles and significances of heritage attraction in experiential consumption;
- the meaning of the heritage site for the visitors (*See 4.2.1, the perceived value of heritage*);
- the meaning of experience for the visitors (*See 5.2, experiential aspects*)
- the patterns of practices (*See 5.3, experience consumption practice*); and
- the nature of interactive experience process and its components (*See Chapter 4*).

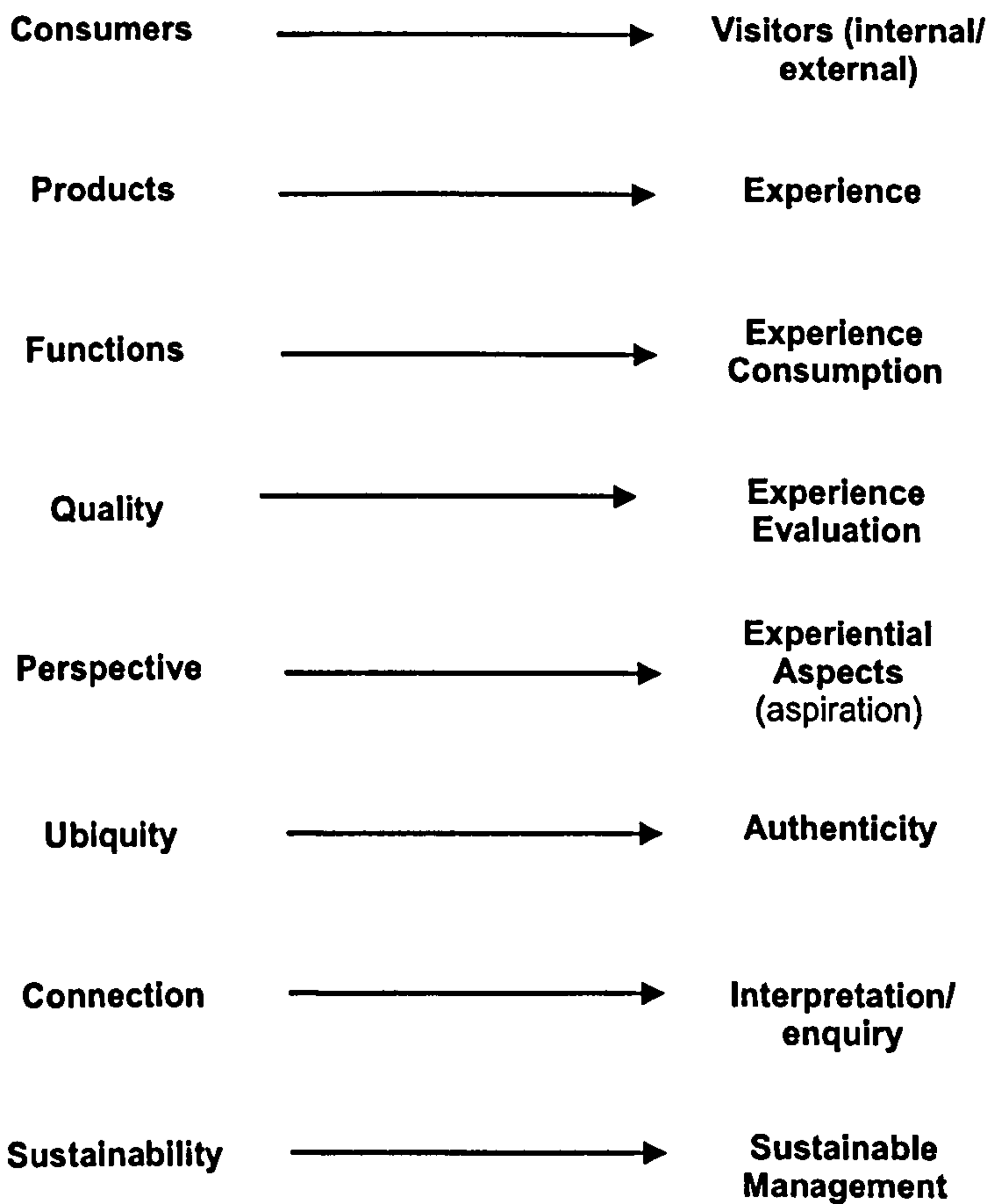
The thought about experience consumption should shift from creating message to communication and promotion to creating a memorable moment of experiencing the heritage attractions. Hence, several matters should be considered:

- Where would it be?
- What would it involve?
- How would it be authenticated?
- How would the experience be remembered and retained?
- How would the values of attractions be sustained?

### 8.3.2 Experience Principals and Practices

This study suggests that on-site experience plays an importance role in heritage tourism preference. Hence, it recommends that the importance of providing more opportunities for visitors to interact with the heritage site's exotic and unique features, given this interaction has positive effects on visitors' attitudes towards its attractions. Identifying the reasons behind the differences in experience preferences and consumptions is a valuable tool to be used in activities directed at determining quality experience and conservation attitudes. This thesis develops a framework for visitor experience management based on the findings of heritage visitor experience and its interactive process. The figure 8.2 depicts principles and practices to enhance preferable consumption practices and preferable experience as an outcome.



**Figure 8.2 Rules of interactive experience management**

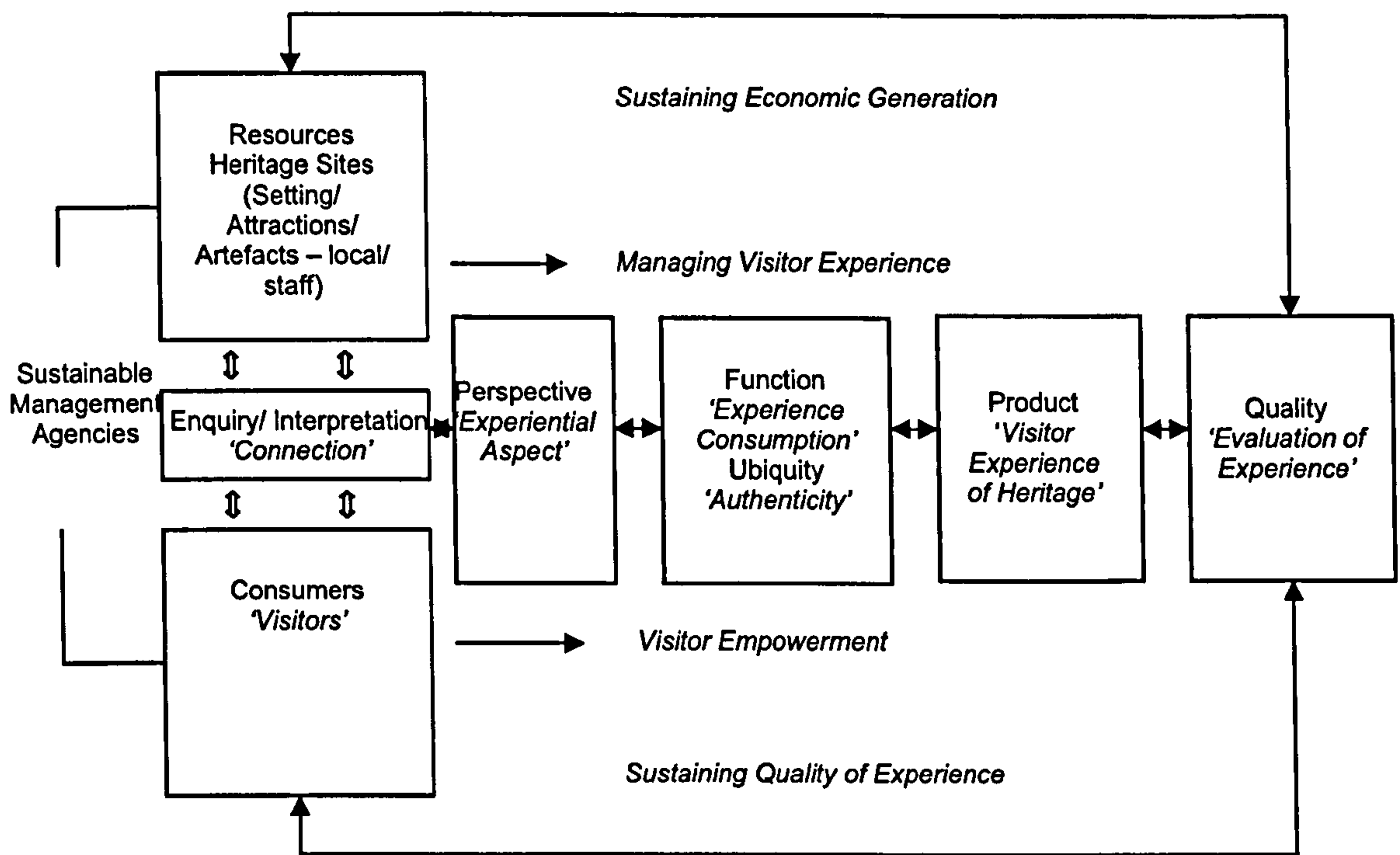
This study involves the shift of meaning of tourism product. There are several considerations for principles of management that respond to the shift of meaning of tourism product. The correlation of principle and practice coinciding in the interactive experience management paradigm could be practical for visitor experience management that aims at sustainability. The framework is discussed in the following sections.

### 8.3.3 Visitor Experience Management Framework

Drawing from the finding of this study and the rules of interactive experience management (Figure 8.2), the researcher conceptualises a framework for visitor management with an emphasis on sustainability, market opportunity and experience quality. The components of visitor management framework arise from the study, which indicates a paradigm shift for management of experience consumption. The visitor management framework is depicted in Figure 8.3.



Figure 8.3 Visitor Experience Management Frameworks



The framework aims to provide the opportunities for the sustainability in heritage tourism through 'visitor empowerment'. It narrows the gap in the knowledge about sustainable management by building the knowledge on understanding of what constitutes heritage experience and presenting the new thinking associated with principle and practice in the rules of interactive experience management (See Figure 8.2). For a more practical issue, the framework could be put at the heart of heritage management process framework (Figure 2.1) formulated by Hall and McArthur (1996). It is a tool to protect both the visitor experience and the heritage resources from impacts associated with the visitor uses, and to help management address the visitor experience issues. The framework is an ongoing, iterative process of determining desired conditions (including desired the resource conditions and visitor experiences), selecting and monitoring indicators and standards that reflect these desired conditions with two important indicators: sustaining quality of experience and sustaining economic generation through the sustainable heritage tourism. Hence, it goes beyond the conventional visitor management by providing the thought of how the new elements of visitor management have applicability within a heritage tourism context as it is built on the interaction between visitors and attractions basis, the provision of an interactive/interpretive environment through visitor interaction and involvement with attractions.

The followings discuss key issues relevant the visitor management recommended by this study including the consumer (visitors), the connectivity of visitors to heritage (interpretation) and the resource and management.



### **(1) The consumer - visitors**

In management of the interactive experience, '*consumer*' means '*visitor*' both internal (staff, local community) and external (people visiting the heritage site). To connect the heritage to the visitors, a visitor is seen as an individual. Suggested by the findings of this study, the first element of an experience is the individuality. The individual is seen as visitor-oriented way-of-action in consuming the heritage experience. Hence, the tailor-made product respects the needs and preferences of the visitor, and each participant can realize his/her own conceptions on the part of the challenge of the activities, among other things. In many cases visitors are members of the group when travelling. However, individuality can be experience through communal situations and the experience is sometimes made up of shared moments. Then individuality takes wider forms. Despite the fact, the visitors should be treated the most personalized manner as possible. This dichotomy of individuality – communality is one aspect to consider when developing the visitor heritage experiences.

This concept suggests the management to move away from '*heritage or attraction*' as a tourism product or commodity to '*experience*' as a heritage '*tourism product*' that fulfils a visitor's desire. Hence, this study considers heritage experience as a product of heritage consumption consumed by visitors that would permanently etch in visitor's memory and make a connection on a level far beyond just satisfaction. This notion has shifted the principles and practices for heritage management to an experiential consumption management for the quality experience and the sustainability of cultural heritage. Some of this has implications for how cultural heritage and other protected area agencies might best work collaboratively with the tourism industry to enhance the quality of visitor experience, maximise the tourism potential for cultural heritage as well as to minimise the impacts of use.

### **(2) Connecting the visitors to the heritage - interpretation**

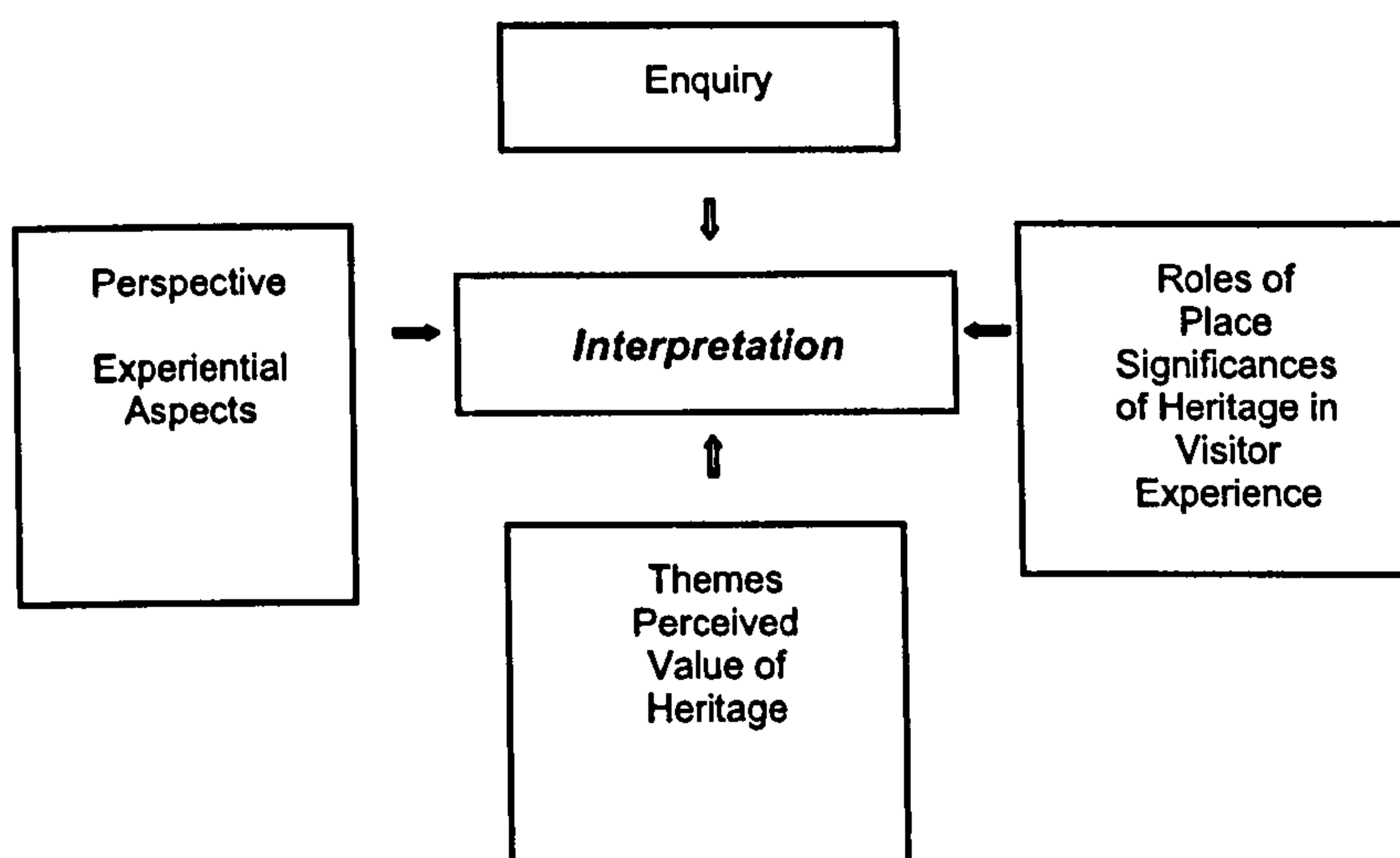
Interpretation emerges as an important element facilitating visitor interactive experience. It is a tool to connect visitors to the heritage. Good heritage management with a major focus on '*heritage interpretation*' and presentation ensures that one complements the other (Millar 1989). Additionally, the construction related to heritage interpretation is often perceived as having higher visitor potential since it creates the inter-reaction between visitors and the sites. Thus, the value of construction sites is brought into the present, and it allows them to help visitors to begin to make sense of their heritage (Stone and Planel 1999). The heritage objects visitors interact with are passive; nevertheless, heritage objects present personal values by which individual visitors assign 'at the moment' of engagement. Hence, to encourage sustainable experience consumption, notion and enquiry about the heritage and



its symbolic meaning and cultural value should be activated and provided to visitors so that they can be actively used in providing apprehension, appreciation, impression and creation of the sense of place. In this thesis, interpretation is indicated as a process that aims to reveal meaning of places, to provoke thought about places and to essentially to make the link between visitors and heritage. The interpretation is an instrument used to stimulate, facilitate, and extend visitors' understanding and appreciation of the heritage places and desirable experiential aspects so that empathy towards heritage conservation is developed.

In this sense, the heritage management could connect visitors to the heritage to create the preferable interactive experiences of the past through the interpretation. This study provides a framework of heritage interpretation (Figure 8.4) that could be used for designing the interpretation strategies for the heritage sites.

**Figure 8.4 Interpretations of place and competing variables in the representation of World Cultural Heritage**



The elements of interpretation framework consist of the enquiry (how visitor acquire information/ types of enquiry by which visitor acquires) (See 4.3.4), the perspective of interpretation related to experiential aspects visitor constructs in engaging with a heritage experience (See 5.2), the themes of interpretation related to the perceived value of heritage or the meaning of heritage perceived by visitor (See 4.3.1) and the significances of heritage in visitor's experience (See Figure 7. 5). This framework suggests that all the levels and the preferable themes of interpretation should be shaped by suitable strategies whilst visitors are still empowered to create their own preferable experience consumption. Similar to other components, the enquiry is found to be the most important element for interpretation (which could be both intellectual and pleasure). There are some issues raised from this study.



Based on the interactive experience process, the study suggests that the characteristics of the interpretive enquiry should be provided at the site. Firstly, the enquiry about the place should be captive, stimulating, supplemented and extending to produce and enrich their understanding of place. Secondly, the collected enquiry about the heritage, i.e. timetable, places, reliable maps, lengths of certain activities, should assist visitor's undertaken designed activities. Thirdly, the interpretation achieved by default (accidentally engaged in an experience) should be provided for visitor who seeks the enquiry and the interpretation to fill in time while on site (alternative to killing time). Finally, there is a need to develop a hierarchy of information which can make the presentations of the past or the heritage visit fun, inspirational, memorable and powerful. A range of the levels of contents and contexts of enquiry should be provided to facilitate the visit and to reduce the frustration since the experience consumption practices at the site could be both oriented and disoriented (when it is associated to exploration and discovery). The interactive interpretation arguably results in enhancement and enrichment of visitors' experience of place.

The heritage resources have the potential of vital dynamic educational assets (Stone 2005) that can reward the visitors an involving experience practice to facilitate a meaningful experience outcome. Visitors may consume heritage without realizing the meaning of heritage or without any knowledge about it. However, they may enquire some information regarding the meaning and significance of heritage objects so that the information rewards a change of heritage's perceived value from a piece of Buddhist statue to a sacred monument. The visitors may not recognise the uniqueness of the heritage attractions they are consuming compared to the similar kind of attraction elsewhere. Once they have been told the story of it, the heritage attraction become more interesting for them. The new knowledge yields visitors a surprise. Hence, they may end up enjoying the exchange of conversation about the heritage they have experienced. The additional information often motivates visitors to visit the place that have a relationship to the places they visited.

In summary, interpretation that is strategically designed and powerfully delivered has potential to enhance quality of visitor interactive experiences, as well as contribute to the accomplishment of visitor management objectives. To support this theory, a review of relevant academic research undertaken by Moscardo, Ballantyne and Huges (2003) suggests that principles for effective interpretation should be relevant to the audience, provide varied experiences, and be organized around themes, be structured, be visitor centered and understand and respect visitors' needs. In addition to this statement, this study suggests a piece of thought for management of visitor experience that interpretation should challenging the intellect, creating experience and memories, creating conservation awareness and morals, motivating visitor experience by (multi) sense, and address the passion (nostalgia/ wellness renewal of spirit/ learning). It is noted that heritage managers have also traditionally been in a role of balancing the demand of sympathetic resource management with



demands from the market place, while also meeting the stringent requirements of being '*guardians*' of a nation's heritage. Therefore, the further '*commodity of heritage*' needs to be considered carefully. Heritage is a concern with *people's values*. Management should advocate an approach that had better facilitate meaningful visitor experiences (Stone and Planel 1999). Used as a tool for visitor experience management, interpretive programs and services can produce reductions in site maintenance and related management issues. In this vain, interpretation could be strategic concept, mass customization and markets of one as it assists visitors to create their own unique choice of practices and activities to experience a site (mass customization and markets of one).

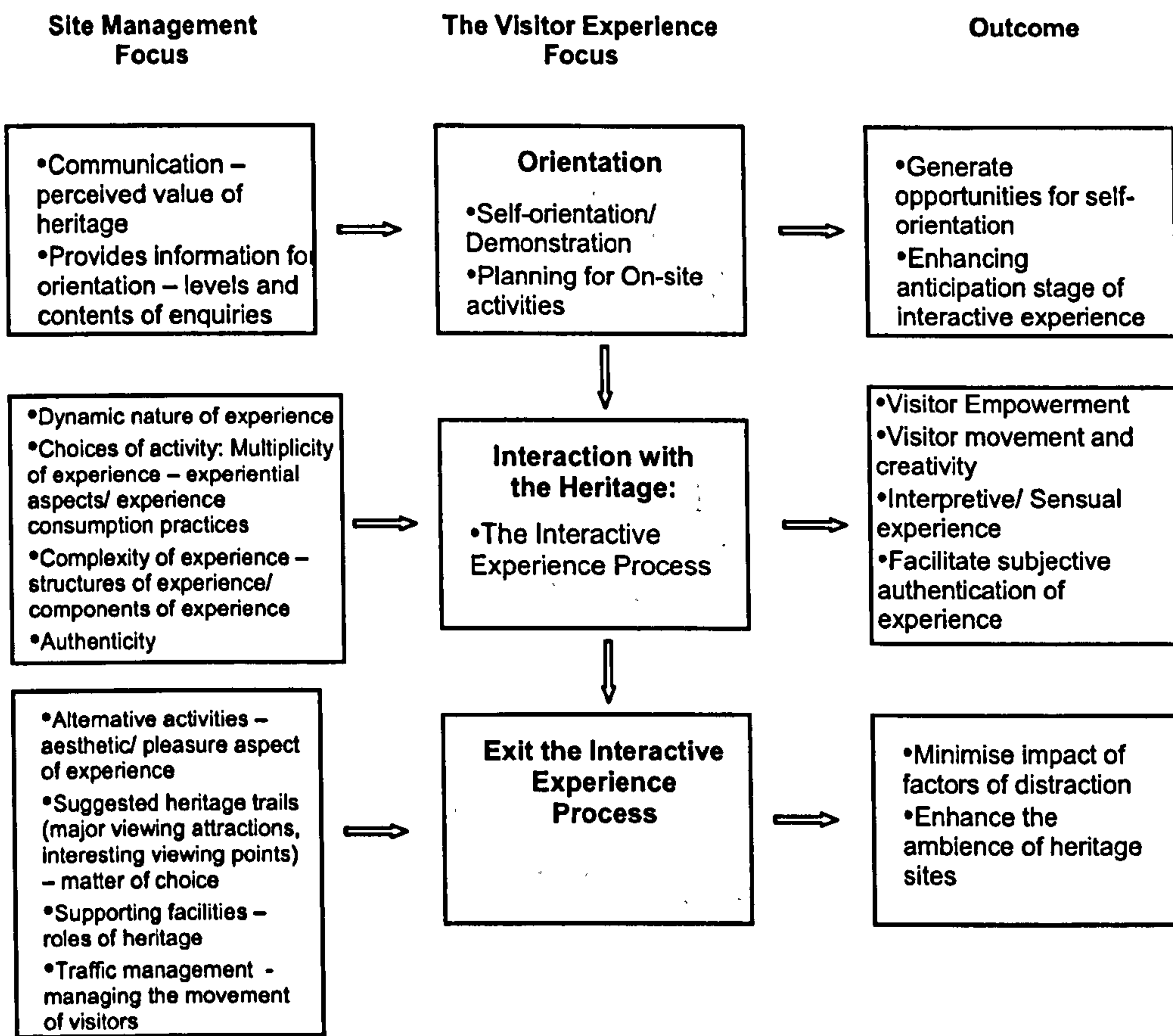
### **(3) The resources and management**

This study examines the complex and dynamic interplay between individual visitors and heritage places. In turns, the management of cultural heritage necessitates and examination of the dynamics of experience construction as a continually shifting interplay between the cultural heritage sites, local residents and visitors. In order to arrive at a more nuanced account of tourism, attention needs to be focused on the relationship between the discourse on one hand, and the practices of experience consumption on the other hands, and the contradictions and paradox that this entails. In particular, attention should be paid to the ways in which values, meaning and forms of knowledge can be altered, changed and renegotiated at all point of on-site experience consumption, from expectations to the point of experience pursuit and beyond, and the way in which different forms of experience consumption are constructed by visitors.

The notion of dynamic nature, multiplicity and complexity of experience has shifted the focus of management from the heritage site or attraction as a tourism product to a visitor experience as a product of heritage tourism. Consequently, the implementation of visitor management plan should put an emphasis on such characteristic of visitor experience. Figure 8.5 suggests the implementations of on-site experience management based on this study.



Figure 8.5 On-site experience management implementations



This study emphasises that the functionality of heritage is about its practical and superficial quality; hence, improving upon this would be the incorporation of sensorial and interpretive designs to create an experience consumption that will be memorable for visitors or fulfil visitors’ aspects of experience and, in turn, elevate the visitors’ aspirations. The function of heritage attraction management, therefore, is to create or encourage preferable experience consumption practices as well as managing potential external factors that could cause distraction and dissatisfaction. The quality of experience consumption is judged by the experience evaluation.

This study addresses that visitors usually have experiential aspects of their own although being part of the same segment or type. Thus, every one of them should be empowered own portion of enquiry (both fact and fiction) or demonstration which assists them to orientate themselves, and plan their own choices of consumption practices. Flexibility and responsiveness towards visitors’ anticipation and consumption are key terms when meeting the challenges of individuality in heritage tourism. Moreover, the communication during the experience consumption is crucial when meeting the visitors’ individual needs. In the light of this, the management should pay attention of facilities that enhance preferable anticipation, and facilitate and support visitor on-site experience. Management plans should also focus on increasing insight into what life was like actually seeing



things in operation, from absorbing the feeling and emotions; identification of things/ feeling of knowledge enrichment; attainment of insight. Indeed to facilitate reflective process of experience consumption (drawn comparisons between life then and now) and to facilitate cognitive process of experience consumption, for example, providing an insight into how people used to live in the past, immersive setting – interactive exhibitions, and multi-sensory exhibits would yield benefits for visitors as well as create higher-perceived value for the heritage.

There are signs that creativity is becoming an increasingly important part of consumption as a whole. One of the major drives of creative experience consumption is the need for the visitor empowerment. Based on this study, it is arguably that the desire for experience or experiential aspect is a major drive of experience consumption in heritage tourism as it reflects individuals' own narratives. Therefore, heritage tourism should offer visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through encouraging active participation in sustainable consumption such as learning experiences that are the characteristic of the heritage attractions where they are undertaken. In this vein, acquisition of knowledge or enquiry has a role in connecting visitors to resources so that they develop a desirable experiential aspect and undertaken sustainable experience consumption that involves sustaining the quality of experience which, in turns, sustaining economic generation.

Additionally, experience of heritage can be reoriented towards creative process of experience consumption practice. The application of creativity in this process is arguably achieved in a number of ways. The successful sustainable visitor management stems from a desire to innovate distinctive product to meet the specific needs of visitors; in this case, experience of heritage is considered a '*product*'. The framework of experience principles and practices arguably appears to meet a need from visitors to develop a more active and longer lasting form of experience consumption, while for the heritage attractions it provides an opportunity to embed experiences at the sites. The model suggests some potential in the development of creative experience consumption, both as an antidote to production on the part of the heritage, and as a new form of involvement on the part of the visitor. In essence, the creative visitor engaged in a combination of experience consumption by visitors and the reproduction of the past by heritage site management.

The relationship between authenticity and experience consumption in the context of heritage tourism examined in this study suggests that spontaneity and creativity can keep heritage ruins alive and well by generating '*experiential authenticity*' for the visitors the perception of genuineness and authenticity emerging from within themselves as they actively in experience consumption process. The important point in developing sustainable visitor experience is to provide a context in which the experience not only becomes a framework for learning, but also for



transformation of the self (Pine and Gilmore 1999). Additionally, this study suggests the focal point of heritage interpretation is that it should become engaging with authentic experiential consumption by *'making intangible heritage tangible'* or *'making the past visible'*. It is workable through sensory and interpretive phenomena because visitor experience could be rewarded. The attitude towards visitor management of cultural heritage attraction should focus affective factors (exotic, historic atmosphere), aesthetic factors (scenery, feature of heritage), cognitive factors (unique historic architectures, opportunities to learn), and the authenticity (perceived genuine experience). The concepts of the perceived value of heritage, the significances of heritage and the perception of authenticity leads to an attempt to challenge the intellect by engaging learning experience into visitor experience, initiating respect for cultural and traditional norms, and facilitating self-development. Meanwhile, there should be an attempt to emphasise the aspiration through visitors' memory or existence, rejuvenation of inner-spirit and appreciation towards the heritage.

This study examines both the tangible and intangible clues provided by visitors through the meanings and values they attach to their experience which can help improve or create a quality tourism experience. These perceptions vary from simple to complex. These factors relate to the evaluation of experience. On the simple end, visitor management at the site (i.e. enquiries, unclear map, and maintenance) affects experiences. Certainly, this is nothing new to the tourism industry; however, this study emphasises hierarchy of expectation or experiential aspect and use of enquiries, which can be applied to interactive experience planning at attractions. Climate condition is frequently mentioned as a primary factor of distraction, which could obstruct the continual interactive process as well as alter experience consumption practices. In managing experience, there should be visiting guide suggesting activities when the weather is not optimal. Another simple clue, which always fails to be recognised, is tied to public transportation schedules. Visitors often feel frustrated when they cannot make decision on activity and attraction choices. This could also be related to time constraints. So that experiential aspect may be altered to lead consumption, practice that yield the least experiential outcome. Further, to the complex issue, visitors could develop higher conservation ethic as they acquire more information or as they appreciate the cultural and historical significances of heritage site or natural environment. Thus, they engage in interactive consumption practices with a concern on preservation for the future generations no matter the nationalities or religions they are.

In the concept of sustainable consumption in visitor experience management model, therefore, the most important implication for managers is that own created visitor experience should be considered as an attribute of the production process as well as consumption process as it does more than add a creative and interactive element to the heritage ruins (attractions). The new principles and practices in this thesis suggest that visitor experience management has to involve the creative



use of heritage site elements (inherited, created and creative elements) in order to successfully provide interactive experience for visitors. In order to enhance the benefits of heritage experience consumption, site managers will need to engage more actively with the interactive process, not just in terms of product development and innovation, but also in recognising the creative potential of visitors in their own consuming process (activity and experience evaluation). The development of creative tourism should also be underpinned by collaboration among tourism, cultural sectors, and public authorities in all levels and local communities, which until now have often been odds with one another.

## 8.4 MY REFLECTION ON PH.D. RESEARCH JOURNEY

### The Preliminary Stage:

As I reflect over the years invested in doing this research work, I could simply say that every aspect of the study has taken me into different but challenging experiences. While parts of those experiences had been easygoing and exciting, I have gone through with much difficulties and frustrations. The first challenge started towards the end of my MPhil with the task of coming up with an upgrade essay or proposal which included finding a researchable topic, identifying the problems and developing an appropriate research methodology. Over the years this foundation stage which has provided the blue print for the rest of the journey remained for me the most frightening but fascinating aspect. This is especially so because it forced me to rethink through the work and to follow the rules for rigorous, formal presentation of the arguments in such a way that brought major changes in the way I had initially planned to approach the study.

**1) The Literature Review:** The earlier stage of the study, I encountered with the literature review process which is different from the process done under positivist paradigm. The literature review in this study was not for developing a conceptual framework guiding the study but for finding gaps and developing research questions. Thus, I had to ignore any concepts and theories that came across the 'visitor experience' field. However, there were not any concepts that exactly provided knowledge about visitor experience I looked for. I aimed at *'just to feel'* a general idea about subjects studied. Hence, most attempts were paid to the research design and research methodology.

**2) The Pilot Study:** I spent two weeks conducting a pilot project at Salisbury Cathedral. The pilot study was very useful for this study. Nevertheless, I had to be aware that this process would lead me to the conclusion of 'pre-identified concepts'. Hence, the objective of the pilot study was clearly defined as a verification of data collection tools and it provided me a good practice prior to the actual field survey.



## The Field Survey:

### 2) Method of Data Collection

The most important aspects of this activity are to discover the data from participants' accounts and let a grounded theory emerge from it. Though it was often tiring because it involved much travelling and many conversations, I found the field survey was a very interesting part of the research process. Therefore, I had to employ flexible and opportunistic data collection methods. The reflection on methods of data collection is as follow:

**Participant observation and Observation:** I found that participant observation and observation were most efficient when it was used along with interviews because I could ask people why and what they were doing. I could also develop an understanding of their inner-directed interactive experience. Further, participant observation was very essential for this study as it yielded exploratory sufficiency and the method allowed me to immerse in the setting and experience. Hence, I could evaluate a visitor's total experience. By participating as a member of service staff and on-site guide, I could get insight from visitors' perspectives from conversation or ethnographic interviews and their behaviour by the observation during time spent together on the sites. Indeed, the experience was not created or manipulated by the researcher but the visitors. Thus, I could demonstrate a range of patterns and meaning of visitor interactions to the heritage sites through mobility of visitors.

**Visual data:** Travel journals, visitor books, and diaries from the internet source were extremely applicable useful for this study in that it assisted in developing interpretation of visitors' behaviour, including the temporal flow of events, culturally significant moments and meanings of experience, visitor-object interactions, and episode of their experience. The data sources allowed me to explore the specific interactive experience and the associated experience. I could also clearly explore how the visitors emotionally experienced the heritage. Moreover, a disposable camera (given to a number of visitors) was one of the most valuable methods to gain authentic information on the visitors' perceptions towards the heritage sites. After receiving the printed photos from visitors and even photos from their digital cameras, I asked them to explain about the reasons for the images. In doing so, aspects of sight and photographing (as an activity) emerged from interpretation of the photographs. People were very happy to participate in the activities since they could also reflect their own impression toward their visits. Furthermore, these activities allowed me to see the flows of heritage attractions in their visits as well as visitor insights into meanings of certain experiences which they might not be able to express through a conversation.



### 3) The Analysis Process

The iterative data analysis is a time and energy consuming process. I had to analyse the data from the field work case by case through the theoretical sampling until the process reached saturation as the gap of new knowledge emerged was minimised. However, I still had to revise all data and using systematic coding all over again after finished the data collection process to ensure that the central theme had emerged. Although this study was conducted in three historical sites to gain richness of data and to ensure typicality of result, I found that the application of this approach enhances reliability for a single case because it reached the same conclusions through the multiple data sources. Meanwhile, the interviews and discussions had encouraged participants to reflect on their experiences. Further, I was spontaneously able to use a rough interview guide to assist the extensions of issues emerging from the previous data collection phases. It is not necessarily for a researcher to conduct the study in multiple sites since a study site can work as a case study. A researcher can apply this approach to conduct the future research at only one study site since to collect and gather relevant data by various data collection methods. Moreover, I would suggest that the researcher should spend time on data reflection while working on the field study as he/she have to immensely perform the process of data analysis after finish collecting it from a single source because the approach requires an interactive meaning making. The details of data analysis process together with its reflexivity are fully discussed in Chapter 3.

### 4) Writing up the Thesis

In retrospect, the shaping of my thesis was a slow (and sometimes frustrating) process, but I was always encouraged by the people around me, particularly fellow Ph.D. students. Indeed, I found that it was important to have time to think alone and work alone, but also to have time to share thoughts and develop ideas with other people. It is not uncommon to feel that the PhD thesis is an insurmountable task that will never end. From my experience the key to completing such a big project is perseverance, hard work, good time management and inspiration. It is important to consider the criterion of 'originality' in PhD research. There are various ways in which one can make 'an original contribution to knowledge' - such as by developing new theories, challenging or re-interpreting existing theories, or applying existing theories to new areas of knowledge. Generally my thesis tends towards the first approach. Hence, I realised the importance of keeping the main thesis and research questions in focus when writing the different chapters. This process helped me to avoid getting sidetracked. For most PhD projects using grounded theory approach tend to blend their literature reviews into the main body of the thesis rather than have separate section so as to avoid repetition. I did this with the help of my supervisors by including literature reviews in chapter 1 and 2 to set the work in context, identify the gap, and thus show how the study attempts



to fill the gap of knowledge in that area of visitor experience in tourism. Further, I put the whole relevant visitor experience concepts in chapter 6 for the theoretical comparison expanded it in chapter 7 with the discussion on theoretical framework.

During the writing process, I had to avoid being dependent on other authorities rather than my own primary materials or ideas. The advice was that I should be careful to organise my materials in such a way that would allow much of my original data to stand relatively free, and to use secondary sources to support my arguments once I finished writing up the findings and developing the emergent theory.

### 5) Finishing up

Once I finished writing the thesis, I found it necessary to consider the final shape for submission. The Universities has detailed policy and procedures on thesis presentation which needs to be carefully studied and applied. Many practical decisions such as the standard of word processing expected, the preferred size and type of font, margins, the way of presenting photographs, how to cope with illustrative materials, binding specifications and procedures etc. needs to be considered as soon as the complete thesis is put together. Unless one is aware of these practical issues, it may be impossible to have the work done in the fashion required by the University. I am aware that the journey is not over until it is over. Further preparation involves returning to the thesis, making notes, careful reading and re-reading to get the details right.

A question that is always come in mind is that *"Would I do it differently for the future research?"* I would still say that I truly admire a qualitative approach and still want to apply it for my future research in tourism marketing area because you will always be fascinated and amused by something new popping up throughout the data collection and analysis process. However, a massive time and energy consuming approach as grounded theory may not be suitable for an ever changing world where there are sufficient substantial concepts and frameworks. If a research project is limited by timeframe, I would like to suggest a mixed-methodology which a researcher can either start with a qualitative approach that could assist a development of initial framework. Then, the researcher can use a quantitative approach to gather an amount of data or with a quantitative approach and fulfil the knowledge with qualitative data. I think that a researcher should be very open-minded and flexible enough in research design and data analysis. Although this study has taken me a long way and long-time to finish, I still can say that I truly enjoy the whole process of my Ph.D. journey.



## 8.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has evaluated the use of grounded theory in researching visitor experience and the emergent theory. Underpinned by the interactive paradigm, the grounded theory approach provides an apparatus for inductive theory formation. The approach draws on the strength of the interpretive paradigm in terms of use of qualitative and unstructured data that represents the subjective understanding for the participants. The chapter discusses the theoretical contribution of this research in the tourism research area in several issues including subjectivity of experience, the notion of experience consumption in tourism, multiplicity of experience and the notion of on-site experience. Indeed, the study has extended and deepened the knowledge on experience of visitors, particularly on-site experience at attractions that leads to extending of framework for sustainable visitor management. Based on the substantive theory conceptualised in this study, the chapter has also discussed the applicability to future research and the transferability for studies of both similar type and characteristic of setting. The implications for sustainable management for cultural heritage sites are discussed through a paradigm of experience principles and practice and visitor experience management model are addressed in this chapter.



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: THE SURVEY SITES

The survey sites for this study consist of three World Cultural Heritage sites in Thailand:

1. Sukhothai Historical Park
2. Sri Satchanalai Historical Park
3. The Historic Town of Ayutthaya

#### 1. WORLD HERITAGE VALUE OF THE SURVEY SITES

##### Sukhothai and Sri Satchanalai Historical Parks

UNESCO designated the historical parks as World Heritage Site Number 574 on 12 December 1991 under the following criteria;

- **Criteria I:**

Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius.

- **Criteria III:**

Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization, which is living, or has disappeared.

The arts flourished in Sukhothai and its associated cities (Si Satchanalai and Kampeangpetch) is outstanding beautiful. Its architectural and artistic style has become the prototype of art in the later periods. Although the early stage of the establishment of the kingdom, there are traces of influence from Khmer and Ceylonese art but after gradually mingled with the native style of Sukhothai, Sukhothai art became unique and satisfactory in its own identical style. The monument and objects reveals the expertise of humankind in creating them. The distinguished character of the Buddha images in a walking and sub duing mala (seated) positions and stupa (chedi) in the lotus bud shape or *'phum khao bin'* have proved for this success.



## Historic Town of Ayutthaya

Evidence of the city's civilization had made Ayutthaya a historical site that was honoured in the list of world heritage in 1991 under the third criteria:

- **Criteria III:**

Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization, which is living, or has disappeared. UNESCO states its remains characterized by the prang (reliquary towers) and gigantic monasteries, give an idea of its past splendor.

Trace of the adornment and glory of Ayutthaya are still seen through the monuments and art objects remaining at the site. These remnants are evidence of the greatness of the kingdom. It gives the reflection of grandeur and beauty of places, temples, fortresses, residences and the live of Ayutthaya people in the past. The historic city represents a masterpiece of creative genius in the perceptive selection of a location on the land that was surrounded by three rivers from different directions. Aside from being suitable for the water-based living style of the Thais, the land was a fertile site for food production that the kingdom became known as the '*granary of Asia*'. Furthermore, the strategic location of the settlement was suitable for protection from enemy invasions. The architecture, craftsmanship and literary works of Ayutthaya reveal the extreme skill of Ayutthaya artists and artisans. Intangible cultural heritage of Ayutthaya continues to exist in form of language, literature, music, dancing, festivals, and ceremonies which are still practices today.

## 2. HISTORICAL SITE MANAGEMENT

The world heritage sites of Sukhothai, Si Satchanalai, Ayutthaya were registered as ancient monument according to the Act on Monuments, Ancient Objects, Art Objects and National Museums, 1961, under the authorization of the Fine Arts Department, Ministry of Education. The project for the restoration and development of Sukhothai Historical Park has been in the National Development Plan for Economy and Society since the fourth circle.

The government granted permission to draw up a plan to develop the sites as historical parks in order to meet the needs for preservation and bring life to the ancient civilization. The plan mainly included historical research, preservation and conservation of ancient monument objects, and the land use regulation for the community and for the promotion of tourism. The beginning of actual preservation of the kingdom as the national historic and cultural heritage was in the reign of King Rama V (1868-1910). It was declared in this period that the land in Ayutthaya was the public property and any



private own was forbidden. Since 1935, the Fine Art Department, as the organization responsible for the care and preservation of the national monuments and ancient objects, has taken over the duty.

In 1977, government granted permission for the establishment plan of Ayutthaya Historical Park to restore the entire monument in the area. However, in 1993 that plan launched was converted into the master plan of Ayutthaya Historical Metropolis due to the importance of the site that was registered as the world heritage list in 1991. The master plan includes plan for study and preservation and preservation of historic and archaeological evidence; a plan for the improvement of infrastructure and environment; a land use plan to adapt the restoration task to present the way of living. The main consideration is to preserve the past glory of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya.

### **3. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCES AND PRINCIPLE ATTRACTIONS**

#### **SUKHOTHAI HISTORICAL PARK**

##### **Historical Background and Cultural Significance**

Sukhothai was the most prosperous city of economic and society as it was the first kingdom of the Thais in this peninsula. The city was founded in 1238 and had been the capital city of Thailand for approximately 120 years. A settlement of Thais appeared on the Yom River alluvial plain, in an area now known as the old city of Sukhothai. This settlement had continuously developed during the period of being under a domination of the Khmer kingdom. When Khmer strength was declining, the Thai gathered their forces and rebelled against their Khmer overloads under the leadership of '*Phoh Khun Bang Klang Hao*' in association of '*Pho Khun Pha Muang*'. They succeeded in driving out the Khmers, and subsequently declared Sukhothai as the first kingdom of the Thais in 1238 with *Si Satchanalai* and Kamphaengphet as two of important associated cities. Pho Khun Bang Klang Hao, urged by the people to be king, was enthroned with the title '*Pho Khun Sri Intarathit*' (King Sri Intarathit).

In 1278, '*Pho Khun Ramkamheang*', the second son of Pho Khun Sri Intarathit ascended the throne and later became the first great king. King Ramkamhaeng was one of the finest warriors who made Shukhothai a powerful and extensive kingdom which included many parts of what are today neighbouring countries. King Ramkamheang opened political relations with China during and after Kublai Khan's reign (1282, 1300) and made two visited to China and from the second visit he brought back Chinese artisans who thought the Thai the art of pottery. Today, the old '*Sangkhalok Potteries*' are eagerly sought by collectors. Sukhothai's cultural importance in Thai history also derives from the fact that the Thai script involving the revision of various forms of Khmer



alphabets into a system suitable for the writing of Thai words which are essentially the same as that in use in the present days.

During his reign, there was prosperity and happiness. Indeed, the Thais have a romantic perception of Sukhothai as the dawn of happiness. Generally, this perception is partially based on historic records. A famous stone inscription reads in part:

*"This Muang Sukhothai is good. In the water there are fish, in the field there is rice. The ruler does not levy a tax on the people who travel along the road together, leading their oxen on the way to trade and riding their horses on the way to sell. Whoever wants to trade in elephants, so trades. Whoever wants to trade in horses, so trades. Whoever wants to trade in silver and gold, so trades".*

According to the stone Inscription, Pho Khun Ramkhamhaeng acted as both temporal and spiritual leader of the Kingdom. With respect to state affairs, he was a great warrior who did everything for the happiness and welfare of his subjects. Sukhothai was a peaceful country. The people had freedom of trading. It is said that the ruler did not require his people to pay tax, and they could trade in anything they wanted. Spiritually, the ruler himself was also the upholder of the Buddhist Faith.

Theravada Buddhism experienced a renaissance in the reign of King Ramkhamhaeng. Founding a new religious faith for his people, the king initiated preaching of Buddhism to his populace on a Buddhist Sabbath. Buddhism became strongly embedded in Thai culture, giving birth to classic forms of Thai religious arts. Although animistic beliefs remained potent in Sukhothai, King Ramkhamhaeng and his successors were all devout Buddhist rulers who made merit on a large scale. The major cities of the kingdom were therefore full of monasteries, many of which were splendid examples of Thai Buddhist architecture. A shrine to Lord Buddha's Relics was constructed during his reign in the heart of a town named Si Satchanalai that was closely associated with Sukhothai. By his command, temples and Buddha images were also built and made in Sukhothai. Images of Buddha sculptured during the Sukhothai era are cultural treasures which impart a feeling of peace and serenity and gives a great reflection on the art and culture of ancient Sukhothai.

Sukhothai adopted the Ceylonese school of Theravada Buddhism, beginning with King Ramkhamhaeng's invitation to Ceylonese monks to come and purify Buddhism in his kingdom. This Ceylonese influence manifested itself not only in matters of doctrine but also in religious architecture. The bell-shaped stupa, so familiar in Thai Buddhist architecture, was derived from Ceylonese models. Sukhothai-style Buddha images are distinctive for their elegance and stylized beauty, and Sukhothai artists introduced the graceful form of the *'Walking Buddha'* into Buddhist sculpture.



Eight kings ruled Sukhothai. The gradual decline of Sukhothai occurred during the reigns of the last two kings. The end of this first Thai Kingdom came in 1365 when it was degraded into a vassal state of Ayutthaya.

### **Principle Heritage Attractions in Sukhothai Historical Park**

Sukhothai historical park is located Meaungkao sub-district, Mueang district, 12 km from the City Hall on Sukhothai-Tak Highway. The site is located about 427 kilometres (267 miles) north of Bangkok. With an area of 6,596 sq. km., the historical park consists of a various kinds of chedi, Buddha statues and ruins of 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Buddhist temples inside the wall of the Old City. There are approximately 200 monuments inside and beyond the city walls. Amongst those ancient monuments and objects owned by Sukhothai Historical Park, several of them are valued for their national and historical importance.

Heritage attractions where the main part of survey was conducted are the followings.

#### **1. Wat Mahathat**



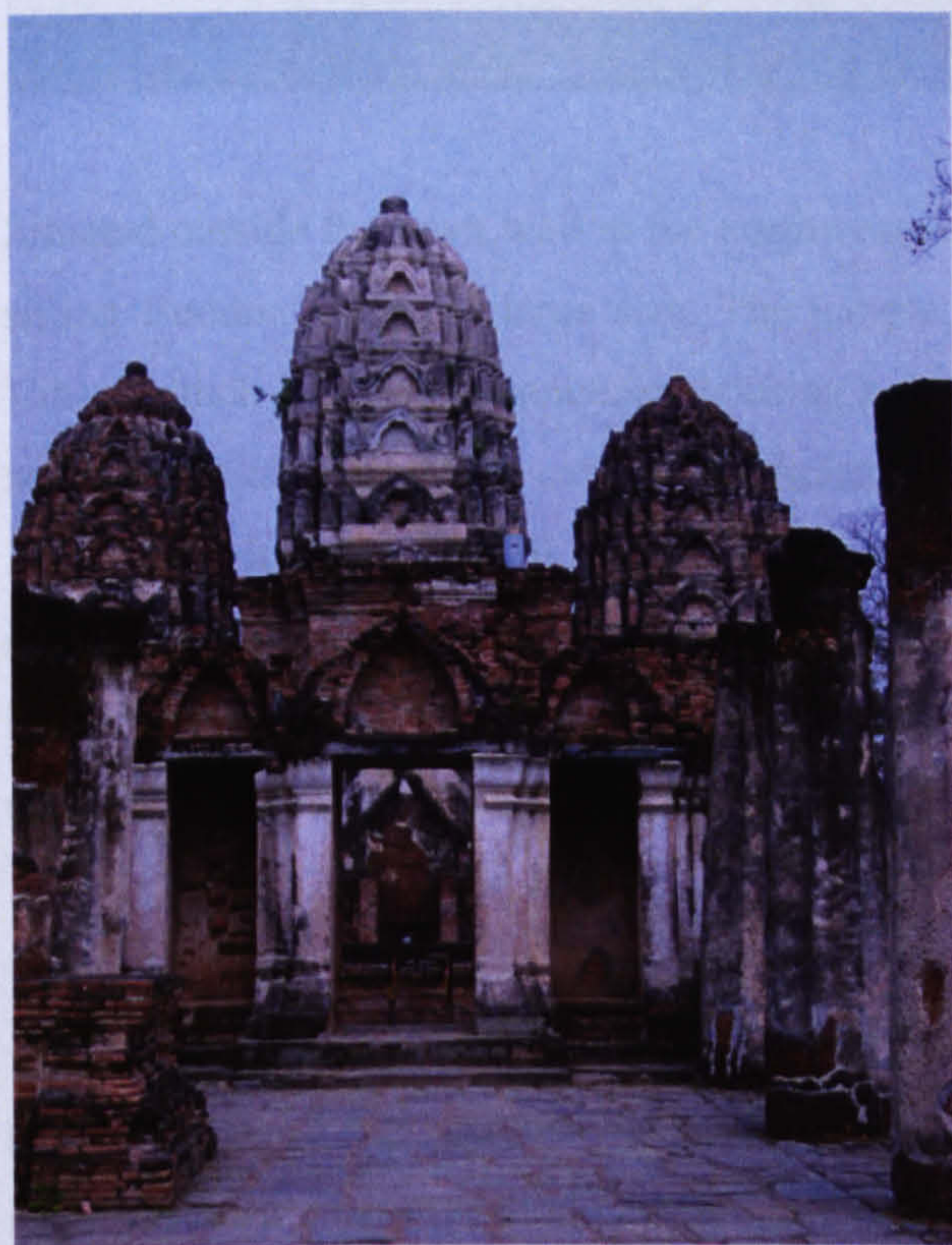
Wat Mahathat is the largest and the most important temple in the centre of Sukhothai. It was built in the reign of the first king in accordance with Indian ancient concept of Mandala. As the stone inscription No. 1 says "*.... at the centre of Sukhothai there are a vihara, a golden Buddha Image, Phra Attharot Buddha Images, large Buddha Images, medium Buddha Images .....*", this temple



comprises the main chedi (stupa), a vihara (royal assembly hall of worship) and mandapas (a square form building with a palatial spire roof for housing an image of Buddha), an uposatha (the royal ordination hall) and 200 subordinate chedis. Surrounded by 8 chedis, the main one in the centre has a graceful shape of lotus bud characterizing the art of Sukhothai. This large chedi built up in steps, the lowest platform is adorned with beautiful stucco pictures of demons, elephants and lions with angels riding on their backs. Mural painting adorns this Chedi.

It contains the symbolic standing Buddha image called '*Phra Attharot*'. At the front of this reliquary is a large Vihara formerly containing a remarkable seated bronze Buddha image of Sukhothai style cast and installed by King Lithai of Sukhothai in 1362. The golden Buddha image referred in the inscription is understood to be a bronze Buddha Image in the posture of subduing Mara (the Evil One) to be enshrined in the royal vihara of Wat Mahathat. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the image was removed to the Vihara Luang of Wat Suthat in Bangkok by the order of King Rama I and has since been named

## 2. Wat Sri Sawai



The ruin of ancient temple situates among magnificent scenery southwest of Wat Mahathat. The distinguish monuments are three prangs demarcated by a laterite wall. These prangs (imitated Hindu Shikhara Vimanas) were built in Lop Buri art style and are regarded as ancient edifice of considerable significance. Their slender forms on low bases are decorated with stucco, some



designs are similar to those on Chinese ware of Yuan dynasty. King Rama VI found a trace of the Hindu sculpture Sayomphu, the greatest Hindu God in this sanctuary. Found in situ, a carved lintel depicting the reclining Vishnu on Ananta Naga(Anantasayana), fragments of Hindu god images and linga, all point out that this temple was originally a Hindu sanctuary and was later transformed into a Buddhist temple with some expansion of the frontal part in form of a vihara.

### 3. Wat Sri Chum



Situated outside the town wall at the northwest corner, this ancient monument is well known for a sitting Buddha Image of large size. The temple was originally surrounded by a moat. A square Vihara which is the main sanctuary housing a monumental stucco-over-brick Buddha image in the attitude of Subduing Mara called 'Pra Achana' (who has a stability state of mind). The Buddha Image with its lap of 11.30 metres wide occupies the total space of the building. Vihara is 32 metres square and the 15 metres high, and the walls are 3 metre thick. There is a passageway in the left inner wall itself which leads to above crossbeam. On the ceiling of the passageway are more than fifty engraving slate slabs illustrating Jakata scenes.

Mentioned in the Stone Inscription No. 1; Phra Achana, the name of this Buddha Image, means one who is not frightened. It is believed that Phra Achana was originally carved in the attitude of subduing Mara. The present one in sitting posture was renovated from 1953 to 1956 AD. This Buddha image's hands are delicate by its fine Sukhothai art which covered with shining gold plates regarding the faith of pilgrims.





### **Buddha's hands shows the finest Sukhothai art**

There is also a so-called folklore tale about this spiritual temple. In a book entitled *Phra Ratchaphongsawadan Krung Si Ayutthaya* written in the late Ayutthaya period, the temple is referred as a place where King Naresuan and his troops assembled before the army marched on Sawankhalok and from which the legend of talking Buddha image (Phra Achana) derives.

The Stone Inscription No. 2 known as Wat Si Chum Inscription was found in a recess in the mondop wall of this temple. Regarded as historical evidence of great value, this Stone Inscription is dealt with the founding of Sukhothai dynasty. Moreover, drawings on the ceiling of the mondop tell stories of former incarnations of Lord Buddha (Jataka) with a title written in the Sukhothai alphabet for each picture. Some of these pictures were drawn in the style of art similar to the characteristics of Sri Lankan (Ceylonese) art.



#### 4. Wat Pra Prai Laung



#### Stucco of Naga at Wat Pra Phai Luang reflecting religious beliefs and ancient skills

Wat Phra Phai Luang or '*temple of the great wind*' is the second in importance to Wat Mahathat. It is surrounded by a moat. The temple has been assumed the first Sukhothai community settled by the Thais. This sanctuary is in the second importance to Wat Mahathat as it is considered a group of ancient edifices of great significance. Its buildings were constructed in different phases and have left impressive evidence of the evolution of Sukhothai art and architecture. The temple was formerly a Khmer-Hindu shrine for Khmer community settled before the Thais in early 13<sup>th</sup> century but later it was converted into a Buddhist monastery. The oldest ancient monuments in this temple are 3 buildings constructed in '*Prasad*' (throne hall) form (imitated Hindu Shikhara Vimanas). At present, two of them are still in existence with only their bases remaining to be seen. The remaining one in the north is adorned with stuccoes relief depicting the story of Buddha, like those at a Prasad of Wat Mahathat in Lop Buri Province and at Palilai Prasad in Angkor, the capital of the Ancient Khmer Kingdom. These stuccoes relief help to confirm the supposition that around the 13th century AD communities in Sukhothai had cultural contact with the Khmer in the reign of Jayavarman VII and were also associated with Lavo (Lop Buri), a Khmer town of importance in the central plain.

To the east of the Prasad are located a vihara and a chedi in pyramid shape with every sloping side decorated with superimposed receding porches, which are similar to those of Ku Kut chedi in Lamphun, for enshrining Buddha Images. Located at the eastern extremity of this temple, a mandapa was built to enshrine Buddha Images in four postures, namely sitting, reclining, standing and walking. This mandapa is likely to belong to the late Sukhothai period.



## 5. Wat Sra Sri



Situated to the northwest of Wat Mahathat, this temple was built beautifully in the middle of a large reservoir known as Tra Phang Tra Kuan. Prior to 1978 AD, there was a road named Charot Withi Thong running through the temple. Fully conscious of great damage and environmental problems which arose from the said road, the Fine Arts Department pulled it down and built a new one along the reservoir. Its important buildings include a chedi in a bell shape, a vihara and the ordination hall in the middle of the reservoir. The bell shaped stupa serves as historical evidence of the diffusion of Sinhalese (Ceylonese) Buddhism in Sukhothai. According to the inscription on golden plate, it is believed that the relic of Phra Maha Dharmaraja Li Thai has been enshrined in this stupa. Around bell-shaped Chedi (pagoda) is the principal of the temple. A large Vihara in the front of Chedi contains a stucco of Buddha image and a small ubosoth on an island isolated at the back of it. It points to a Buddhist concept of demarcating an area where monks perform religious functions by enclosure of the holy precincts with water as a symbol of purity.



## 6. Wat Chetuphon



**Ruin of Buddha stucco at Wat Chetuphon**

Situated in the east of the town wall, this temple is famous for four Buddha Images of vast size in four different postures (sitting, reclining, standing and walking). Enshrined in a mandapa with porches on four sides; these huge Buddha Images also served for supporting the mandapa roof, a functional feature developed from Burmese architecture in Pagan. The outer walls of the Mondop still retain a section in the form of a slate pillar-balustrade window. There is an entrance to the Mondop to the north. At the behind the Mondapa is a small sanctuary which contains a Buddha image known locally as Phra Si Ariya (Maitreya), the Lord Buddha of the future. Also discovered on the exterior wall of the latter mandapa were black floral designs like those on Chinese wares.

There is no evidence to point out when this temple was constructed. It is believed that the temple was not built yet during the reign of King Ramkhanhaeng. According to the stone inscription of Wat Sorasak, around the middle of the 15th century AD, Venerable Phra Maha Thera Dharmatrailok who was an uncle of a Sukhothai ruler named Phra Maha Dharmaraja met with monks from Wat Chetuphon to discuss the construction of Chang Rop Chedi and other religious buildings during his stay at Wat Sorasak. Considering the name of Wat Chetuphon as mentioned in the sand stone inscription together with its architecture style, it is presumable that Wat Chetuphon was an important and flourishing temple during the late Sukhothai period. A stone inscription was found at Wat Chetuphon. According to the inscription, Chao Thammarangsi, entering monkhood for 22 years, made a Buddha Image in 1514 AD out of his strong faith in Buddhism.



## **SRI SATCHANALAI HISTORICAL PARK**

### **Historical Background and Cultural Significances**

Sri Satchanalai was previously called '*Muang Chaliang*' and later was named Si Satchanalai during the Phra Ruang Dynasty when a new administrative centre was established to replace Chalaing. It became a dual capital city with Sukhothai as both King Ramkamheang and King Lithai ruled the city during their reigns. Therefore, it shares most historical background with Sukhothai. The historic city embraces of brick walls and two mountains (Khao Phanomploeng and Kha Suwan Khiri).

According to early stone inscriptions, local legends, and historic chronicles, the crown prince of the Sukhothai Kingdom exclusively governed Si Satchanalai. Phaya Li Thai (1347-1369 AD), known as a great ruler and scholar, was also the crown prince ruling Si Satchanalai before ascending the throne at Sukhothai. There is evidence indicating that he wrote a book called "*Trai Phum Phra Ruang*," the book of life and former lives according to Buddhist concepts, while he ruled Si Satchanalai. During his reign, many temples were built and restored. After King Li Thai passed away (around 1370-1371 AD), the Sukhothai Kingdom fell under the rule of the Suwannaphum Dynasty of Ayutthaya. Si Satchanalai, called Sawankhalok by Ayutthaya, still maintained its status as an important town, governed only by a member of the former Sukhothai Royal Family. However, when King Borom Trailokanat (1448-1488 AD) governed Ayutthaya, the status of Si Satchanalai changed to that of secondary outpost.

Architectural and archaeological remains found in this historic town point out clearly that it was not only a political important town but also quite an important religious centre. These significances were appeared long before the town was included into Sukhothai kingdom. During the 13th-14th century AD the so-called Lankavamsa section of Hinayana Buddhism was the main religious belief in Sukhothai Kingdom. However, religious edifices belonged to Brahmanism and Mahayana Buddhism was also found at Wat Chao Chan and Wat Phra Si Ratanamahathat Chalieng. This supports the idea that Si Satchanalai had diversity in religious beliefs since its early times. A large number of religious edifices and temples in Si Satchanalai were constructed from laterite that can be locally found. These religious structures were normally coated and decorated with stucco. The decorative stucco sculptures of Si Satchanalai are always considered as a highly artistic achievement of ancient Thai people.

### **Principle Heritage Attractions in Sri Satchanalai Historical Park**

Si Satchanalai Historical Park covers an area at Si Satchanalai Distric, Sukhothai Province, 55 Kilometres from the ancient town of Sukhothai. The historical park situates on the banks of Yom River and occupied more than 800 acres of land. Of this, the 288-acres area within the old laterite



ramparts and the city moat is the focus for visiting in the historical park. The historical park contains approximately 140 monuments inside and beyond the city wall. Heritage attractions where the main part of survey was conducted are the followings.

### 1. Wat Chang Lom



**Decorated elephant stucco around the Ceylonese Chedi at Wat Chang Lom**

Wat Changlom is one of the most important temples in Sri Satchalai. It is located almost at the center of the historic town. The temple was built in 1285 by King Ramkamheang the Great. The temple houses the most sacred of pagodas in Thailand's earliest example of Ceylonese-style architecture. Some historians believe that the temple was the one mentioned in the stone inscription No. 1 as the place where King Ramkamhaeng had Buddha relics unearthed in order to pay homage to them before reburial and building a chedi with a boundary wall over the relics in the middle of Sri Satchanalai town. The most important historic building at this temple is the main chedi of Ceylonese style bounded by a demarcation wall. The temple means '*Elephant Temple*' after the 39-stucco pachyderm sculptures (with with 4 of them at 4 cardinal points elaborately decorated) that surround the enormous monumental bell-shaped. They represent standing elephants and taller than life-size ones. The sculptures of elephant at Wat Chang Lom are quite different from those found at other temples. Beautifully ornamental laterite terraces, columns and a demarcation wall encircle the monument, with a line of the niches that houses stucco of Buddha images in peaceful subduing mara postures.



## 2. Wat Chedi Ched Theaw



### Chedi in different styles at Wat Chedi Ched Theaw

This temple is located opposite to Wat Chang Lom. The important buildings in this temple are the main chedi with lotus-bud shape top, a vihara and 33 subordinate chedis. This temple has been called Wat Chedi Chet Thaeo, means the temple with seven rows of chedis, because there are many subordinate chedis in this temple. This temple is one of the most appealing monasteries of the ancient town because Chedi that built of harmonious Sukhothai, Lanna and Siviya and several others' architectures. Mural paintings still appear in some Chedis; however, they are seriously damaged as the time passes by. Historians have assumed that these Chedis were built to store the ashes of Royal family who ruled the city in ancient time. This temple, therefore, become the royal grave yard.





**A stucco of decorated Buddha image in the nak-prok (naga covering), position, reflecting the influence of the South Indian Buddhist art**

### 3. Wat Nang Phaya



**Stuccoes relieves at Wat Nang Phaya**



Wat Nang Phaya is well-known for its delicate stucco modelling on the remains of the north-western wall of 7-room Vihara. Each is decorated with unglazed ceramic designs. The large laterite Chedi is in perfect condition and encircled by lampposts. The main chedi of Sri Lankan style is the focus of this temple. This chedi is supported by a high base, which was once decorated with sculptures of elephant similar to Wat Chang Lom. Another important and famous historic structure here is a vihara building made of laterite blocks. The exterior face of the vihara's walls were decorated with highly elaborated stucco bearing the art style Ayutthaya period.

## **THE HISTORIC TOWN OF AYUTTHAYA**

### **Historical Background and Cultural Significance of Ayutthaya**

Ayutthaya was the ancient capital of Thailand during 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. The city was the administrative headquarters of the Thais living in the area of Lower Chao Praya River alluvial plain since its establishment by King U-Thong in 1350. The period was acclaimed the Golden Age of architecture, arts, and economic wealth. During the early establishment of period of Ayutthaya; the power of Sukhothai still existed. As time had gone by, Ayutthaya gained strength in the army and the proficiency in the warfare had made the kingdom so powerful that later Sukhothai was annexed to the kingdom as well in 1438. With the suitable location and the greatness of the army, Ayutthaya had gained all aspects of prosperity rapidly especially in foreign affairs among neighbouring countries and westerners. Ayutthaya also had a good political relationship with many countries both in Asia (e.g. Japan, Lao, Cambodia, many states in Malaysia) and Europe (e.g. Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands, England and France).

The Ayutthaya period was early Thai history's great era of international trade. The port of Ayutthaya became an entrepot, an international marketplace where goods from the Far East could be bought or bartered in exchange for merchandise from the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, India, or Persia, not to mention local wares or produce from Ayutthaya's vast hinterland. The trading world of the Indian Ocean was accessible to Ayutthaya through its possession, for much of its long history, of the seaport of Mergui in the Bay of Bengal, which was linked to the capital by an ancient and frequently used overland trade route.

The area outside of the city is lowland devoted to rice culture. The canals in this area are both natural and man-made and are used for communication and transportation. Local people lived along the rivers and the canals. Those on the city side were involved in various activities supporting the consumers in the town. The large markets which were centers of trade comprise four water markets situated in the four corners of the town. The small markets were in land; they



numbered 40 inside the city walls and 30 outside. Fresh food was sold at these localities from morning to evening, as well as local specialties.

Most of the population of Ayutthaya was Buddhist. Evidence for this is manifested in the profusion of monasteries, of which 500 have been found. Mosques, too, were present, as well as Hindu shrines and Christian churches. Various people from different countries came to live under the rule of Thai Kings who gave permission to foreigners including Portuguese, Dutch, French, Indians, Chams, Malay and Japanese, etc. to live in Ayutthaya.

The art of Ayutthaya can be derived into four periods according to the social and political changes. The first period was during 1354-1448, when the kingdom was first established; the art in this period reflected the native style of the indigenous with extremes influences from Sukhothai. The second period was during 1448-1628, the period of warfare, the art during this time reflected the mixture of diverse cultures that later became the true style of Ayutthaya after developing sequences. The third period was during 1628-1733; the kingdom had begun its relationship with westerners, as the result, the art clearly had some remembrance of the west. The last period was during 1733-1767, which was decline period of everything: political, economy, society, art and civilization.

Ayutthaya remained the royal kingdom of the Thais for 417 years before becoming weakened by internal political problems that caused the loss of its independence to Myanmar in 1767. During the period of Ayutthaya was the Thai capital, 33 kings of dynasties ruled the kingdom until it was destroyed by the Burmese in 1767. Although the kingdom declared freedom from Myanmar a short time later, it was completely devastated from the war that restoration seemed impossible at the time. The Thais then migrated to Thonburi and later to Rattanakosin (Bangkok) for the establishment of their new kingdoms where it remains to the present days.

### **Principle Heritage Attractions of the Historic Town of Ayutthaya**

Ayutthaya is 76 kilometres north of Bangkok and boasts magnificent ruins. Today, the Historic City of Ayutthaya is one of Thailand's major tourist attractions. The site is conveniently accessible by visitors due to various means of transportation and its short distance from Bangkok. The historical attraction is plenty as it contains ancient palaces, buildings and objects. Ayutthaya historical park covers an area of 2.89 square kilometres.



The heritage attractions where the main part of survey was conducted are the followings.

### 1. Wat Mahathat



Wat Mahathat or '*Temple of the Great Relic*' was once originally one of the most arresting and temples in Ayutthaya. Constructed by King Boromraja I, the temple is also one of Ayutthaya's oldest temples, dating from 1380s. The temple was a royal monastery and has been the seat of the Sangaraja, the head of the Buddhist monks of the kamavasi sect, since the time of the Mahathera Thammakanlavan, who was a contemporary of King Borommarachathirat I, who built the temple. Its divine attribute was its lofty laterite prang, which originally stood 50 metres (165 ft) tall. The construction of Wat Mahathat was begun during the reign of King Borommarachathirat I in 1374 A.D. but was completed during the reign of King Ramesuan (1388-1395 A.D.). When King Songtham (1610-1628 A.D.) was in power the main prang collapsed.

When the government undertook to restore all Ayutthaya ruins in 1956, the Fine Arts Department excavated the pagoda and found a buried treasure chest containing many valuables. Among objects discovered were a relic of Lord Buddha, placed inside a golden casket, several golden Buddha images in different sizes, and many other objects in gold, ruby and crystal. These are now housed in Bangkok's National Museum.



## 2. Wat Ratchaburana



Wat Ratchaburana is one of Ayutthaya's finest temples. It was built in 1424 by the seventh king of Ayutthaya as a memorial to his elder brothers who have died together dueling to inherit the throne. In 1424 A.D. King Intharachathirat passed away. His two sons, Chao Aye Phraya who reigned over Suphanburi, and Chao Yi Phraya who reigned over Sanburi, met in battle as each desired the throne. This took place at the approach to the Pa-Than Bridge and ended with the death of both sons. A third son, Chao Sam Phraya came down from Phitsanulok and acceded to the throne where upon he declared his intention to organize a funeral for his father and his two brothers. Afterwards he ordered the building of a temple, namely Wat Ratchaburana, at the site of the cremation and at the place where his brothers fought and died he had two chedis created in which to keep their ashes.

In September of 1957 A.D. looter dug into a two-level crypt inside the main prang (Khmer type tower) and stole a great quantity of valuable material. Police arrested some of these looters. The Fine Arts Department proceeded to excavate the site and found Buddha images and many artefacts made of gold. Among these were a large number of votive tablets made of gold and lead. In 1958 A.D. the Fine Arts Department built a stairway so that one could go down into the crypt and look at the mural paintings which were also found there. Since the Buddha images and votive tablets discovered in the crypt were very numerous, the ministers of the government approved giving some of them to people who had contributed to the building of the Chao Sam Phraya Nation Museum, much of the collection in which was found at this temple.



### 3 War Chai Wattanaram



Wat Chaiwatthanaram was established by the command of King Prasatthong in 1630 A.D to make merit for his mother. It is believed that the temple is located on the site of his former home. Wat Chaiwatthanaram was a royal monastery. It is a wat where the king and his descendants would perform religious rites; thus renovation would have been continuous. It was also used as a cremation site for the princes, princesses, and the royal family. When prince Thammathibet died, for instance, King Borommakot decreed that an area in the wat be used as the site for his cremation. The late Prince Damrong Rachanuphap noted that its architecture was similar to that of Angkor Wat and inferred that the wat might have been built to commemorate the king's victory over Cambodia. This temple consists of a main prang (Khmer type tower) built in the early Ayutthaya style and four lesser prangs, all created on the same base and surrounded by eight lesser prangs and a gallery. The form of eight lesser prangs might have been taken from the shape of a royal cremation tower in the Ayutthaya period. Thai type of tower represents Mt. Meru, the center of universe.

In 1767 A.D., Ayutthaya, the capital city of Thailand, was besieged by Burmese invaders and the temple became an army camp. After the fall of Ayutthaya, Wat Chaiwatthanaram was abandoned; Looting, the decapitation of Buddha images, and the selling of brick from the wat became common practices. Finally in 1987 A.D. the conservation of the wat was begun by the Thai Fine Arts Department and was completed in 1992 A.D.





### **Buddha image in Ordination Hall**

The principal Buddha image in the Ordination Hall is seated in meditation posture. Made of stucco with sandstone core, it is lacquered and gilded. The head of this statue was recently made on a photograph of its original which had been stolen long time ago.



### **The Crowned Buddha image**

Images of a Crowned Buddha were widely built in the reign of King Prasatthong (in about the 17th century A.D.) There are 12 Buddha images in this style placed in each Meru of the temple. They were all gilded.



## 5. Wat Prasrisanpetch



### The three Chedis at Wat Prasrisanpetch

Wat Pra Srisanpetch is the biggest ruin of temple in Ayutthaya Historic City. It was the Royal temple situated within the boundary of the grand palace. The temple was first built in the reign of King Boromtrilokanath. This is the most important temple within the Royal Palace compound and corresponds to The Emerald Buddha Temple in Bangkok's Grand Palace. Wat Phra Sri San Phet was the royal chapel and as such did not have a Samgavasa (no monks dwelt there). It was used for royal ceremonies. Wat Phra Sri San Phet was the royal chapel and as such did not have a Samgavasa (no monks dwelt there). It was used for royal ceremonies. In 1500 a 16-meters high standing Buddha was cast by King Ramathipodi II. The image was covered with gold weighing some 170 kilogrammes. In 1767, the Burmese set fire to the image to melt off the gold, completely destroying the image and the temple. Nearby are three Ceylonese-style chedis built during the 15th century to enshrine the ashes of three kings of Ayutthaya. . These were renovated in 1956.

Two big stupas was built by King Ramathibodi II in 1492 dedicated to his father King Boromtrilokanath (the east stupa) and to his brother King Boromraja III (the middle stupa) in 1499 the Vihara was built to house the golden Buddha image "*Srisanphetchadhayan*" the third stupa was built in the next reign dedicated to King Ramathibodi II. Small stupas were built to place the royal relics. The royal palace was located here from the establishment of Ayutthaya in the reign of King Ramathibodi I (1350 A.D.) to the reign of King Sam Phraya (1448 A.D.) Later King Borommatrailoknat ordered a wat to be built on this site in 1448 A.D. to be used as a monastic area. After the reign of King Borommatrailoknat, his son King Ramathibodi II, ordered the construction of two chedis, one of which was kept the ashes of his father and the other those of King



Boromrachanophuttanghun. It was similiary used to house Royal Remain, those of King Ramathibodi II. In 1499, a principal Vihan was built. The following year, in 1500 A.D. King Ramathibodi II commanded the casting of a standing Buddha image 16 meters in the height and covered with gold. This image, Phra Buddha Chao Si Sanphet was the main object of veneration in the royal vihnra (hall of worship). After that time the ashes of members of the royal family other than the kings were placed in small chedis constructed at the site. The gold which covered the chedi was taken by the invaders, when Ayutthaya was sacked in 1767 A.D. During his reign King Rama I (1782-1809 A.D.) of Rattanakosin Period ordered the transfer of the inner core of Phra Buddha Chao Si Sanphet from Ayutthaya to Wat Phra Chetuphon, Bangkok, and had it placed in a chedi specially built for the purpose. Another Buddha image of importance called Phralokanat was also brought to this temple at around the same time.



## APPENDIX B: CLASSIFICATION HERITAGE

The classification of heritage referenced in this thesis is from various scholars: Boyd and Timothy (2002), Ashworth and Tunderbridge (1996), and Prentice (1993).

### Boyd and Timothy's (2002) classification of heritage attractions as tangible immovable resources and intangibles

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<b>Natural History Attractions</b>	Nature Preserves, Nature Trails, Aquatic Displays, Wildlife Parks, Zoos, Caves, Gorges, Cliffs, Waterfalls
<b>Scientific Attractions</b>	Science-Museum, Technology Centres, 'Hands-on' Science Centre
<b>Primary Productions</b>	Farms, Dairies, Agricultural Museums, Vineyards, Fishing, Mining
<b>Craft Centre and Workshops</b>	Water and windmills, Sculptures, Potters, Woodcarvers, Metal Shops, Glass Market, Silk Working, Lace Making, Craft Villages
<b>Manufacturing Centre</b>	Pottery and Porcelain Factories, Breweries, Cider Factories, Distilleries, Industrial History Museum
<b>Transportation Attractions</b>	Transport Museums, Railways, Canals, Shipping and Docks, Civil Aviation, Motor Vehicles
<b>Socio-cultural Attractions</b>	Prehistoric and Historic Sites and Displays, Domestic Houses, History Museums, Costume Museums, Furniture Museums, Museums of Childhoods, Ancient Ruins
<b>Attractions associations associated with historic people</b>	Sites, Area, and Building associated with famous writers, painters and politicians
<b>Performing Arts Attractions</b>	Theatre, Performing Arts, Circus
<b>Pleasure Garden</b>	Ornamental Gardens, Period Gardens, Arboreta, Model Village
<b>Theme Parks</b>	Nostalgia Parks, Historic Adventure Parks, Fairytale Parks
<b>Galleries</b>	Art and Sculptures
<b>Festivals and Pageants</b>	Historic Fair, Festivals, Recreating Past Ages, Countryside Festival
<b>Stately and Ancestral Homes</b>	Palaces, Castles, Country Houses, and Manor Houses
<b>Religious Attractions</b>	Cathedrals, Churches, Abbeys, Mosques, Shrines, Temples, Springs, Wells
<b>Military Attractions</b>	Battlefields, Military Airfields, Naval Dockyards, Prisoner of War Camps, War Museums
<b>Genocide Monuments</b>	Site associated with the extermination of other races or other mass killing populations
<b>Town and Townscapes</b>	Historic Urban Centres, Groups of Buildings, Shops, Urban Setting
<b>Villages and Hamlets</b>	Rural Settlements, Architecture, Pasture
<b>Countryside and Treasured Landscapes</b>	National Park, Rural Landscapes
<b>Seaside Resorts and Seascapes</b>	Seaside Towns, Marine Landscapes, Coastal Areas
<b>Regions</b>	Counties or Other Historic Regions identified as distinctive residents and visitors

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### Prentice's (1993) classification of heritage

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<b>Natural heritage</b>	usually associated with protected areas like national park
<b>Living cultural heritage</b>	fashion, foods, custom
<b>Built heritage</b>	historic cities, cathedrals, monuments, castles
<b>Industrial heritage</b>	elements of a region's past that were influential in its growth and development
<b>Personal heritage</b>	aspect of regions that have value and significance to individuals or groups of people
<b>Dark heritage</b>	places of atrocity, symbols of death and pain, and element of the past some would prefer to forget

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**Ashworth and Tunderbridge's (1996) identification of heritage**

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<b>Heritage places</b>	objects, buildings, sites, towns, districts, regions
<b>Memories</b>	collective and individual
<b>Cultural and artistic production</b>	cultural events, traditional performances, art and crafts
<b>heritage flora and fauna</b>	ecology, biodiversity
<b>Heritage industry</b>	selling goods and services with heritage component

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## APPENDIX C: UNESCO SELECTION CRITERIA OF WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE SITE

This appendix provides criteria for the selection World Cultural Heritage sites applied for the survey sites in this study.

### Selection criteria:

- i. to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- ii. to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- iii. to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- iv. to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- v. to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- vi. to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);
- vii. to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- viii. to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- ix. to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- x. to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.



## APPENDIX D: DEFINITIONS OF HERITAGE TOURISM

Author	Definition
Smith (1989)	The tourism that includes nostalgia for the past with an emphasis on peasant culture and handicraft objects
Hall et al 1990	An element of the cultural ethnic and education. It is a form of special interest tourism which includes many aspects of tourist behaviour ranging from examination of the physical remains of the past to the experience of contemporary cultural traditions
Hall and Zeppel (1991)	The desire to visit past and present cultural landscapes, environments, places and forms. Indeed the heritage tourism is viewed as a broad field of specialty travel, 'based on nostalgia for the past and the desire to experience diverse cultural landscapes and forms'
Yale (1991)	What we have inherited, which can mean anything from historic buildings, to art works and beautiful scenery
Swarbrook (1994)	Tourism which is based on heritage, where heritage is the core product that is offered, and heritage is the main motivating factor for the consumer
Naryanti (1996)	Tourism that offers opportunities to portray the past in the present
Peleggi (1996)	A subgroup of tourists based on the historic attributes of a site attraction
Poria et al (2001)	A phenomenon based on tourists' motivations and perceptions' rather than on the specific site attributions
The National Trust for Historic Preservation	Travelling to experience the places, artefacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present
UNWTO	An immersion in the natural history, human heritage, arts, philosophy and institutions of another region or country







## 2. TRANSCRIBING INTERVIEWS AND PROCESSING FIELD NOTES IN OPEN CODING PROCESS

### Transcribing interviews

One of the main concerns for data collection and analysis is 'type' of interview data. Types of interview data provide some guidance when interpreting, labelling or comparing transcript (Goulding, 2002).

**Baseline** – Baseline is factual and used as a reference point

*“They mentioned before that they just arrived in Bangkok the evening before and headed to AY because they are from a big city and they didn't want to land in another big city.”*

**Interpreted** – It represents participant's interpretation their behaviour or experience.

*“I did touch it but very tenderly. Just because I want to know how hard it is and what it was made from.”*

**Conceptual** – It involves an underground opinion and hypothesis.

*“It has been a capital. Once it has been capital. So that interests me. So I see this all the time it was a capital long time ago. It was important. That was interesting for me. Archaeological thing was interesting. Also the culture, the typical Asian style like that..urr (thinking about word)... 'the chedi' ... It's not European. You have the feeling about the architecture. You have the feeling that you are in Asia. We fly over to the continent of Asia. So now we want to see Asia. And also because of the Buddha images...statues. I have been to India and Turkey. And I have seen Hindunistic temples and mosques and churches because we are in Europe...always churches, churches and churches. I have seen Hindu and mosque but never Buddhist.”*

**Vague** – Vague data are imprecise data. They simply require further investigation. They may be deliberately vague in order to conceal an aspect of behaviour.



*“Well...I want to see the history because I..mm..I mean I friends who had been travelling in Thailand before and I know a little about it. I wanted to see...you know I have seen the ruins in the TV and I mean may be not a specific one...it’s like Angkor Wat or something...something similar to me. And you know I don’t..I’m not gonna go the Cambodia to see something similar.”*

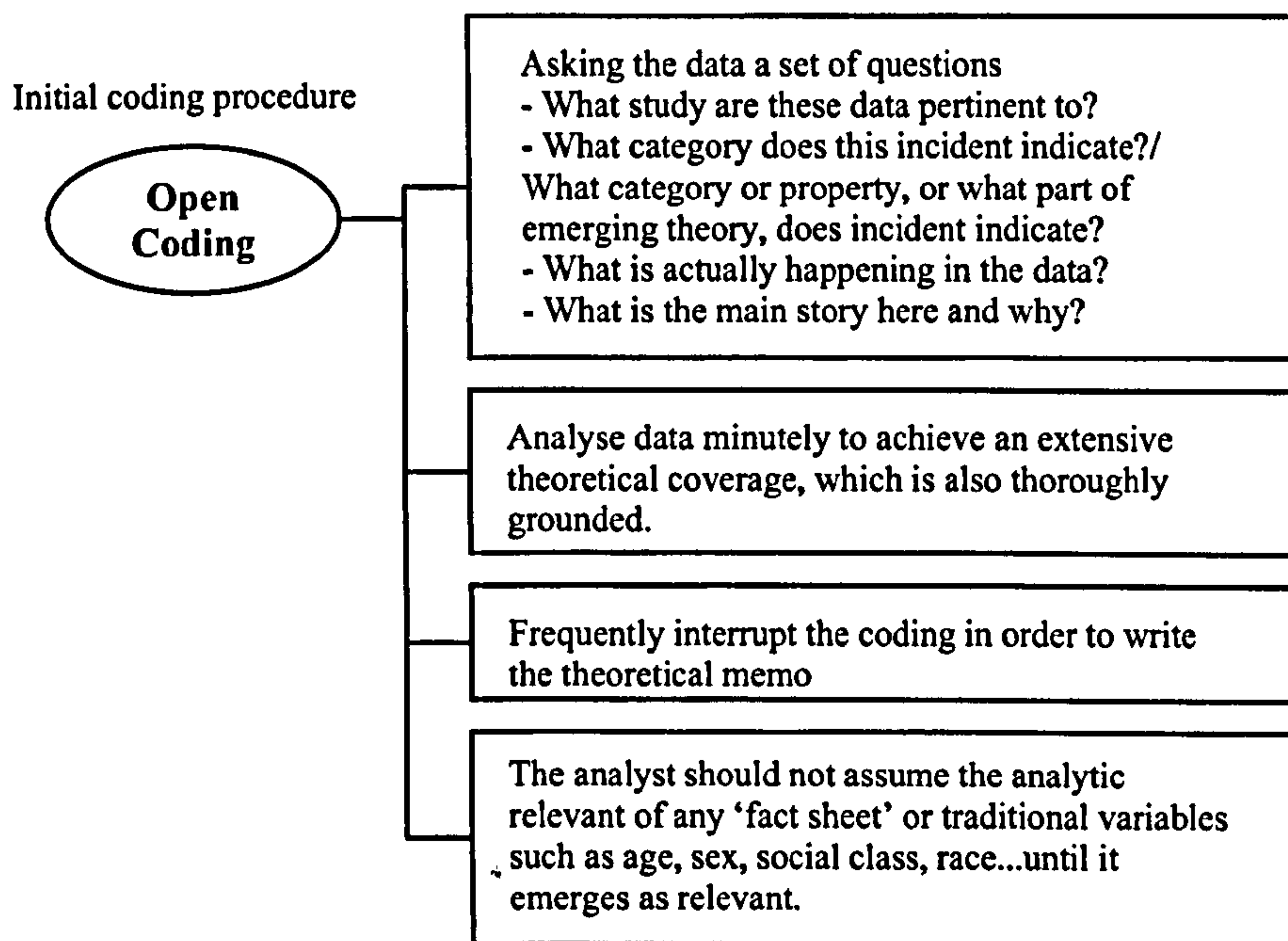
**Analytic tools for open coding**

The research develops a set of analytic tools for used in coding process for this study including:

**1. Microanalysis**

Microanalysis is claimed to be a very systematic and useful tool for open coding. The central idea of micro analysis is a ‘line-by-line’ analysis where coding is done on the basis of a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, an entire document, observation or interview transcript. The detailed line-by-line analysis is necessary at the beginning of a study to generate ‘initial codes’ (with their properties and dimensions) and suggest relationships among categories; a combination of open and axial coding. The process also involves careful and often minute examination and interpretation of the data. The researcher focuses on theoretical questions, probing questions that stimulate the discovery of properties, dimensions, conditions and consequences such as who, when, what, how, and why to the data (Figure 3.5).

**Figure 3.5 initial coding procedures: questions guide**



Adapted from Glaser (1998)



## 2. Constant comparative method

The constant comparative method comprises asking questions and the making of comparisons. Data are initially broken down by asking simple questions such as what, where, how, when, how much, etc. Subsequently, data are compared and similar incidents are grouped together and given the same conceptual label. The process of grouping concepts at a higher, more abstract, level is termed categorising. The category is a classification of concepts that seem to concern the same phenomenon. This is discovered when concepts are compared one against another and appear to pertain to a similar phenomenon. The category is then given a '*conceptual name*'. The important source of names is the words and phrases used by participants themselves. These terms are called 'in-vivo' codes. The research could look for a catching phrase that immediately draws the interest.

The constant comparison technique is a focal point for this stage. A four-step approach to constant comparison advances the discovering ability of grounded theory method:

- The comparison within single interview transcript or observation field note
- A comparison between interview transcripts or observation field notes (in other words 'theoretical memo')
- Homogeneous/ heterogeneous comparison (heuristic analysis of similarity and differences)

It is important to look for patterns or combinations of categories or codes. Generating the categories early through line-by-line analysis is important because categories also become the basis of 'theoretical sampling'. They tell researcher what to focus on in the next interview or observational site, and give the researcher some ideas to find instances of the phenomenon to which the category refers. It is very important to understand that, from an analytic standpoint, it is the data that is relevant, not the specifics of a case or an individual (Struass and Corbin 1998).

**Table 1: Illustration of Codes of Open Coding for Interview Transcript**

**Message from conversation and labelling**

*Message 1*  
*On trip planning*  
 "It has been a capital (*having been a capital*). Once it has been capital. So, that interested me. (*interest – status of place*) So, I see this all the time it was a capital long time ago. (*ancient capital*) Then it was important. (*significance of place*) That was interesting for me (*perceived value - interesting place*). Archaeological thing was interesting. (*archaeological attribute - interest*) Also the culture (*cultural attribute - interest*), the typical Asian style (*represent Asia - architectural attribute*)...likes that...urr (thinking about word)... 'The chedi' ... It's not European. (*distinctive character*) You have the feeling about the architecture

**Notes on categorizing and dimensionalizing**

- Reason to visit the place related
  - Archaeological interest
  - Cultural interest
  - Architectural representative
  - Symbolic of place – Buddha image
  - Significance of place as capital city
  - Distinctive character
- Reason to visit associated with aspect
  - in search of sense of place –in Asia (intense)
  - in search of new experience : different religious sites (intense)
  - experiencing Asian culture
- Experiential aspect associated with



*(felling about architecture)*. You have the feeling that you are in Asia. *(in Asia - feeling sense of place)* We fly over to the continent of Asia. So now we want to see Asia. *(to see Asia)* And also because of the Buddha images *(to see Buddha image - Buddhism symbol)*...statues. I have been to India and Turkey *(experienced cultural destinations)*. And I have seen Hindunistic temples and mosques and churches because we are in Europe...always churches, church and church. I have seen Hindu and mosque but never Buddhist." *(in search of experience different religious sites)*

### Message 2

#### *On their motivation to visit*

Well..I want to see the history because I..mm..I mean I friends who had been travelling in Thailand before and I know a little about it. *(have been told – words of mouth)* I wanted to see...you know I have seen the ruins in the TV and I mean may be not a specific one...it's like Angkor Wat or something. *(interesting historic place is influenced by TV program)* Something similar to me. *(all ruins are similar)* And you know I don't..I'm not gonna go the Cambodia to see something similar. *(Imply – this represents a kind of historic ruins – see one, see them all)*

### Message 3

#### *One visitor's experience*

I had a chance to touch them *(get a chance to touch)*. I think it's is good *(touching is a good experience)* because I like to touch things. Touch the rocks you know...it's hundreds years old. It's really nice *(to fell the old age of rocks)*. And in the way I think if those rocks...the weather and the rain will wash them away anyway *(Touching is not as harmful as weather)*. So don't know if we do much harm to them. If they are in a glass house then I understand why you can't touch them. They preserve it for eternity *(willing to follow the rules)*. But here....because of the weather I understand this is falling apart anyway *(the ruins will fall apart)*.

### Message 4

#### *On the comparison of experience*

To me the ruins here are more spiritual for example I'm catholic ...but not really religious.. *(I am not so religious – perception of themselves)* not meant that I am not religious at all...but not very strong. I am not going to the service or the priest...no never...*(not practical catholic)* last year I go to Italy which is very famous for the church...so I entered the church but that doesn't affect my religious feeling...*(religious place doesn't yield religious feeling)* but I just appreciate the architecture. It's old and you can smell that it's old from the smell of wood *(smell the old age)*. But this you can breathe it out also *(able to 'breath it out' in-vivo)* but even more I think. Spiritual!

- to see Buddha image (intense)
- to see Asia (intense)
- to feel sense of place
- to feel architecture (intense)

Interaction with place associated with feeling of sense of place

Past experience related to

- having been to several religious sites

Source of information

- literature

Reason to visit related to

- seeing history
- 'see one, see them all' → representative of all historic ruins

Reason to visit associated with information

- have been told → words of mouth (high influential)
- documentary (influential)

Physical interaction

- touching (dimension – intense)

Aspect of touching

- to feel age of things
- not harmful

Attitude of visitor associated with

- willingness to follow the rules (good understanding)
- ruins will fall apart (very concern)

Perception of place

- more spiritual
- religious place doesn't yield religious feeling

Perception of themselves

- not so religious
- not a practical religious

Interaction with place

- smell the ages
- breath it out (in-vivo)
- appreciate architecture



## Processing the Field Notes

With regard to the analysis of data, each field notes were written in episode accompanied by a memo, clarifying ideas and incorporating codes and their possible meaning. The ultimate goal is to produce a coherent, comprehensible focused analysis.

Qualitative analytic coding, developed by basis of grounded theory, usually process in two different phrases.

- The first stage the researcher applies 'open coding', which involves line-by-line categorization of specific notes – breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.61). The researcher reads field note line-by-line to identify and formulate all ideas, theme or issues they suggest, no matter how varied and disparate.
- The second stage is 'focused coding'. In focused coding the researcher subjects field notes to fine-gained, line-by-line analysis based on core categories identified. The researcher uses a smaller set of promising ideas and categories to provide the major core categories and theme. In this stage using of 'theoretical memo' on a discrete of phenomena, topics and categories yields a clearer sense of ideas or themes that she wants to pursue. Later, the researcher develops the 'integrative memo' seeking to clarify and link analytic themes and categories.

## Illustration of analytic coding and memo of field notes

### Analyzing Observation

#### Observation diary

A group of Thai visitors  
They dress up quite formal. They stick in-group.  
They look like lack of information. Just know that this is a very important place and something very famous – a must do.

A guy (taking role – guide) said 'please get together in the group and take a photo before getting inside the temple'.

They take a group photo at the front of the temple.  
They walk in the group, take a brief look at the statute, and discuss about the beauty of the statute – the story (tall tale) they have heard of.

They express the impression towards the statue and myth of the statue through the story about the tunnel and sacred Buddha.

However, they did not perform much attention about the site. They went inside, worship, and left early. I found out that they were rushing back to

#### Codes/ Memos

##### Character of trip

- Thai visitors
- Party of 12 by Van
- On business trip

##### Level of enquiry

- lack of information

##### Use of enquiry

- not carrying any information

##### Activity

- Visiting *the icon* of the park
- Taking role → tour guide
- Getting together and take photo with the front of the temple as background
- Taking a brief look at the statues
- *Telling the tall tales (Chronicle) → impression of myth → literary place*
- Focusing worshipping the statue
- Visiting by chance



another place. It was their business trip in town and they had a chance to visit the temple when they were in town. People believe that it's a must to do when they are around or happen to be in town, they have to visit the temple.

#### Motivation

- Happen to be in town (Visiting by chance)
- The temple is a must you when you are in town regards the beliefs → impression of myth

#### Interaction with others/Group cohesion

- Walking in group
- Discussion over the object viewing

#### Interaction with the objects/ Level of interaction with the place

- Not much attention
- Rushing to another place

#### Interaction with the place

- impression of myth through the story

#### Perceived value

sacred value

#### Time constraints affect time spent at the site

- Weather affects time spending at the site

#### Intensity of interaction related to

- time spent at the site
- level of activity
- level of interaction/ attention
- afford putting for the visit
- amount of times they visited the place

### Analyzing Participant Observation

#### Field notes

They came directly from the Airport to Ayutthaya and stay overnight in Pitsanuloke and will go to Chaing Mai afterward.(then Bangkok and beaches or Island in the south of Thailand. They have not decided yet) They took a day trip in Sukhothai. (However, they said, "We regret not staying overnight here.")

They came to Wat Srasri after biking around the outer city wall.(I saw them around 10 a.m.) They stopped and took pictures on the bridge with the Lunga pagoda behind and then took pictures with walking Buddha image. They also imitated the position of Buddha. At the end of the day, they said a trip today is like 'a cherry on the cake' or 'Cheese on Macaroni'. They said they *wish they could have more time in this town.* (They carry a professional camera)

After that they were sitting and relaxing and look away at the main pagoda. They spend around 10 minute there. (They might come to rest here.)

#### Interview

The place is very beautiful and peaceful. We are very impressed.

#### Where have you been before getting to the

#### Codes/ Memos

##### Motivation

- Heritage is the first stop to getting away from the big city
- It's on the main route to CM
- Spend a day trip in ST

##### Character of the trip

- Long haul holiday

##### Character of visitors

- professional
- carrying professional camera
- casual dressed

##### Satisfaction

- We regret not staying overnight here. → fully satisfied

##### Activity

- biking around the outer area in the morning
- taking picture with the spectacular monument (chedi)
- taking pictures with walking Buddha image
- spend more time if they enjoy the visit

##### Interaction with toured objects

- Imitated the posture of Buddha (note → found often with Japanese tourists)

##### Satisfaction → enjoyment

- cheese on macaroni → totally satisfied

##### Time spent at the site related to

- Time constraint for the whole journey

##### Activity

- Sitting and relaxing in a quiet space near the ruins → Taking a short break

##### Determinant of Satisfaction → impression

- Peaceful → intangible attribute of the site → site ambience
- Beautiful → tangible attribute of the site →



**park**

- We went were biking around outside and stop by the temple on the hill which have a big standing Buddha. *It is very nice when you look down from the hill.* We can see the surrounding area of the park. Buddha image is very beautiful.

Then we went to a temple with a very big Buddha. It was very beautiful. We were amazed by the building and when look at the Buddha from the temple. It is amazing. Little Francesco: I really like this temple. Very amazing and impressive!!!

Brabara: but we don't know well about Buddhism and everything here. (This park is well design. I mean everything is in the same area. It's different from Ayutthaya. We had to hire a tuk tuk to travel around and jump on and off when we went to the temple. We were so rushing and running around. Very tired (laughing) But here we ride bicycles and It's very relaxing. We spent morning outside the wall and the big Buddha temple.

**What do you like the most in this park so far?**

- The temple with big Buddha! It's amazing when we think about how the people could build it in more than 700 hundreds years ago. And, also the park is beautiful and peaceful.

**Have you heard about this historical park before?**

- We read from the guidebook since we were in Italy. We found that Sukhothai is the first capital city of Thailand and it is historical site. So we were interested in this city and also Ayutthaya. We also saw the picture. (They read Lonely Planet) But the information in the guidebook is not much and not enough. We don't know well about the story the building, and everything here. And we have prepared this trip since last year. And because we work in different

beauty

**Activity/ Route**

- biking around outside
- stopping by the temple on the hill (*wat sapanhin as reckon in guidebook that they could see the town from the hill* → choice of activity influenced by (a) 'recommendation by guidebook' → use of information (b) viewing the town from the hill → what to do there → note pretty much the same as when tourists climb up to the chedi to look down to the view)

**Activity choice related to**

- we can see the surrounding area
- the Buddha image is very beautiful

**Activity/ Route**

- went to Wat Sri Chum (→ visiting the icon of the park)

**Activity** → interact with the site

- looking at the statue

**Interaction**

- can't recognise the name of place
- the temple with a very big Buddha → *remembering the monument icon of place*
- amazed by the building
- The Buddha was beautiful. (→ attached by the beauty)

**Content of interaction**

- size impression
- beauty attachment

**Perception of themselves**

- I don't know well about Buddhism and everything here.

**Determinant of Satisfaction**

- easy to travel around
- everything in the same area → complexity of attractions
- no rushing and relax trip (→ take your time)
- riding bikes is very relaxing

**Activity**

- We spent morning outside the wall and the big Buddha temple.

**Interaction with place**

- Amazed by big Buddha
- Wonder how ancient people built a big statue

**Perceived value of the place**

- the park is peaceful
- it's beautiful

**Enquiry about the park**

- we read from the guidebook when we were home (the lonely planet)

**Perceived value related to Motivation**

- it's the first capital city
- historical site

**Motivation associated with enquiry**

- we also saw the pictures

**Level of enquiry**

- information in the guidebook is not much and not enough

**Preparation of trip**

- we have prepared the trip since last year

**Expectation**



companies so we have to wait until we have this holiday at the same time. We will spend 3 weeks in Thailand.

- After we read the guidebook, we think that we must visit this city. We are interested in historical building and places related to religion.
- It could be more beautiful if everything remain.

Yes. We do not have anything left because all the construction except the pillar and pagoda were wooden. Therefore, they were destroyed by nature.

- I see. It's different from historical building in Italy. They remain because marble and hard stones built them.

And in the past we didn't know the technique. They build everything with material they have in the area.

- And this is another question which you may be angry with me? Why is Buddha's body similar to woman's body? I think Buddha was a man, wasn't he?

I said yes. He is a man. But when people built the Buddha image, they built them regard their sense of beauty and their imagination.

- Oh yes yes...Sense of Beauty

I explain about the body of Buddha image. They were very interested in what I told them.

And you can also see the different of the shape and expression of the face of Buddha of each period.

- Brabara: Oh yes I notice that and we also saw in the guidebook
  - Francesso: The face of big Buddha is long and I saw his eyes look down to us.
- Exactly...and they are also smiling.
- Oh yes yes...and buddha in Ayutthaya has more likely square faces.
  - And what the differences among many positions of Buddha image.
  - Irrigation system of ancient Sukhothai. They seemed amazed by the information.

I started explaining about a brief history of

- the whole trip is expected to be the best of Thailand

#### Motivation associated with enquiry

- after reading the guidebook, we must visit the city
- interested historic building
- interested in places related to religion

#### Interaction

- imagination

#### Content of interaction

- It could be more beautiful if everything remain. (sympathy → nostalgia)

#### Interaction with heritage

- comparing with their own cultural heritage in terms of architecture/ materials
- making assumption about things they are viewing

#### Enquiry

- some knowledge about historical sites

#### Interaction

- curiosity of original concepts of artefact
- artefacts were built regards sense of beauty
- interested in concept of Buddhist arts

#### Interaction with the place

- I notice the uniqueness of the Buddha's feature
- I saw in the guidebook (interpret through the guidebook)
- Explaining the feature of Buddha
- Comparing the toured objects, they have seen somewhere else.
- Wondering what the differences among Buddha posture
- Amazed by concept of irrigation system

#### Enquiry

##### Level of enquiry

- asking question regards conceptual meaning of things

##### Strategy for enquiry

- asking questions
- actively acquire information

##### Content of enquiry

- the feature of artefact
- the conceptual meaning of feature
- significances of different size of Buddha



Sukhothai, and how they built the temple. Material, styles and also pagoda and Buddha image. Then we decided the walk around the temple. (Start observations)

Francesco asked: Is there any different between the sizes of the Buddha. For example bigger on is more significant than a smaller one. And how can you tell the significance of each Buddha.

We also talk about 'Silalang' and Vihara...What are the main functions of using them?

Francesco were carrying a guidebook and read it when he saw the toured objects described in the book.

We spend around 10 minute to walk around the temple and left for Wat Mahathat. They took many pictures of pagoda and Buddha image in the vihara.

They said they only have a limited time to travel around Sukhothai and they really regret that they didn't spend the night in Sukhothai so they could have more time. So they prefer to go to focal attractions in the parks.

We left for Wat Mahathat.

They walked around and took many pictures. Francesco recorded the pagoda, art styles stucco. They took pictures of different angle, which show the significance and are outstanding in terms of art, and culture associated Buddhism.

The men have some knowledge about the history and seem much understood about the fact.

When we were touring the temple They asked questions:

- The significance of architectural style
- Why did they build so many temples in the town?
- Is Sukhothai historical park area the city?
- How many people lived in the city?
- The reason and concept (แก่น) (of building Buddha image.
- The Buddha position..
- They mentioned about the site maintenance: green money and remain the site ambience.
- They talk about *comparative history issues*.

Francesco would actively interact with me. He discussed about the knowledge he has got before he came to Thailand and this heritage site. The rest were enjoying the scenery by walking slowly and take a deep breath. Babrara said 'What a nice feeling.'

- Francesco (little): I think it was very beautiful in the past. Now it is already beautiful even though it's ruined. I have read a book about Ayutthaya. Someone who visited the city in that period wrote it. And I can't imagine how beautiful it was. Someone said it could be 400 times more beautiful than it is nowadays. I

Activity

- walking around the temple
- What are the main functions of those building ruins?
- Interpret through the guidebook
- Taking many pictures of the temples, monuments, Buddha
- Spending quite a short time since they have to catch the bus
- We prefer some attraction icons of the park.

Time spent at the site related to

- time constraint of the overall trip

Choice of attraction related to

- time constraints
- walking around
- taking many pictures
- recording VDO → stucco and crafts
- taking pictures of different angles of something showing Buddhist art
- taking pictures of something telling the story

Enquiry

- have some knowledge about history

Content of interpretation

- The significance of architectural style
- Why did they build so many temples in the town?
- Is Sukhothai historical park area the city?
- How many people lived in the city?
- The reason and concept (แก่น) (of building Buddha image.
- The Buddha position..
- Site maintenance: green money and remain the site ambience.
- They talk about *comparative history issues*

Interaction with others

- discussion with peers
- mostly walking in the group → group cohesions
- Separate when they saw something of own interest → Group cohesion
- Pay attention in what peers recommend
- Enjoying themselves sometimes

Interaction with heritage

- I think it was very beautiful in the past. → nostalgic
- It could have been 400 times more beautiful than this → nostalgic
- Imagination
- I really want to see AY 400 years ago.

Perceived valued of heritage related to



really want to see it. How these temples look like.

- the beauty → attribute
- It could have been much more beautiful than it is nowadays

Interaction with place

- I have read books about Ay (someone telling the story of their visit 400 years ago) → Reading travel journal → literary place

What did the building look like before it was destroyed?

They left for the Museum.

They finish a rush visit the museum around four. And sitting and rest at a shop in front of the park.

They asked me for my address and they wanted to give me their address. They also invited me to visit Italy. They gave me all information for me to get there.

Little F said 'She wants to say a word about the trip today in Italian.....'

She said a long one and she said it's hard to say how they feel in English.

Little F said 'I am trying to say in English....I can say...our trip today is like a cherry on the cake or cheese on macaroni. It's the best'

Content of Interpretation

- How would it have looked like in the past?

Activity

- visiting museum to wrap up the experience
- resting at the shops around that

Enjoyment associated with

- informative experience (information they have got → ability of interpretation)
- Beautiful countryside → we would not leave the town too soon.
- We would definitely come back

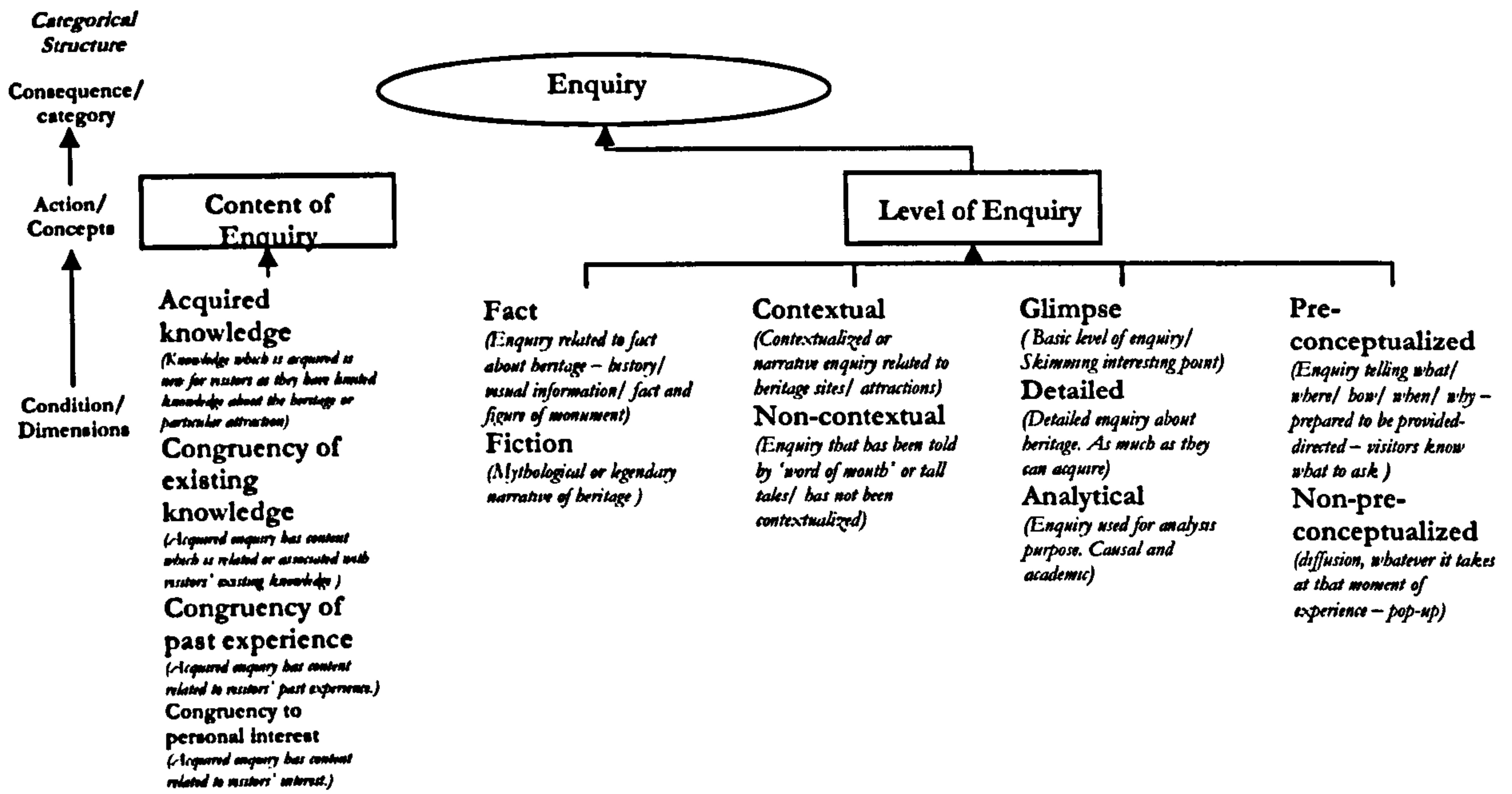
The coding procedure also involves analytic strategies and 'Dimensionalization'.

### **3. THE ILLUSTRATION OF SAMPLE CATEGORIES FROM THE AXIAL CODING PROCESS**

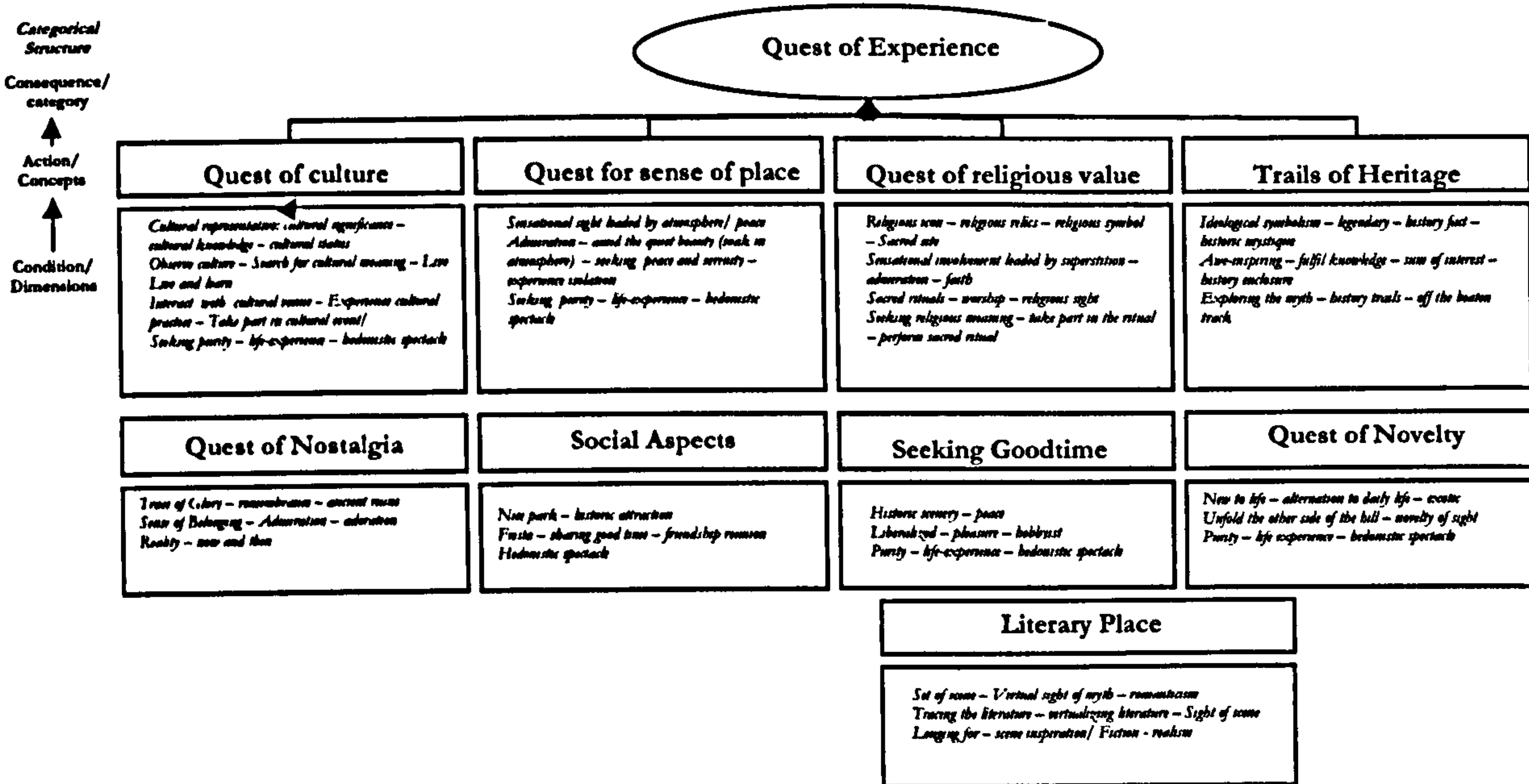
The next part of process is to review the codes and concepts, to note these recurring themes, abstract them, and cluster them in a way that indicated a relationship between them. The categorization involves demonstrating the relationship of these concepts to each other in order to provide conceptual category that need to be integrated in the stage of theory development in selective coding. These concepts are linked in dimensional levels.



# Enquiry

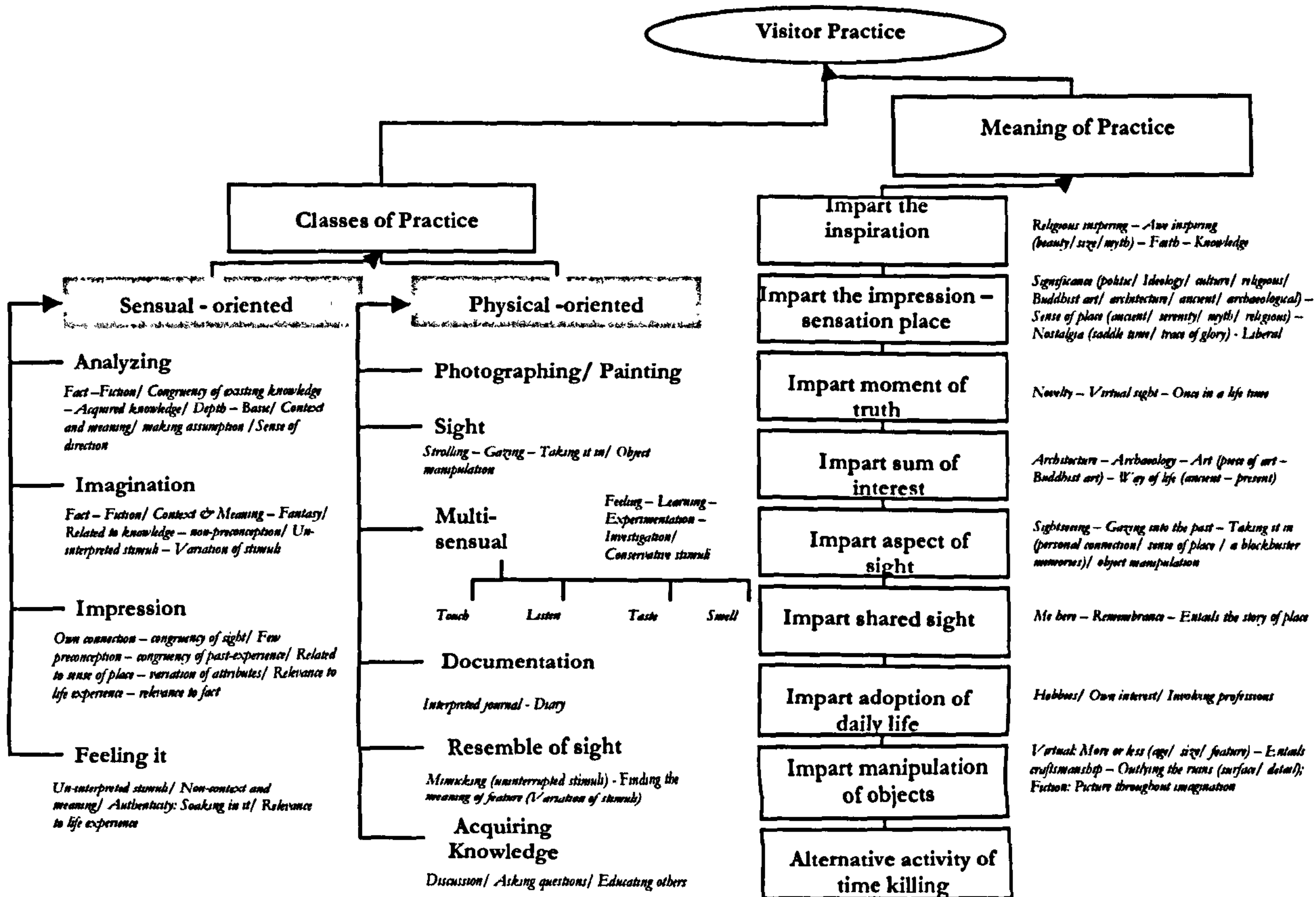


# Quest of Experience





Consumption Practice

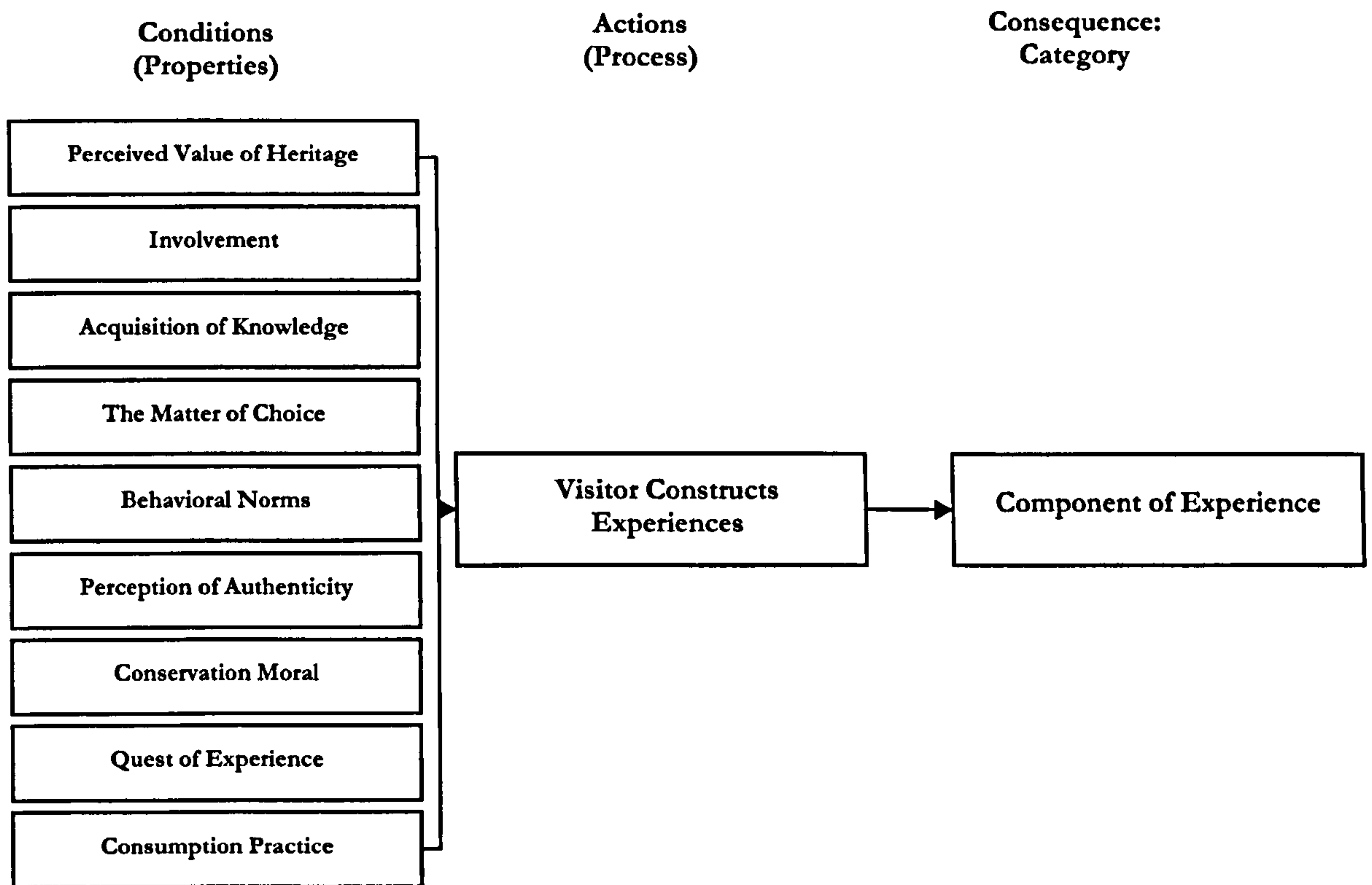




**4. THE ILLUSTRATION OF THE INSTRUMENT USED IN THEORIZING GROUNDED THEORY**

**(1) Illustration of Paradigm Model for Component of Experience**

**CATEGORY: COMPONENT OF EXPERIENCE**





## 2) The Illustration of Condition Relationship Guide for Experiential Aspect

### CATEGORY: EXPERIENTIAL ASPECT – Aspect (WHAT/ WHAT IT IS FOR) of Experience (accompanied with levels of intensity of interaction aspects)

Concepts	What	When	Where	Why	How	Consequence
<b>CULTURAL OBSERVANCE</b> - to see culture (to see what it's like)	Visitors have an aim of experience culture as they value heritage 'Thai culture representative' – cultural value of heritage.  To see culture	Initiative process of interaction with heritage  Interact with heritage  Interact with local culture/ others  Heritage is defined as means for cultural experience.	In the steps of pursuit ( <i>when there are there – at the site/ at the attraction</i> )  Often in the early stage of pursuit – can be placed at initiative stage of their visit	Aim at observing culture – see what it's like 'Thai culture'  Perceived value of heritage associated with culture – as a cultural significance → heritage site is a way to see Thai culture  Behavioural norm – aware of norms	Seeking experience from hedonic spectacle from the visit (staging authenticity)  Getting a glimpse of Thai culture – often popping up as their sights (serendipitous)  Interact with cultural venue (where there are performance and practice related to Thai culture)/ Tracing the heritage by <i>visual aid</i> and <i>live-experience</i>  Taking a look/ Seeing what happening (related to culture) at the heritage sites  Seeking to explore culture through the heritage  Enquiry Level of enquiry – acquire precise and basic level → as provided → none enquiry needed  Content of enquiry – fact/ fiction  Interpretation – passively acquire	<b>ASPECT OF EXPERIENCE → IN SEARCH OF CULTURAL EXPERIENCE</b>



<p><b>CULTURAL ASSIMILATION – to learn culture (know-how)</b></p>	<p>Visitors have an aim of experience culture as they value heritage ‘Thai culture representative’ – cultural value of heritage.</p>	<p>Initiative process of interaction with heritage Interaction with heritage Interact with local</p>	<p>In personal background (congruency with past experience/ interest) In the steps of pursuit</p>	<p>Visitors aim at ‘cultural meaning’ as they experience the sites/ attractions/ toured object - learn Thai/ local culture (culture related to the heritage sites) from the visit Perceived value of heritage</p>	<p>Observe life around ruins (In early morning, I watched ‘Tai Chi’ practitioners near Wat Mahathat. Observe life performance at the sites; monks around ruins, rituals Visiting cultural venue associated with heritage sites; kiln museum, weaving village Watching live performance Mimic ‘Buddha Posture’ (as recognition of cultural significance) Sight the objects having meaning associated with culture Seeking pleasure of ‘sight’ – fulfil basic knowledge/ basic travel perspective: the best of Thailand/ Where to see Thai culture Selected attractions that are well representing culture</p>	<p><b>IN SEARCH OF CULTURAL EXPERIENCE</b></p>
	<p>Seeking to simulating cultural experience/ Seeking to learn culture from the visit and toured objects Simulate cultural practice as their sights/ as told (show appreciation in cultural value of</p>					



	→ to learn culture	culture	Can be placed in the (middle) adoption stage of pursuit – i.e. after a while – they have learn more about heritage (meaning associated with culture/ tradition – they start trying practice as local people or others who belong to this culture practice)	associated with representation of culture – cultural knowledge	heritage) / Find 'cultural meaning' of things  Cultural learning opportunities Explore the cultural practice Seeking self-enhancement – To learn from sight Learn few Thai words while on tour; 'wat', 'bot' Take some tradition to their own value – taking off shoes when walking on the temple floor (as they see local people do/ have some knowledge about it)  Resemble traditional performance (with respect); costume dressing  Behavioural norm – respect the norm Respect and aware of local cultural tradition	
<b>CULTURAL PRACTICE – practicing culture</b>	Visitors have an aim of experience culture as they value heritage 'Thai culture representative'.	Initiative process of interaction with heritage Interaction with heritage Interact with local culture	In personal background (congruency with everyday life)  In steps of pursuit  Can be placed at the late stage of pursuit – visitors can then take this cultural value for grant as they appreciate it (as	Experience is aim at culturally involve (live and learn + practice) – as its perceived value → cultural status	Live and learn 'cultural norms'  High concern with 'cultural value' of heritage  Seeking to live and learn 'cultural meaning' of things – and practice  Adopt culture to their own value and practice it as life experience  Interact with local community	<b>IN SEARCH OF CULTURAL EXPERIENCE</b>



				they learn more about the tour objects and also with more experience of sight in the setting)			around the sites Practice in 'cultural event'/ Aware + respect and practice cultural norms Experience – congruency of life-experience/ past experience/ part of life Seeking genuine cultural experience (authenticity) Seeking 'self-indulge'	
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(3) The Illustration of Conditional Relationship Guide for Experience Consumption Practice

CATEGORY: EXPERIENCE CONSUMPTION PRACTICE – Ways of Experience

Concepts	What →	When →	Where →	Why → (motivation + meaning of performance + perceived value)	How → (process of performance/ enquiry: level/ contents)	Consequence
<b>ORIENTATION</b>	Visitors acquire amount of knowledge about the site/attraction, information could be associated with existing knowledge or	Preparation for the visit Interaction with heritage at the early phrase of interaction	In participant's background In early steps of pursuit (outcome of the visit)	Deepen existing knowledge → congruency of existing knowledge Sharpen existing knowledge → congruency of existing knowledge +	<b>Enrichment</b> Open to learning from a wide range of sources → variation of enquiries Acquisition of knowledge involved – discussions, asking	<b>Way of Experience</b> (Interaction strategy) <b>COMPREHENDING</b> <b>THE HERITAGE:</b> <i>internal-directed</i>



	<p>new information that can fulfil their aim at gaining knowledge and understanding from the visit)</p>		<p>Post-visit</p>	<p><i>Acquired experience</i></p> <p>Getting new knowledge for assisting interpretation → <i>Acquired knowledge</i></p> <p>Perceived value associated with <i>significance of place</i> (<i>cultural representative</i>)</p> <p>Secure the outcome of the visit (knowledge/ understanding)</p>	<p>questions, educate themselves (<i>knowledge extension</i>) and others (<i>taking roles of demonstrators</i>)</p> <p>Focus on what's related to the visit (<i>diversified/ variation of attributes</i>) / attractions (<i>relate to specific attributes</i>) <i>congruency of existing knowledge + Acquired experience</i></p> <p>Interpretation requires sense of direction to less sense of direction (<i>diffusion</i>) / Interpretation through <i>contextual content – fiction context</i></p> <p>Level of Interpretation</p> <p><i>Getting a glimpse – Investigation</i></p>	<p><i>performance</i></p>
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<b>ASSIMILATION</b>	Visitors relate (connection) and evaluate (compare) experience towards toured objects to past experience and experience elsewhere.	Interaction with heritage	In participant's background In steps of pursuit Post visit	Facilitate their interpretation (experience) Driven by <i>sum of interest</i> Perceived value of heritage associated with cultural and historic dimensions	Comparison of sight with own experience (past – something similar elsewhere/ own culture or history). ' <i>comparative experience</i> ' Finding connection between their sight (heritage) and own experience Making ' <i>theoretical</i> ' sense and meaning of heritage Interpreting mainly through <i>contextual content</i> (knowledge) Level of Interpretation <i>Getting a glimpse – Investigative</i> Acquisition of Enquiry: <i>congruency to existing knowledge – acquired new knowledge</i>	<b>Way of Experience</b> (Interaction strategy) – <b>COMPREHENDING THE HERITAGE:</b> <i>internal-directed performance</i>
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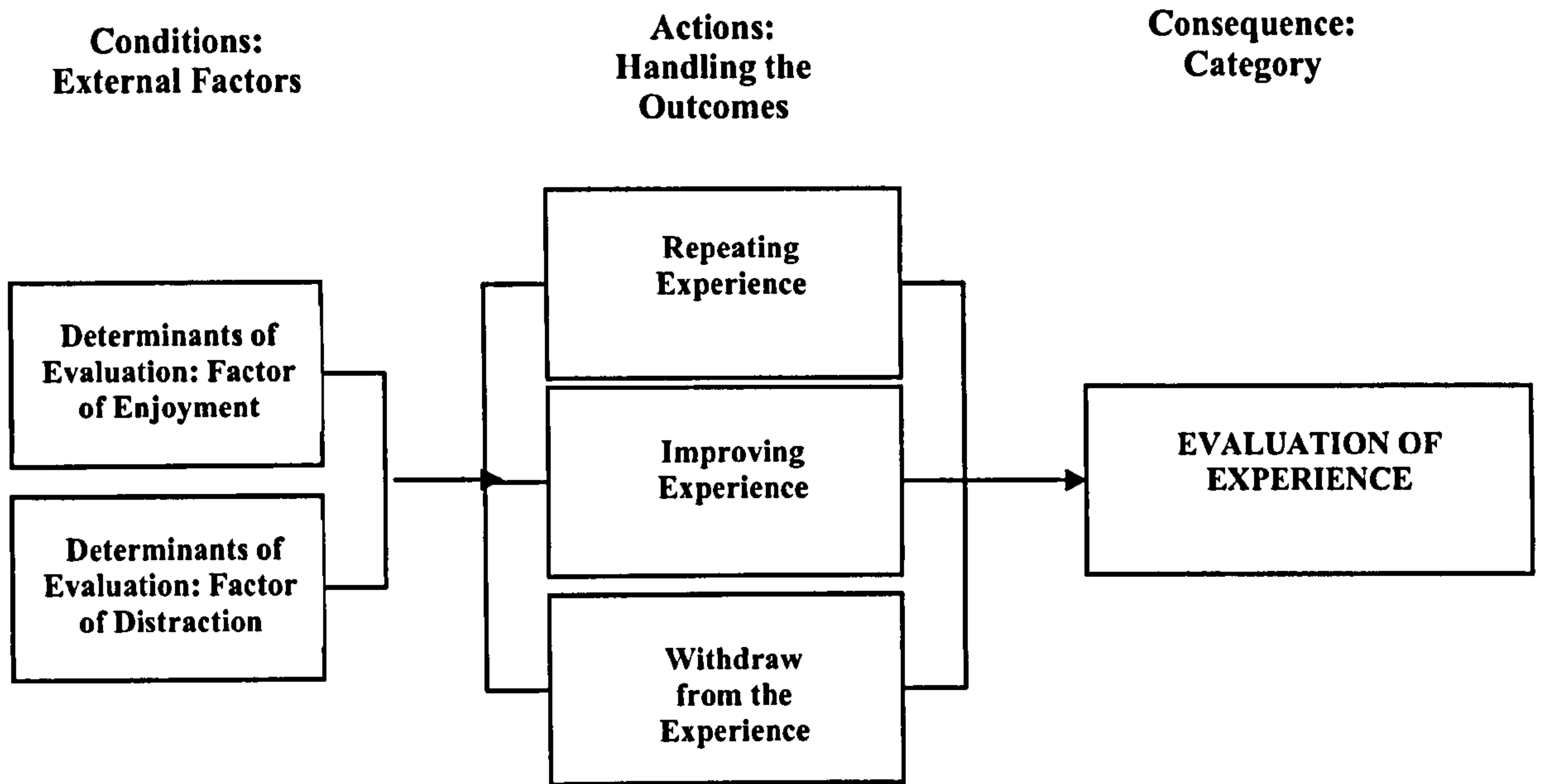
<p><b>ASSIMILATION (Participation)</b></p>	<p>Visitors become a participant in the social/ cultural setting of heritage.</p> <p>Participations related to meaningful/ interpretive attributes of heritage; e.g. religious, culture, and so forth</p>	<p>Interaction with heritage</p>	<p>In step of pursuit</p> <p>Post-visit</p>	<p>Sum of interest stimuli</p> <p>Perceived value of heritage related to cultural representative determinations (cultural significance – knowledge and status)</p>	<p>Performance imparts inspirations (knowledge), some of interests, adoptions of everyday life, life experience</p> <p>Visitors interpret their sight of life experience or understanding about heritage and transform to their own performance.</p> <p>Focus on what is related to their interest (congruency of existing knowledge) and novelty and adopt it to their own value.</p> <p>They experience heritage as an object and transform into means of experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worshipping Buddha statue as they saw other visitors do it and as their perception towards the heritage attractions or toured objects.</li> <li>• Adopt the value of life experience to their post-visit</li> </ul>	<p><b>COMPREHENDING THE HERITAGE</b></p>
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**(4) Illustration of Paradigm Model for Evaluation of Experience**

**CATEGORY: EVALUATION OF EXPERIENCE**





## APPENDIX F: THE TOURIST TYPOLOGIES

Authors	Criteria of Classification	Tourist Typology
Cohen (1974)	The degree of institutionalization of the tourists (types of holidays, organization of trips, experience seeks, and types of place they engage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The drifter: <i>Tourists belong to this type seek novelty at all costs: even discomfort and danger. The tourists will try to avoid all contact with 'tourists'. Novelty will be their total goal; spending patterns tend to benefit immediate locale rather than larger companies.</i></li> <li>• The explorer: <i>The tourists who travel on 'off-beaten track'; perhaps following a destination lead given by a travel article rather than simply choosing from a brochure. This type of tourists will move into bubble of comfort and familiarity if the going gets to tough.</i></li> <li>• The individual mass: <i>Tourists who use the institutional facilities of the tourism system (scheduled flights, centralized bookings, transfers) to arrange as much as possible before leaving home; perhaps visiting the same sights as the mass tourist, but going under their own steam.</i></li> <li>• The organized mass: <i>Highly dependent on an environmental bubble created, supplied and maintained by the international tourism industry/ Characterized by all-inclusive, fully packaged holidays/ Familiarity dominates; novelty non-existent or highly controlled</i></li> </ul>
Smith (1978)	What is consumed by tourist: the cultures of exotic peoples, vanishing but familiar lifestyles, past glories, and alien environments as well as demographic characteristics of tourists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The explorers:</b> <i>Travellers do not see themselves as tourists, and live as active participants and observers among the people, easily and fully accommodating to the accepting the lifestyles of and norms of their hosts. The number of tourists in this group is limited.</i></li> <li>• <b>Elite tourists:</b> <i>The travellers who have been almost everywhere but with the pre-arranged service facilities and adapting fully, but temporarily to local norms.</i></li> <li>• <b>Off-beat tourists:</b> <i>Travellers who are seeking either to get away from the tourist crowds or heighten the excitement of their vacation by doing something beyond the norm in which they generally adapt well.</i></li> <li>• <b>Unusual tourists:</b> <i>Travellers who travel in number and in an organized tour or buy an optional toured package to visit attraction or destination. Generally, they are interested in the primitive culture, but with his 'safe' box lunch and adapt somewhat local norms.</i></li> <li>• <b>Incipient (early) mass tourists and charter tourists:</b> <i>Travellers who are seeking Western amenities and comfort</i></li> <li>• <b>Mass tourists:</b> <i>This group of tourists consists of a continuous flux of visitors of middle-class income and values, expecting trained multi-lingual hotel, Western amenities and tourist staff to fulfil their needs and wants.</i></li> <li>• <b>Charter tourists:</b> <i>The group of travellers those arrive en masse and have minimal involvement with people and who demand Western amenities</i></li> </ul>
Stewart et al (1998)	Typology of visitors' use of different provisions of interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seekers:</b> <i>Visitors who actively seek out sources of information and interpretation</i></li> <li>• <b>Stumblers:</b> <i>Visitors who stumble across information and interpretation sources</i></li> <li>• <b>Shadows:</b> <i>Visitors who were chaperoned by other people through interpretation</i></li> <li>• <b>Shunners:</b> <i>Visitors who shun sources of information and interpretation</i></li> </ul>



Authors	Criteria of Classification	Tourist Typology
McKercher (2002)	<p>Classification of cultural tourist by</p> <p>The integration of two dimensions. It is illustrated that the importance or centrality of cultural tourism can be the main reason someone choose a destination, but it can play a lesser role.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The purposeful cultural tourist:</b> <i>high centrality – deep experience/ learning about the other’s culture or heritage is a major reason for visiting a destination/ has a deep cultural experience/ engages in a more intellectual experience/ generally shows a predilection for museum experiences and visits lesser known temples and heritage sites/ seeks to immerse him/herself in a local culture</i></li> <li>• <b>The sightseeing cultural tourist:</b> <i>high centrality – shallow experience/ learning about the other’s culture or heritage is a major reason for visiting a destination/ has a shallower, entertainment-oriented experience</i></li> <li>• <b>The casual cultural tourist:</b> <i>moderate centrality – shallow experience/ cultural tourism reasons plays a limited role in the direction to visit a destination/ engages the destination in a shallow manner</i></li> <li>• <b>The incidental cultural tourist:</b> <i>cultural tourism reasons plays a little or no meaningful role the destination decision-making process; however, while at the destination, the person will participate in the cultural tourism activities/has a shallow experience.</i></li> <li>• <b>Serendipitous cultural tourist:</b> <i>low centrality – deep experience/ cultural tourism plays little or no role in the decision to visit a destination, but while there this type of cultural tourist visits cultural attractions and ends up having a deep experience.</i></li> </ul>
Wickens (2002)	<p>The sacred and the profane – Types of tourist</p> <p>Characterized by choices of holiday, types of activities, and views about host community, respondents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The cultural heritage tourist:</b> <i>strong emphasis on the cultural aspects as they seek the real Greek culture</i></li> <li>• <b>The Ravor tourist:</b> <i>emphasised the possibilities offered by Chalkidiki for sensual and hedonistic pleasures</i></li> <li>• <b>The Shirley Valentine tourists:</b> <i>characterized by their expectation pleasure and romantic experience from socializing with others</i></li> <li>• <b>The Heliolatrous tourists:</b> <i>expected relaxing holiday in the sun</i></li> <li>• <b>The Lord Byron tourists –</b> <i>tourists who make annual ritual return to the same place and sometimes to the same accommodation with nostalgia as they attracted to relaxed, laid-back and outdoor way of life/ desires for human authenticity rather than cultural/material or physical/natural authenticity.</i></li> </ul>
Goulding (2002)	<p>Types of tourist conceptualised from six factors relating to consumer behaviour at the heritage sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The existential visitor :</b> <i>largely defined by age (18-20s along with older group aged over 70/ predominantly drawn from the lower socio-economic groups with little academic interesting the past/ role deprivation / involves alienation in the present and the search for meaning and temporary control in the past</i></li> <li>• <b>The aesthetic visitor:</b> <i>mainly middle-class professions or students/ ages range from 20 to 59 (majority 30s-40s)/ visitor perception of the past is related to the arts, architecture and craftwork/ visitor behaviour involves the consequent idealization of previous eras and vicarious nostalgia/ have a desire for authenticity and quest for imaginative escapism</i></li> <li>• <b>The social visitor constitutes:</b> <i>ages range from 19-80/ a middle ground in terms of behaviour/ described as ‘mainstream’/use heritage for both leisure and education/ little to suggest any disaffection with the present, nor any hint at romantic idealization of previous times</i></li> </ul>



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Poria <i>et al</i> (2003)	Type of tourist travelling to heritage destination conceptualised by differentiation of perception.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourists who are not aware of the heritage attributes of the site</li> <li>• Tourists who are aware of the heritage attributes of the site but are motivated by other attributes to visit the site</li> <li>• Tourists who are motivated by the heritage attributes of the site; but do not consider these attributes as part of their own heritage</li> <li>• Tourists who are motivated by the heritage attributes of the site; and consider the site as part of their own heritage</li> </ul>
Hayllar and Griffin (2005)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Explorers:</b> <i>visitors who are finding out about something interesting; i.e., the perspective on the interconnectedness of the historic development of the area</i></li> <li>• <b>The Browsers:</b> <i>visitors who experience pleasant strolling while visiting places. Their experience does not have the depth of explorer but they are interested in capturing the experiential breadth of the place (walk, sit and relax, listen to the music)</i></li> <li>• <b>The Samplers:</b> <i>are visitors who perceive 'The Rocks' as just another place to visit on the tourist trail</i></li> </ul>