

**Multi-vocal Narratives of World Heritage
in China: On the Case of West Lake
Cultural Landscape**

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ABSTRACT

As with all heritage, World Heritage Sites vary tremendously in the ways they engage with interpretation for the wider public encompassing local communities, domestic and international visitors. Invariably, narratives used in site interpretation vary considerably, ranging from those that are officially constructed and ‘authorised’, to those which are more organic, unofficial and ‘disruptive’. This thesis focuses on the multi-vocality of interpretation relating to West Lake, a World Heritage Site near Hangzhou in China. It takes a narrative approach in examining the rich representations created and communicated by a wide diversity of stakeholders engaged with this cultural landscape.

The study interrogates the plurality of narratives of West Lake, how they have emerged, how they compete and, the ways in which they surface amongst different audiences. In part this reflects the complexity of a large cultural landscape but it also relates to the ‘life’ and symbolic value of West Lake *before* it was inscribed on the World Heritage List. While there are official narratives of World Heritage, these reflect more national rather than trans-national perspectives or the idea of ‘Outstanding Universal Value’. But there are also local narratives, that speak to the locality of West Lake and to ways in which the surrounding communities have adapted and continue to adapt, to its role in wider social and economic life.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iii
THE LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
THE LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
ABBREVIATION.....	viiix
Chapter One Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 The case of West Lake Cultural Landscape.....	5
1.3 The value of this research.....	7
1.4 Research methodology.....	9
1.5 Thesis structure.....	11
Chapter 2 Literature review.....	14
2.1 Introduction.....	14
2.2 Concepts and characteristics of narrative.....	18
2.2.1 Narrative: a tool of meaning-making.....	19
2.2.2 Types of narrative.....	20
2.2.3 Sociocultural situatedness of narrative.....	21
2.3 Critical heritage studies and AHD.....	23
2.3.1 Pluralising concepts of heritage.....	24

2.3.2 Multi-layered functions of heritage	26
2.3.3 The contestation and dissonance of heritage	28
2.4 Officially heritage narrative	30
2.4.1 UNESCO's trans-national narrative	32
2.4.2 The national narrative	35
2.4.3 Heritage narrative in tourism industry	42
2.5 Heritage narrative as a social practice	46
2.5.1 Narratives, memory and identity	47
2.5.2 Tourist' narratives.....	52
2.5.3 Non-official narratives and heritage communicaiton	56
2.6 Conclusion.....	58
3. World Heritage management, tourism and community in China.....	59
3.1 Introduction to West Lake Cultural Landscape	59
3.2 The changing national narrative of heritage in China	62
3.3 The drive for World Heritage in China	66
3.4 Management of heritage in Hangzhou	68
3.5 Local stakeholders and local narratives.....	74
3.6 Tourists' perspectives of West Lake	77
3.7 Conclusion.....	82
Chapter 4 Methodology.....	84
4.1 Introduction	84
4.2 Research questions and objectives	84
4.3 Philosophies and paradigms	85

4.4 Research approaches	86
4.5 Field work and data collection	88
4.5.1 Selecting studied subjects	90
4.5.2 Document collection.....	91
4.5.3 Observation.....	93
4.5.4 In-depth interviews	94
4.6 Data analysis.....	99
4.7 Ethical issues	100
4.8 Research limitations	102
4.9 Conclusion.....	104
Chapter 5 Official narratives of West Lake Cultural Landscape	105
5.1 Introduction	105
5.2 Official narratives of a World Heritage Site.....	106
5.3 Narratives of West Lake as a tourism destination	124
5.3.1 Our story of Hangzhou	126
5.3.2 Impression West Lake	131
5.3.3 A harmonious landscape.....	135
5.4. Conclusion.....	143
Chapter 6 Unofficial narratives of West Lake Cultural Landscape	148
6.1 Introduction	148
6.2 Local communities' narratives	149
6.2.1 Local villagers' narratives	150
6.2.2 Immigrant entrepreneurs' narratives.....	159

6.2.3 Heritage volunteers’ narratives	164
6.3 Tourists’ narratives.....	169
6.3.1 Tourists’ narratives and social media	171
6.3.2 World Heritage: an unpopular subject in tourists’ narratives	173
6.3.3 A scenic area for leisure and aesthetic appreciation	175
6.3.4 West Lake: a site of symbolic significance.....	179
6.3.4 Cross-cultural communication of World Heritage.....	183
6.4 Conclusion.....	188
Chapter 7 Conclusion.....	190
7.1 Introduction	190
7.2 Major findings	191
7.2.1 Disconnection between heritage listing and heritage interpretation	191
7.2.2 Universal value versus National significance.....	195
7.2.3 Narratives for heritage conservation and tourism marketing.....	198
7.2.4 Unheard voices of local community	200
7.2.5 The gap between the production and the consumption.....	203
7.3 Contributions to knowledge	205
7.4 Conclusion.....	206
Appendices.....	208
Reference	222

THE LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Property area of West Lake Cultural Landscape	6
Figure 3.1 Location of West Lake on the map of Zhejiang Province	59
Figure 3.2 Map of West Lake, the location of field work.....	60
Figure 3.3 Institutional framework of WHITRAP.	68
Figure 3.4 The management System of West Lake	69
Figure 3.5 West Lake Administration Committee	72
Figure 3.6 Number of Tourists in West Lake	78
Figure 4.1 The process of participant identification	97
Figure 5.1 The location of West Lake Museum.....	113
Figure 5.2 The diorama of West Lake at West Lake Museum.....	114
Figure 5.3 The exhibition hall of West Lake Museum	115
Figure 5.4 Information panels at scenic and historical sites	117
Figure 5.5 A scene of Our Hangzhou Story	126
Figure 5.6 A scene of Impression West Lake.....	126
Figure 5.7 G20 promotional films.....	136
Figure 5.8 Impressions of Hangzhou	137
Figure 6.1 Tea villages in West Lake Scenic Area.....	172
Figure 6.2 Competition for tea processing skills	177
Figure 6.3 Gentrified villages	178
Figure 6.4 Tourists' post on Mafengwo	172
Figure 6.5 Tourists' spatial exploration of West Lake	177

THE LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Laws and regulations related to West Lake management.....	69
Table 4.1 A list of methods applied	90
Table 4.2 Themes of narratives by a variety of stakeholders	99
Table 6.1 Themes identified in tourists' reviews.....	178

ABBREVIATION

AHD: Authorised Heritage Discourse

CPC: Communist Party of China

HTC: Hangzhou Tourism Committee

ICOMOS: International Council on Monuments and Sites

MCWL: Monitoring Center of West Lake

OUV: Outstanding Universal Value

PNSP: Poetically Named Scenic Place

SAB: Small Accommodation Business

SACH: The State Administration of Cultural Heritage

UNESCO: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization

WHITRAP: World Heritage Training and Research Institute for the Asia and
Pacific Region

WLM: West Lake Museum

WLAC: West Lake Administration

Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Background

This research stems from the realization that heritage narrative, as an area of academic enquiry has not yet received enough academic attention considering its essential role in World Heritage communication and engagement of broader audience. Since late 1990s, the focus of heritage studies has undergone a shift from the conservation of material fabric to its role as a cultural tool for multiple appeals by diverse stakeholders (Smith 2006; Ashworth 2007; Harrison 2010). Changing perspectives on heritage encourages the development of new roles of heritage interpretation. The demand of cross-cultural communication in the trend of mass tourism in either international or domestic scope, also requires existing interpretation theories and practices to be re-examined in order to narrow the cultural gaps and strengthen the connection between visitors and heritage places. However, compared with personnel and money occupied by the traditional heritage management such as site protection and curation of collection, much less public resources and academic attention have been dedicated to how heritage is communicated (Fairclough et al. 2008). It can be observed in many World Heritage Sites that public interpretation is still conducted in the traditional expert-dominated and research-oriented approaches which can hardly engage a broader participant to realize the social and cultural roles of World Heritage.

Narrative, with its constructive nature in meaning-making process, is applied in this research as a key concept. Understanding the issue of heritage interpretation from a narrative perspective means a more open and critical thinking about the issue of World Heritage communication, which is not a pass of message from one group to another, but a dynamic process of interaction and negotiation. This process of meaning construction involves a more active engagement of a variety of stakeholders and multivocal voices rather than single interpretation being heard.

In the context of China, the issue of narrative of World Heritage is quite complicated because

World Heritage in China is not an issue simply concerned with keeping the past through heritage conservation. It is related to bigger issues such as ‘modernity, identity and sustainable development’ in the present Chinese society (Yan 2017:1). It is complicated also because it involves a variety of stakeholders at different levels and their diverse appeals. Although some scholars (Zhu 2018; Yan) has already noticed the importance of addressing the conflicts between different stakeholders and dissonance in the meaning-making of World Heritage, not enough research has been conducted on the examination on these issues, especially in a Chinese background. This research will address these issues from the perspective of World Heritage narratives, with the aim to add some new thinking to existing researches in this field.

1.2 Research questions and foci of the thesis

In order to address the tension between the different narratives of stakeholders, it becomes really necessary to expand the study of heritage interpretation beyond the traditional professional sphere and discuss various responses in social practices through an analysis of multi-vocal heritage narratives in the case of West Lake.

The study will focus on the analysis of heritage narratives owing to its wide application in heritage interpretation and its universal utilization among different agents and groups. Compared with some communicating tool occupied by professionals and official agents, narrative acts as a more democratic tool which can be used by both professional interpreters and non-professional locals and visitors. Therefore, different versions of narratives related to the same heritage object and place can serve as suitable media for the analysis on the complicated process of meaning construction at both official and unofficial levels. The research will focus on how narratives of heritage has been applied by different official agents and social groups as a ‘cultural tool’ to interpret and construct the meaning of past in the present context.

The two key research questions as the foci of my discussions are:

- What narratives of West Lake have been created and communicated by official stakeholders of West Lake Cultural Landscape?
- What narratives have been created and communicated by non-official stakeholders of West Lake Cultural Landscape?

Addressing these questions involves the study of narratives constructed by a range of stakeholders. In order to make the task more practical, I will focus on the narratives produced by four groups of stakeholders: heritage conservation agency and tourism marketing agency on the official side and local residents and tourists on the non-official side. Thus, a number of objects are set for fulfilling the research aim.

- Identify and understand what stories heritage conservation agency produced and communicated to the public audience?
- To identify and understand what stories tourism marketing agency produced and presented in marketing materials to potential tourists?
- To identify and understand what stories local residents produced and shared with community members and other people?
- To identify and understand what stories tourists produced and circulated on social media?

The discussion on the first question focuses on official narratives for heritage interpretation and tourism promotion by local official agencies, West Lake Administration Committee and Hangzhou Tourism Committee. The analyses of their dominant narratives aim to illustrate the process of heritage making which is connected to the building of a common national identity by creating a sense of historical continuity and an imagined cultural authenticity (Zhu 2015). It also intends to explore the roles of cultural heritage in promoting heritage and tourism industry in both domestic and international market. In-depth analysis of the production of official interpretations of West Lake associates such interpretations with wider issues such as the construction of national identity, modern development and the binary opposition between the west and China

Discussions on the second question focus on the examination of narratives made by two social groups, tourists and local communities. Compared with the official narratives which have received attention in scholarly research (McCarthy 2003; Gibb 2003; West and McKellar 2010; Waterton and Watson 2010), the non-official narratives either on or off heritage sites have not got enough attention in academic heritage studies. However, these materials collected from local communities, domestic visitors and foreign tourists will receive a scrutiny in this study to unpack the important role of non-professional groups in fostering multi-vocal interpretation, which further maintain local or communal identities and benefit the sustainable heritage management. Analysis of non-official narratives of this World Heritage Site focuses on what narratives have been produced by stakeholders such as local communities and tourists, why they have produced these narratives and how their alternative narratives have negotiated with the official interpretations.

Through exploring these questions, I will reveal (1) how West Lake was interpreted and presented as a World Heritage Site and promoted as a tourism destination for the sake of local economic development; and (2) how local communities and tourists adapt, negotiate and contest heritage models through various practices to address their own cultural pasts and values. I argue that the official government-led conservation project in West Lake creates heritage dissonance of images, tensions and desires that co-exist, interact and are negotiated by different groups of people. In the case of West Lake, the Chinese past has been used as a resource for various related purposes: a mark of tourism to motivate consumption; a theme for city branding and marketing; a trigger for community-based pride or nostalgia; and a motif for protesting individual rights.

This study aims to contribute deeper understanding of the dissonant nature of heritage and complicated relationship between different stakeholder groups involved in meaning making of World Heritage in China. For the empirical purpose, this research is intended to help heritage site managers, curators, and decision makers to build up a thorough understanding of heritage sites, which should facilitate the establishment of more inclusive interpretive management plans for World Heritage Sites, and enhance the communication of meanings

and values of their physical remains; for achieving socio-cultural sustainability in the development of World Heritage Sites.

To answer the research question stated above, an empirical study will be carried out, focusing on the case of West Lake, a cultural World Heritage Site located in Hangzhou, China. In the following sector, I will give a brief introduction to this heritage site and discuss the reasons for choosing this site as the focus of my field research.

1.2 The case of West Lake Cultural Landscape

The case on which this study draws is West Lake Cultural Landscape in Hangzhou, China. Hangzhou is the capital city of Zhejiang Province. Hangzhou City has long been well regarded as a tourism destination in China because of its distinctive natural landscape, historical sites and cultural tradition. West Lake is the iconic attraction of Hangzhou. In many travelogues, it is compared as the ‘spirit/essence’ of Hangzhou.

West Lake is a cultural landscape centered around a lake located in the west of Hangzhou, a provincial capital city known for its historical and cultural significance, located south of Yangtze River. This landscape has been renowned for its beautiful scenery and prosperous culture ever since the Tang Dynasty (618-907). After the construction and conservation over hundreds of years, this original lagoon has evolved into a fresh-water lake comprising an area of 6.39 km², surrounded by cloud-capped hills on three sides (Figure1.1). Man-made elements including three islands (in the lake), causeways (across the lake), numerous temples, pagodas, pavilions, gardens and various plants (around the lake) have been added at different historical periods. The Top Ten Scenic Spots of West Lake, designated by artists in 13th century when Hangzhou was the capital of China, have been well-preserved and are always popular spots among visitors. As a combination of natural beauty and human civilization, West Lake is a physical representation of the traditional aesthetics of Chinese landscape and therefore has always been perceived as one of the most popular and romantic tourist destination in domestic market. It receives over a million travelers each year (HBLCR 2011)

and its popularity among foreign visitors is also rising, especially after this cultural landscape finally gained its status as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 2011.

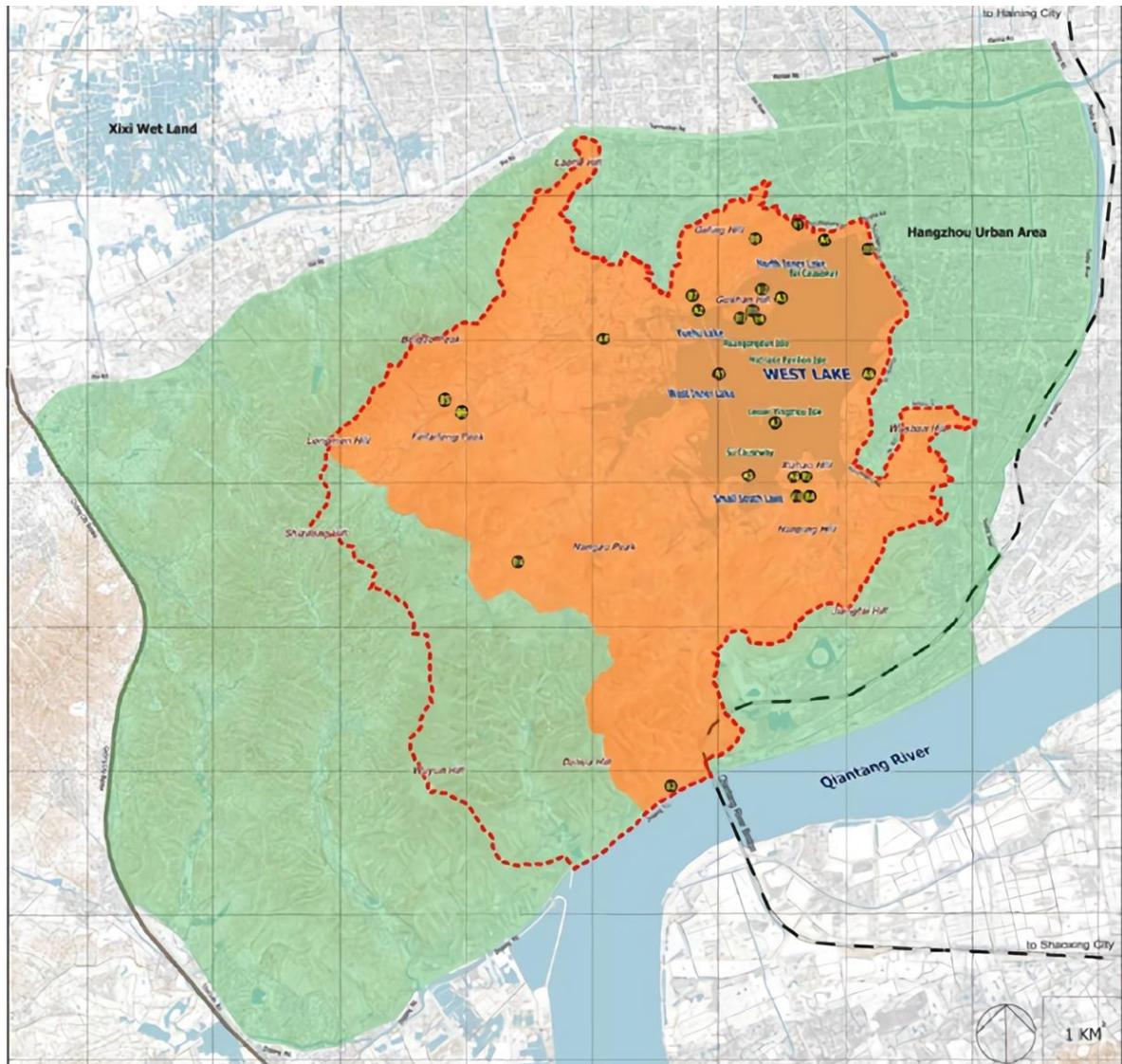


Figure 1.1 West Lake Cultural Landscape; Source: SACH

West Lake Cultural Landscape has been selected as the place for field research for several reasons. The first and the most important reason rests with the potential of collecting suitable heritage narratives addressed by various social groups and at different levels in such a place as a World Heritage Site, a national iconic site of traditional Chinese aesthetics and a popular tourist destination. Another reason is that narratives of West Lake can be treated as a typical example of cross-cultural communication in the sphere of heritage interpretation. Designed and constructed according the traditional aesthetics of Chinese landscape, West Lake faces

the challenge of presenting the cultural values and features which are often not obvious in the tangible forms or surrounding geography in the perspectives of foreign visitors with aesthetics fostered in a different culture. In order to bridge the gap and connect visitors with the site, the cultural values must be interpreted and translated through narratives in a visitor-oriented way so as to properly convey the fullness of their meanings to foreign visitors. Therefore, the discussion on the cross-cultural interpretation of West Lake will have a broad implication on the similar research in other contexts.

The appropriateness of this choice can also be justified by my familiarity of the place as my hometown and my existing network established with government officers, academic researchers, professional experts, tourism agents and local citizens, which will be of value when carrying out fieldwork.

The features of West Lake introduced above put the landscape in an advantageous position as a site for comprehensive research on World Heritage interpretation. Part of the problems presented by this site may be observable in other cultural heritage sites. Therefore, the case study on West Lake will have wider significance for a range of different research contexts.

1.3 The value of this research

This research is nourished by existing academic literature of narrative studies, especially those on the main characteristics of narrative which justify its wide application as the basic structure of most heritage interpretations. Drawing upon the works of Abbott (2002), Lyotard (1990), Wertsch (2008) and Cronon (1992), the research also situate itself in context of academic debates on the dissonant nature of heritage and thus the plurality of heritage narratives (Ashworth and Tunbridge 2007:37; Graham et al. 2000:25). It also benefits from a broader exploration of studies on a variety of issues related to World Heritage, including sustainable tourism, and national building and communities in Chinese context (Yan 2017; Zhu 2015, 2016, 2018). The research is also inspired by researches on West Lake Landscape by Chinese scholars in a range of disciplines (Zhang 2017; Han 2008).

While this research draws inspiration and support from such existing publications, it

represents a departure from prior studies in its comprehensive considerations of the complex relationship between official and non-official stakeholders, especially in terms of their respective use of heritage narratives for different purposes.

With a critical thinking on the issue of heritage interpretation from the perspective of narrative, this research will contribute a deeper understanding of heritage communication beyond technical problems of communication strategies and approaches. Addressing the issue from the perspective of narrative, this research will examine the authorized status of official heritage interpretation and hierarchy value system behind it. This new theoretical thinking about the nature of heritage interpretation will open the possible exploration into some more practical issues related to heritage communication in the future.

The study will reveal the plurality in heritage narratives, through which different stakeholder create and communicate World Heritage values ranging from the trans-national ones such as Outstanding Universal Value, national significance to some alternative ones at regional and local levels, or even disruptive ones.

This research will also add to the knowledge about the involvement of multi-stakeholders in heritage communication. As an extension of earlier studies with focus on heritage narratives by one group of stakeholders, this research holds discussions on the involvement of multi stakeholders in the narration of World Heritage and the relationship between the multi-vocal narratives of different groups of stakeholders. While official agencies created their narratives to channel public audience's attention to some particular values of a World Heritage Site and also exclude others, other non-official stakeholders also use heritage narrative as a measure to participate in the meaning making of World Heritage in alternative ways. The study intends to show that each stakeholder group is concerned with only a part of the total construction. However, it also aims to bring together these contributions together, preparing the ground for the summary and synthesis necessary if a new strategy for World Heritage Interpretation is to emerge.

This research is one of the few researches on heritage narratives in Chinese context. In addition to the relevant studies in other cultural background, this study focuses on the

narratives of World Heritage in China. It means the discussion is set in a Chinese context with some typical social background, such as the top-down power relationship in heritage management, the trend of urbanization and modernization, and national identity building. All these related factors make the issue of heritage narratives more complicated and thus worth further exploration and comparative analysis with other cases in a different cultural background in future studies.

With its particular focus on the case of West Lake Cultural Landscape, this research will also address the issues related to how to interpret a big and complicated space which is more complex than a building, a monument or an archaeological site. The findings of this research can thus add knowledge to other research on the interpretation of a vast and open space such as landscape.

1.4 Research methodology

This study involves a number of objectives, including an analysis of heritage discourses in China, an examination of the local responses to the heritage movement by people living in the conservation area of West Lake, as well as an overview of tourists' account of their understanding of the values of this World Heritage Site in virtual tourist communities. In order to fulfill these tasks, this study borrows different approaches from a number of related disciplines and integrates them into a mixed methodology. In general it is guided by qualitative methods.

I carried out fieldwork over seven months from November 2015 to June 2016. In the first stage of my field work, I conducted non-participant observations in this World Heritage Site to gather interpretative materials presented on text panels on scenic spots, in exhibitions at museums and brochures available at tourist service kiosks. These materials were recorded either in the form of photos or printed papers. By walking around the site and observing the relevant group's behaviour, I also developed a basic understanding of the spatial dimension

of the place. The materials collected through the non-participant observation fed into developing the questions in in-depth interviews and identifying the targeted groups for more focused observation.

I also collected audio-visual materials of West Lake on the website, such as youtube and youku. Compared with the traditional media dominated by the official agencies, the internet is a more democratic virtual world which enables the researcher to trace more narratives of West Lake composed, uploaded and shared by common individuals. Hence, in addition to promo films produced by official agencies for the consumption of tourists, I also collected and examined materials produced by tourists, mainly via their online reviews.

In the second stage I conducted participant observations by joining guided tour groups to travel around the site with other visitors, so as to collect the tourist guides' interpretations and tourists' talks and accounts.

In-depth interviews were adopted in the third stage to collect narratives from government officers in West Lake Administration Committee(WLAC), directors in the Monitoring Center of West Lake (MCWL), managers of the regional tourism board as well as local residents.

Through these various methods, data was collected from diverse sources and thus offered a wide range of perspectives to the further analysis through these materials on the role of narrative in cultural heritage interpretation of West Lake.

This study seeks to account for a variety of stakeholders who participate actively in shaping the heritage interpretation and making sense of the landscape and their own identities through their narratives. Via a case study on West Lake World Heritage Site, it focuses on the process of how these different narratives intertwine, respond, and compete and thus formulate a multi-vocal heritage interpretation of the heritage site. The research is a cultural study of the complex ways people connect with 'their heritage places', which will contribute a range of different insights into conversations about heritage values, and the power involved in the interpretation and presentation of World Heritage Sites.

1.5 Thesis structure

My thesis comprises two main sections. The first section, consisting of chapters one to four, is introductory, setting the theoretical, historical and methodological context within which this research has been carried out. In the second section, chapter 5-7, there is an analytical discussion of the multi-vocal narratives of West Lake by different stakeholders.

Chapter One outlines the significance, research questions and gives a brief introduction to West Lake, the site of field work.

Chapter Two provides an overview of previous research addressing the scholarly debates related to my research questions, particularly critiques of heritage discourse, the present-centred paradigm of heritage, multi-vocal heritage interpretations and characteristics of narrative. This review of literature situates my research in a multidisciplinary context of heritage studies, archaeology, anthropology, and ethnography.

Chapter Three introduces the background information about the heritage movement in China in the past two decades. It discusses the main features of this mass popular movement and examines relevant political, economic, social and cultural factors. It also analyses how international impacts such as the discourse of UNESCO has influenced the heritage interpretation in China. It points out, consequently, these factors have shaped the current policies and practices of heritage management of West Lake, in the aspects such as management planning, issues of communities and heritage interpretation and presentation.

Chapter Four introduces the research methodology to be applied in the empirical research. In general, the research will be guided by qualitative methods. In the process of collecting data from various resources, a combination of methods will be used, including participant and non-participant observation, semi-structured interview, and online document collection.

Chapter Five examines official heritage interpretations produced by two governmental agencies—West Lake Administrative Committee (WLAC) and Hangzhou Tourism Committee (HTC). The first part of the chapter addresses how West Lake Cultural Landscape has been created as a national cultural icon through official discourses at the levels of central and local governments. It will elaborate the fundamental causes of cultural heritage

movement in Chinese society, which is in endeavour to construct its national cultural identity in the context of globalization. It explores how UNESCO's associated agents, governmental administration departments, site-based management offices collaborate and negotiate with each other to construct a set of official narratives. The second part discusses how official agencies and tourism operators cooperate or compete in the construction of a set of narratives for their interests. It will elaborate the gaps and conflicts between these narratives, which will contribute to the understanding of controversy and negotiations within the official heritage interpretations.

Chapter Six is concerned with non-official narratives created by local communities and tourists. The discussion consists of two analysis sections, one on narratives of local communities and the other on narratives of tourists. The section of local communities focuses on the analysis of a range of divergent perceptions and accounts of the landscape produced by two groups of local communities — local residents and immigrant small accommodation business (SAB) owners. It will not only focus on the divergent accounts of the same heritage site by a variety of groups of stakeholders, but also analyse why some voices are heard while others are marginalised. The section of tourists is to complement the discussion of the other three groups of stakeholders' roles in the construction of a World Heritage Site and its values. Drawing upon their on-line reviews about their experience in this World Heritage Site via tourism activities, this section is to explore what narratives of West Lake is presented and how tourists develop their narratives of West Lake through their short encounters with the place.

Chapter Seven is the concluding chapter with reflections on the major findings of this research. The first of these is the gaps between UNESCO's universal values and the values communicated in the official narratives of World Heritage Site such as West Lake. The second finding is the dissonance of values communicated in the multiple narratives by stakeholders, not only between the official and non-official groups, and also among the groups themselves. The final subject discussed is about the possibility of co-construction of heritage values in some identified contact zones, which encourages better communication between different

stakeholders. It will also mention the contributions and limitations of this study.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Literature view in this chapter takes a closer look at the existing academic literature on the issues of narrative, heritage and interpretation, which are relevant to the subject of my research. Discussions and critiques of these academic works will form a theoretical context for my research and underpin the analysis and argument in the main body of my thesis. Narrative has long been applied as an instrument of heritage interpretation in practice, but has rarely been treated as the central theme of academic studies in this field. My literature review intends to prove that, as a result of development of heritage studies in the last 40 years, the issue of heritage narrative is beyond an instrument of interpretation in professional heritage management. Promoted by critical analysis on authorized heritage discourse (AHD), heritage narrative involves a series of relevant issues, such as the relationship between heritage narrative and socio-cultural contexts, community's narratives and local identity, heritage narrative and tourist experience. To start with, this introductory part is to sketch the evolving history of heritage interpretation so as to locate the discussion of heritage narrative in a temporal context.

The earliest exploration of heritage interpretation can be dated back to 1950s when some heritage site managers and custodians began to publish works on methods and philosophy of their heritage interpretations. Tilden, as the most influential one, is regarded as the founder of modern heritage interpretation (Jameson 1997). Many of the basic principles for interpretation, such as provocation, revelation and interaction with visitors, stem from his writing (Jameson 1997). And philosophy and ideas in his work *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957) are still frequently quoted in the works of scholars and interpreters (Stone and Mackenzie 1990; Jameson 2003; Little 2002). Under the impact of Tilden's work, heritage

interpretation, for a long time, has been perceived as a professional practice of conveying meanings of objects or places of heritage to visitors and the aim of heritage interpretation is to educate the non-professional public (Staiff 2014).

In 1980s, there was a resurrection of Tilden's theory, which emphasizes education as the key characteristic of heritage interpretation and aims to establish a standardized discourse about heritage interpretation (Staiff 2014). This trend of heritage interpretation can be attributed to three factors. The education-oriented strategy of heritage interpretation can be traced back to the 19th century tradition of regarding knowledge formation as central part in museum's mission of collecting, documenting, conserving and presenting material culture (Hooper-Greenhill 1995; Falk and Dierking 2000; Schuber 2009).

The second factor is related to the development of mass tourism in 1980s. Heritage industry, promoted by a national discourse of Western societies, defined the role of museums and heritage sites as both economic resources to attract visitors and cultural resources to educate public. The traditional disciplinary framework for heritage interpretation, with its focus on disciplinary knowledge and power, cannot meet the demands of the new roles of heritage sites. In order to improve visitors' experience and deliver information more effectively to the non-professional public, heritage experts devoted great effort in promoting public education and outreach activities. Various approaches and practices have been applied to the representation and interpretation (Jameson 2004).

With the development of heritage industry, especially heritage tourism, in the Western countries, the cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural conservations were promoted via international conferences addressing heritage interpretation and academic works of national interpretation associations (eg. the UK Association for Heritage Interpretation, the US National Association of Interpretation and the Interpretation Association of Australia). As a result, communication and education became consensus about the aim of heritage

interpretation among experts across disciplines and heritage fields (Staiff 2014).

Consequently, through the 1980s and 1990s, many of the discussions of heritage interpretation were made under the impact of Tilden's theory. Heritage interpretation was regarded as an educational activity and professional interpreters were empowered as educators and communicators. Heritage interpretation developed into an educational-oriented and visitor-oriented framework (Beck and Cable 1998; West and Mckellar 2010). Evolving standards and philosophies of heritage interpretation accumulated through the professional practices over half a century have formed a basis for creating of a global framework for heritage interpretation standards and approaches.

While the move away from the restrictive disciplinary framework of heritage interpretation is a large step in the democratising process of heritage interpretation, it has been admitted that the education-oriented strategy of heritage interpretation is still limited in the traditional heritage discourse. As it has been criticized by Staiff (2014), the education-oriented theory emphasizes the dominant role of national narratives and the authority of experts, and, therefore, fails to achieve its aim to reconnect the visitors to heritage sites and to engage the audience's participation in heritage interpretation.

Many social and political forces promoted the critiques on the education-oriented theory of heritage interpretation in 1990s and early 21st century. One of promoting factor is the shift in theory from modernism to postmodernism, from structuralism to poststructuralism (Jameson 1997; Lyotard 1984). Under the influence of new theoretical thoughts, the focus of heritage studies shifted from scientific objectivity to subjectivity. In addition, feminism and postcolonialism also developed under the influence of growth of social movements supporting the recognition of the rights of socially marginalised groups (Habu, Junko, Fawcett, et. al. 2008.). These shift and development in theoretical perspectives opened up the possible of giving more consideration to the multivocal narratives of various stakeholders of

heritage sites.

Under the impact of new theoretical development in cultural studies, the critical heritage studies came into existence in the last two decades (Smith 2006; Waston and Waterton 2010; Staiff 2014). This trend of critical analysis of the dominance of authorized heritage discourse (AHD, a term coined by Smith) challenge the traditional understanding of the concept, roles and values of heritage. Academic works in this trend develop new understandings of heritage and give shape to new approaches to heritage management. The concepts of heritage were redefined and broadened; the roles of heritage were reconfigured and the relation between heritage and non-professional public was also reconsidered. The focus of heritage studies were shifted from the standardized conservation of static objects/places with so-called intrinsic values to the ever-changing and pluralizing interpretations of heritage values by people in diverse socio-cultural contexts.

Consequently, this trend of critical discourse analysis imposed a great impact on theoretical architecture of heritage interpretation. It broadened the concept of heritage interpretation and made it beyond the decoding and presentation of information in heritage sites. The discussions on heritage interpretation began to encompass a series of related issues: the relationship between heritage interpretation and socio-cultural contexts, the democratizing evolvement of heritage interpretation, the critical discussions on the education-oriented interpretation, the power of multi-vocal narratives, local community's interpretation, the relationship between heritage interpretation and tourism experience and the problems associated with cross-cultural translation. The following parts of literature review will discuss into details these issues relevant to heritage interpretation.

The second part of literature review is to discuss the concepts and characteristics of narrative as a representational device widely applied in heritage interpretation at both the official and unofficial levels. It analyses how and why narrative has been employed to articulate and reflect multi-voices in heritage interpretation. The third part reviews some essential ideas in

critical discourse analysis of AHD which serve as the theoretical foundation of the reconfiguration of heritage interpretation. It aims to point out that based on the critical analysis of AHD, the present-centred and pluralizing understanding of heritage has imposed great impact on the development of multi-vocal heritage interpretation theories and practices. In the fourth part, I will show how pluralizing theories and practices of heritage interpretation have developed in response to these new shifts in heritage study at both official and non-official levels of heritage interpretation.

2.2 Concepts and characteristics of narrative

Narrative has been widely used in diverse time, space and culture. This part of reviews will draw a brief summary of the existing academic works on basic concepts of 'narrative' which can be applied in heritage studies, its main characteristics as an instrument of meaning-making and representation, and its functions in creating a rich texts of heritage interpretation.

In Western culture, the concept of narrative has been a subject under discussion ever since ancient Greece (Abbott 2002). Traditionally, narrative is understood as a genre of literature, being defined as a fiction-writing mode. Narrative can be perceived as storytelling, a way to record and share knowledge of histories, myths, and values, among communities of indigenous cultures. It is suggested that the narrative qualities can even be found in musical compositions. Owing to its universal existence in various fields, narratologists have no agreement on the definition of narrative and on how to recognize what makes it different from other genres (Rudrum 2005).

Abbott(2002), however, emphasizes that narrative should not just be viewed as an art of rhetoric used in only literature, film, and theater, but a basic device of understanding and meaning-making in the ordinary course of people's lives. It is something people engage in, either artists or non-artists. It is the basic structure in most of human discourse, which has

therefore even developed into a basic perspective for people to understand and interpret the world. In this thesis, the concept of narrative is used as defined by Abbott, the nature of narrative as a human phenomenon ‘in all activities that involve the representation of events in time’(2002:1). This definition of narrative suggests two important features of this language device: being universally applied (indicated by ‘in all activities’) and being interpretative (suggested by ‘the representation of events’). This definition is adopted in this research as a useful beginning and basis for further discussion.

2.2.1 Narrative: a tool of meaning-making

An inclusive description regarding the universality of narrative in human activities can be found at the opening of Barthes’s essay on narrative (1966). This part describes the far-ranging presence of narratives in ‘a prodigious variety of genres such as myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, painting, comics, news items, conversation’ (Barthes 1982: 251). In addition to the diversity of forms, universality of narrative can also be summarized owing to its presence in the wide range of age, place, and culture, used and shared by people of different classes and with totally opposite cultural backgrounds (Barthes 1982). Narrative is so widely used that it becomes ‘an international, transhistorical, transcultural instrument tool’ (Barthes 1982: 252). Barthes even regards it as ‘life itself’(Barthes 1982: 252).

Owing to its wide application as a device of representation, narrative has gradually developed into a basic perspective for people to understand and interpret the world. Lyotard (1990), for example, perceives narration as the whole traditional knowledge system in the form of narrative. Jameson also describes the ‘all-informing process of narrative’ as the ‘central function or instance of the human mind’(1981:13). According to Abbott’s etymological study

of the word, narrative derives from the Latin words *gnarus* (meaning *knowing*) and *narro* (meaning *telling*). Abbotts further explains that there is a strong sense that we do not understand unless we know the story. This view is also reiterated by the statement of the film director Brian De Palma, saying that '[p]eople don't see the world before their eyes until it is in a narrative mode'(Abbott 2002: 6). These statements corroborate that narrative, as a way of thinking, has a strong power in the process of meaning making in human society.

2.2.2 Types of narrative

Owing to its universality in the meaning-making activities in human society, narrative has been used as a useful instrument in heritage interpretation across different times, cultures and media. Abbott (2002) makes the point clear that narrative does not only refer to the story itself, but also the structure of the story, which coexist with each other. With the development of photographic, audio and digital technologies, heritage information can be interpreted through different media in diverse ways. However, narrative has been applied as the basic structure in most of these interpreting forms. The fundamental characteristics of narrative hold for all these types of written, spoken, visual and mixed forms of narrative.

It is used frequently and widely in a big range of forms, including academic writing in archeology and history, tourism marketing materials such as brochures, guidebooks, and travel-related television programmes. Scholars such as Dann(1995), Bhattacharyya (1997), Gibert (1999), Siegenthaler (2002) and Jaworski (2003), have respectively examined the functions of narratives in these different forms in shaping tourism experience and tourist identities.

Staiff (2014) argues that although heritage interpretation use various forms, narrative is an essential structure in most of them. He takes film, a visual storytelling that involves no spoken or written words but moving images accompanied by soundtracks, as an example. By

comparing this form of visual narrative with prose fiction, Staiff points out that although reading a narrative is different from watching a cinematic narrative, both forms of representation use structural elements of narrative including characters, action, time, place. The ‘inevitable linearity’ (Abbott’s term, Abbotts 2002:37) with cause and effect has also been adopted in both forms to drive a story from the beginning to end.

People also use narrative frequently in daily communication. For instance, when tourists recall their experience in heritage tourism, they tend to use narrative to construct their sense of identity by shaping and reshaping their memory of their experience at heritage sites, and to interpret their understanding of the values of heritage. Compared with systematic narratives created and spread by power groups, fragmental narratives of the public have not received enough attention, and thus will become the subject of examination in my research.

2.2.3 Sociocultural situatedness of narrative

Another characteristic of narrative is that it is a socio-culturally situated interpretative instrument rather a neutral reflection of events. According to Abbott’s study (2002), the relationship between narrative and events depicted is complicated. Narratives, on the one hand, are dependent on and constrained by events as past facts because of their nature as representations of events that precede them. But at the same time, narratives are also independent of the events depicted, gaining lives of their own when they are produced, read, viewed or listened in different times, spaces, cultures and through diverse media. This independence strengthens the relationship of narrative with its sociocultural contexts and its function as an interpretative instrument in meaning making.

The issue of sociocultural situatedness of narrative is addressed and explicitly examined in Cronon’s (1992) study on the power of narrative patterns in shaping the collective way of

talking, writing, and thinking about the past. Through his observation on two historians' narratives of the environmental problem called the Dust Bowl in 1930s in the U.S., he finds out that totally divergent accounts can be made about identical materials. One story is a progressive account of human victory over a natural disaster while the other is a tragic story about environmental problems.

According to Cronon's (1992) analysis, the contradictory accounts of the same event reflect the struggle between two narrative patterns deriving respectively from 'eighteenth-century Enlightenment notions of progress' and 'romantic and antimodernist reactions against progress' (Cronon 1992:1352). He therefore draws a conclusion that these two types of narratives are social-culturally situated and the narratives organised in these patterns will develop different types of plots and lead to diverse conclusions. His study suggests certain narrative patterns are shaped in relevant sociocultural contexts and the impact of such patterns will sustain and can be traced in specific narratives created later.

Wertsch (2000) also argues against the sense of viewing narratives as transparent windows of reality. He asserts that narrative is a cultural tool for social members to recount the past, and therefore has the power of shaping collective remembering. Wertsch illustrates this power of narrative in his examination on narratives of WWII in post-Soviet Russia (2008). For the convenience of discussion, Wertsch (2008: 122-123) uses the terms 'specific narrative' and 'schematic narrative template' to make a distinction between the narratives of specific events and the narrative concerned with general patterns. In his case study on narratives of WWII, Wertsch illustrates how individual narrative can be shaped by the collective memory under the state control and how this kind of control can be reflected in one's narrative not merely in specific details but more obviously in the patterns of narrative.

In his study on the process of creating new official historical narratives in Soviet and post-Soviet history textbooks, Wertsch (2000) identifies the nature of narrative as dialogical

responses. It suggests that relevant narratives influence, reflect, and reshape each other in a dialogic relationship which is referred to as the ‘textual signifying relationship’ by Wertsch. He observes that, in the production of narratives in post-Soviet history textbooks, ‘textual signifying relationships’ and the dialogic process associated with them play a central role and outweigh factors associated with the ‘object signifying relationships’ (2000:529). This finding echoes with Abbott’s idea about the independence of narratives from a different perspective, and further illuminates its role as a cultural tool to shape and reshape how people and social agents talk, write, and think about the past in changing social-culture contexts.

Studies on the socio-culturally situated characteristic of narrative exposes its power in the meaning-making process of the past and its competence as a useful instrument applied by different power groups and individuals to produce multi-vocal heritage interpretations in different cultures and through different media. Such characteristic also suggests the potential of narrative to promote interactive dialogue between heritage places and visitors through the production and consumption of multi-vocal heritage interpretations.

2.3 Critical heritage studies and AHD

In this part, I intend to elaborate into details about how the critical heritage discourse gives context to a collection of new concepts and practices which suggest a realignment of the very foundation of cultural heritage. The critical discourse analysis has challenged the traditional concepts of heritage, the evaluation system and the power relationship in heritage field. Under the impact of this critical discourse, a range of new views have developed, which give shape to a series of new approaches to heritage interpretation. The changes are mainly illustrated in the following three aspects:

- 1) The definitions of heritage have been reshaped and become pluralising;
- 2) The values of heritage are more present-connected and diverse;

- 3) The dissonance of heritage has been realized inevitable owing to its multiplying role as various resources.

2.3.1 Pluralising Concepts of heritage

The past 30 years has witnessed great changes in the understanding of the concept 'heritage', which has shifted its focus from the past to the present, from scholarly intrinsic values to multiple functions, from physical conservation to meaning interpretation (Smith 2006; Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge 2007; Waston and Waterton 2010).

In the traditional western heritage discourse, heritage places have been understood as physical things with intrinsic values 'to warrant inter-generational transfer' (Staiff 2014:165). Tangible objects, such as buildings, monuments and works of art, are the central focus in heritage practice. In favour of an assumed universal significance inherent in material culture, the object of heritage management is to protect the material objects from physical damage.

At the same time, authorised narratives generate cultural meaning of these objects and places as a national past and national identity. This discourse also hinder any deeper or alternative understanding of heritage and is prone to marginalize and even suppress the performance of personal identity or collective one at local or regional level.

The limitation of the materiality-based heritage discourse has been criticized by a number of researchers (Smith 2006; Waston and Waterton 2010; Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge 2007). For example, Smith's study focuses on the actual processes how contemporary notions of heritage have been constituted and thus deconstructs the authorized status of Eurocentred heritage discourse with its focuses on materiality. She claims at the very beginning of *Uses of Heritage* that 'there is ... no such thing as heritage'(2006:11). To support this statement,

she explores the process how the concept of heritage has developed. Drawing on ethnographic approaches, Smith finds out that the traditional and widely-accepted concept of heritage as monumental and aesthetically pleasing sites and buildings has been constructed by a hegemonic discourse, deriving from 19th-century elite western culture. This heritage discourse, which is referred to as 'authorized heritage discourse'(AHD) by Smith, 'is reliant on the power/knowledge claims of technical and aesthetic experts, and institutionalized in the state cultural agencies and amenity societies' (2006:11). The dominance of AHD in heritage management discourages active public negotiation and participation and limits the social and cultural roles to a small scale.

Smith criticises the AHD and points out that the nature of heritage is more than material fabric and the meaning of heritage is not determined only by the authenticity of objects. She suggests the alternative perception of understanding heritage as 'a multilayered performance ... that embodies acts of remembrance and commemoration while constructing a sense of place, belonging and understanding in the present' (2006:3). Finally, she concludes with a new perception of heritage as a cultural practice for people to construct their values for the present society through their understanding and shaping of the meanings of the past. Waston and Waterton (2010) also question the so-called inherent and aesthetic values. Through their analysis on the cultural and social meanings about heritage objects places and buildings, they deconstruct material obsession in heritage discourse and reveal the 'secret life' of heritage (Waston and Waterton 2010:84). As McCrone et al (1995:1) has put it, heritage is a 'thoroughly modern concept' which can fulfill the need for a wide range of social, cultural and political purposes in the modern age. Dicks (2000) has also argued that past materials have been packaged into economic resources through the process of selection and display. As she contends (2000: 33), heritage is a product of the culture of display, which transforms the raw materials heritage 'sites' into cultural products 'sights' which can be consumed by visitors.

In sum, criticism on the traditional western heritage discourse has questioned and deconstructed the dominant understanding of cultural heritage as a fixed authentic endowment with intrinsic value which originates from the western tastes and values of a nineteenth-century educated elite. Based on the criticism of traditional heritage discourse, the present-centred perspective of heritage has diverted attention away from the materiality of cultural heritage to the selective process in which past materials, either tangible or intangible, become resources for the present use.

It suggests that the significance of a heritage site rests less in tangible material qualities or intangible forms of traditions than in their meanings constructed for the present through a variety of interpretations created from them to diverse purposes. As Hall argues, it is people in different cultures and historical periods who define and interpret the meanings and the significance of cultural heritage, and therefore such meanings will also be shaped and reshaped in accordance with the change of time and the variation of culture(1997). As a result, heritage interpretation is no longer regarded as a marginal attachment to heritage management, but instead as an essential part in the process of shaping heritage by converting selected raw materials into cultural and/or economic resources which can meet contemporary social needs (Ashworth et al. 2007).

2.3.2 Multi-layered functions of heritage

Adopting the present-centred perspective of heritage, a number of heritage studies examine how different agencies and groups have developed various functions of heritage, in the forms as political, cultural, and/or economic resources, for contemporary purposes.

As Littler (2005) states, multi-layered heritage, as a cultural resource and a political product, has an essential socio-political function. Memory and identity are essential concepts in understanding the sociocultural role of heritage in maintaining communal interactions and

traditions, which give this heritage special meanings.

In reference to Smith's study, heritage is used to 'construct, reconstruct and negotiate a range of identities and social and cultural values and meanings in the present' (2006:3). Heritage plays a quite active role in the relationship with memory —not just as physical aid to arouse memory, but also as resources to create new memories shared among family and community members. In this process of remembering, people involved are constructing and reconstructing the identity and feeling of belonging (Hall 2001; Shackel 2001).

Lowenthal's study is also helpful in identifying the cultural functions of heritage (1985, 1998). As Lowenthal argues, the perspective of heritage as an interpretation of the past by the present supports the idea of the continuity of social development. Such ideas allow us to connect the present to the past, and to find our location in the sequence of events. In such way, people in present society can link personal understanding to collective memory and thus build a sense of belonging to the society.

Apart from its socio-cultural roles, heritage has also been exploited as an economic resource to promote tourism, and economic regeneration in rural and urban areas (Graham et al. 2000, 2005). For Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, in heritage industry, 'locations have been converted into "destinations"' and heritage has been turned into some new cultural products with values of "pastness" (1998:151). According to Sack (1992), in the process of commodification, heritage places have been transformed into places of consumption and are arranged to encourage consumption of cultural products in both domestic and international tourism.

The multiple roles of heritage in contemporary societies are created by multiple producers with varied objectives in the management of heritage (Ashworth and Graham 2005). Various groups and individuals of diverse interests have been involved in the process of transforming selective past into products intended for the satisfaction of their own demands. As Littler

(2005) remarks, heritage is not an immutable entity, but a diverse practice shaped by specific circumstances and power groups. While powerful groups often promote 'sectarian claims upon the past' for their own ends (Landzeliu 2003:208), local communities and non-professional individuals also seek opportunities to articulate their understanding of heritage values.

In sum, the present-centred perspective of heritage has encouraged and promotes the development of multiple functions of heritage exploited by different agencies with various assumptions and goals. In the process of shaping heritage into cultural and/or economic products, heritage interpretation has been employed as a useful tool to realize different purposes of different political, social, religious or ethnic groups. As a result, the present demand for diverse functions of heritage has led to more democratic and far ranging treatments of cultural heritage involving multi-vocal interpretations.

2.3.3 The contestation and dissonance of heritage

Ashworth and Tunbridge have made an important contribution to heritage studies with their research on the concept of 'dissonant heritage' (2007:37). They state that 'heritage is characterized inherently by a dissonance created through its simultaneous multiple commodification as cultural and an economical capital' (2007:37). According to their observation, the dissonance of heritage is inevitable when it is interpreted in various ways by people with different interests, purposes, social backgrounds and cultural experience (1996). They explain it as an emotive, cultural and political consequence.

Locating their study within a political context, Ashworth and Tunbridge point out that heritage has a particular power to 'legitimize' certain social group's understanding and interpretation of a place. In the process of legitimization, different values will be challenged

and contested. Some groups, or communities will have stronger powers to mold this process and have their values legitimized. They stress that the sense of politics is inherent in the construction of heritage at any level, not only in terms of national ones, but also include sub-national, local or communal heritage, because in any society 'the view of heritage reflect that of the dominant social, religious or ethnic groups' (Graham et al. 2000:25).

With their study on the economic uses of heritage, Ashworth and Tunbridge argue that tensions of dissonant interest among different groups and communities is evident when heritage resources are appropriated and packaged into in tourism products , because of 'tensions and dilemmas inherent in all commodification for contemporary markets' (1996: 21).

Ashworth and Tunbridge emphasise the essential role of interpretation in the legitimizing power of heritage, saying that 'the root cause of the dissonant nature of heritage lies in that heritage is created by interpretation' (1996: 80). This statement suggests that heritage is not only a passive reflection of dominant values and memories, but also a constructive tool to both challenge and strengthen certain values and experiences. Their study also draws our attention to the multi-vocality of interpretation which has been echoed by some other researchers and will be further discussed in the following part.

Although Ashworth and Tunbridge acknowledge dissonance as an intrinsic nature of heritage, they regard it as a negative quality which should be managed and coped with. However, in my view, the dissonant nature of heritage cannot be reduced to problems and conflicts in heritage management. Rather, it can be redefined as a constructive quality which will turn heritage interpretation into a mediating tool, which normalises some social values, but meanwhile challenge or exclude some other social values and cultural identities. Peckham even suggests that, owing to its dissonance nature, heritage has the potential to function as 'a contact zone', 'a place where different pasts and experiences are negotiated, a site of mutual

translation' (2003:57).

To draw a summary of this part of literature review, I summarize that the changes in theoretical perceptions of heritage has been promoted by the critical discourse analysis of AHD. These changes, involving the conceptualization of heritage, evaluation of heritage and the realization of dissonance as intrinsic nature of heritage, contribute to new thinking of heritage interpretation. I will employ these new perspectives as theoretical basis to facilitate my further discussion of heritage narratives in the next part.

2.4 Official heritage narratives

Advances in thinking about heritage broaden the concepts of heritage interpretation. It is not only restricted in the professional zoom and has been expanded to a process of meaning-making involving both experts and common public. This new view of heritage interpretation makes it possible to understand heritage interpretation as narratives which could be classified into official narratives and unofficial ones. The former type of narratives is constructed by institutes and organizations with authorized power embodied, in the form of UNESCO, national governments and local tourism bureaus. The latter type refers to narratives made by local communities and tourists. In this part, I aim to review, from the critical perspective of AHD, the existing studies on the nature of official narratives as a product of dominant ideology, which have been produced to establish a stable and authorized system of value in order to influence, shape and control the public's understanding of heritage. I will also discuss the limitations of official narratives and the change of these narratives in response to new social, economic and cultural challenges.

Scholars, including Wright (1985), Hewison (1987) Hollinshead (1992), agree that officially sanctioned heritage narrative has been used as a device of and social control, with the power to legitimize or delegitimize certain ways of understanding and presenting values in a society.

In different times, official heritage narrative is employed to meet the requirements of different social demands by the dominant power groups. Heritage, since the early stage of its development, has been applied as a tool to construct unified national identity for the founding of modern nations in 19th century (Anderson 1991; Jokilehto 1999). This national narrative of heritage has also been used as a device to legitimize the building of a nation by creating and communicating a sense of belonging and unitedness among the population within a territory (Graham et al. 2000; Murzyn 2008;)

In the post WWII era, with the desire to protect and renovate the monuments, sculptures and historical building destroyed in the war, an array of projects have been carried out in Europe, which required joint efforts of governments, institutions and experts between different countries. It was in that social background that UNESCO's first International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice Charter) was drawn up in 1964 to establish a trans-national system of heritage conservation principles. With the development of the heritage discourse of UNESCO, its conservation principles spread to other parts of the world and become internationally naturalized. Today, this discourse has been regarded as an authorized voice, which continue to frame and define heritage management practices. The originally European-rooted principles become global common standards.

The uses of heritage narrative were greatly changed in 1980s, when mass tourism became popular and heritage sites were developed into tourism destinations. Heritage policy in this period treated heritage as economic resources and became more market-oriented. Consequently, the official narratives of heritage turned to oriented at marketing and promotion of heritage sites as products. This type of narrative is still used by both national and regional governments, especially by local tourism bureaus. In the following parts, drawing on the existing literature, I will explore how these different levels of official narratives have been constructed by different power groups into authorized discourses in

order to control heritage interpretation and evaluation. I will also discuss the problems and limitations of these narratives.

2.4.1 UNESCO's trans-national narrative

My discussion on UNESCO's heritage discourse will consist of three parts, starting with a brief overview of the development of the idea of universalism as the essence of world heritage discourse, followed by critiques of the limits of universalism and ending with debates on its impact on the practices of heritage interpretation.

It was between the two world wars that the idea of a common heritage shared by all human beings was first proposed (Musitelli 2002). As a response to this call for the establishment of a legal foundation to protect heritage of great significance for everyone, the Convention Concerning the Protection of Cultural and Natural World Heritage was signed in 1972 (UNESCO 1972)

This convention makes the statement that some cultural and natural heritage have 'outstanding universal value' should be regarded not only as treasure property to the people in the territory where these properties are located, but also taken as 'part of the world heritage of mankind' (Introduction and Article 6.1) It also states that the 'the international community as a whole' should take up the responsibility of protecting these property through international co-operation. With its function as a legal instrument for the protection of world heritage, the convention defines the key principles of OUV, according to which properties can be conserved and also the key stakeholders who are responsible for the conservation and management of these properties.

In brief, the Convention of 1972 affirms the universal essence of world heritage, by

proclaiming its OUV, placing it under the protection of ‘the international community as a whole,’ and stating that it is a good of ‘all humanity’ (Musitelli 2002). The idea of universalism is pervasive in represented in the statements of 1972 convention, the *Operational Guidelines* as the bylaw of the convention, and the intergovernmental constitution of World Heritage Committee. Since then, the convention together with the World Heritage List, has been used as an authorized international tool by UNESCO in world heritage management.

Despite the ideal intention to establish an internationally shared system to protect all human treasure, the implementation of the convention, however, turns out to impose a dominant and European-centered impact on the selection, evaluation, interpretation and management of heritage resources. Its self-contradictory statements about the universal ambition on the one hand and cultural diversity and state sovereignty on the other hand has caused ambiguities and conflicts in practice.

One of problems rests with the contradictions between its stress on universal values and the designation of properties of outstanding national significance. Several scholars have questioned the universal value it defines because the World Heritage List which is supposed as a representation heritage for all human beings is, in fact, occupied by European monumental properties (Byrne 1991; Cleere 2001; Meskell 2002). The designation of World Heritage properties means to communicate something of outstanding universal significance at a global level. Byrne challenges its statement of universal values and compares it as a ‘case of Western imperialism’ (1991: 272), because values of many designated properties are related to Western and Capitalist values which convey the idea of nationalism rather than universalism (Gamboni 2001).

Convention’s obsession with the concept of ‘authenticity’ is another problematic issue. The concept of authenticity, rooted in the 19th century European heritage discourse and

conservation practice, attaches great importance to the originality of material fabric which 'endowed with historic, artistic as well as economic values at the expense of others' (Choay, 2001: 82). When it became inherited and authorized as the key standard to judge the outstanding universal value of a property, it frames heritage values and produce the selection criteria in favor of certain kinds of heritage in specific areas of world.

As response to these critiques and changing socio-cultural demands, the World Heritage approach started to make adjustment in 1990s and 2000s. The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003) and the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (2005) indicate the significance of intangible heritage and cultural diversity represented got UNESCO's recognition. The *ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites* (2008) shows ICOMOS and UNESCO's emphasis on the principles of inclusiveness and multi-vocality in heritage interpretation.

Yet, despite these reforms, there still remain a number of structural features in its operation, which value the authenticity of material forms, material priority in conservation and dominant role of state government and experts in heritage conservation and management. Smith (2006) and Byrne (2009) have produced critical account of its principles and concepts as a hegemonic Western discourse which separates the material remains from its intangible dimensions and lays emphasis on the 'thingification' of heritage (Byrne 2009: 229). Conservation principles still privileges physical authenticity, while use and preservation of heritage sites for the living significance of a place (Byrne 1995) are still not at the core of its principles. This discourse of heritagizing sites separates heritage sites from the everyday life of the local people and prefers tourist display as the function of these sites, which therefore restrict community participation and hinders the construction of new meanings and values in the present sociocultural contexts (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, 2006).

According to Smith's (2006) critiques, AHD embodied by World Heritage also legitimizes the status of experts in heritage conversation and interpretation. This narrative, with its emphasis on 'effective system of collective protection . . . organized on a permanent basis and in accordance with modern scientific methods' (UNESCO 1972: Introduction), aims to implement universal mode of protection through the development of best standard practices to be applied globally.. Through international meetings and workshops, experts network and exchange ideas, methods and techniques around the world. The dominant role of experts can also be identified in the creation of local institutions and the development of local policies of heritage conservation and heritage management.

Despite its efforts to be more multi-cultural, the universalism is still the central value of World Heritage discourse. It has been illustrated at three different levels: World Heritage is important for all human beings; because it is the testimony of a universal value; and thus it should be protected by all human beings. The narrative of UNESCO, as a transnational discourse of heritage, set up a standardized system of heritage practices. It tends to bring about cultural assimilation rather than diversity around the world through its conservation and management principles of a specific mode. It reinforces the impact of European conservation principles, state-government's ownership of heritage resources and the authorized voice of experts. It, in turn, also restricts the alternative interpretation of heritage values and functions by marginalizing the role of local community and disconnecting tourists from heritage sites.

2.4.2 The national narrative

Drawing on the studies of Anderson (1991) and Smith (2006), the critical heritage studies focus on the relationship between heritage and nationalism. Several scholars have examined how heritage has been used as an instrument to materialise the nation's identity (Anderson

1991; Meskell 1998; Wright 1985). A number of anthropologists have made ethnographic explorations of the essential role of heritage in the nation-building process. Handler states that nationalists appropriated culture as national icon in the process of nation building, by stating that ‘we are a nation because we have a culture’ suggests that (1985: 210). Some stressed that heritage has been transformed into a material icon and its material existence justifies the legitimacy of the nation (Handler 1985). Others pointed out that it was the cultural elite that used heritage to legitimize national ideology and consolidated elites hegemony (Herzfeld 1991: 106; Maffi 2009). These studies help to answer two important questions: who create the imagined sentiment of nationalism by appropriating heritage and how are messages of this sentiment spread widely and effectively?

1) Modern nation: an imagined community

Anderson’s (1991) book, *Imagined Communities*, has been the touchstone and theoretical foundation of most studies on the relationship between nationalism and heritage. Anderson’s study develops the concept of nation as an ‘imagined’ unity which becomes probably the most quoted term in studies on the construction of nationalism. It is helpful to take a brief look at Anderson’s theory before moving on to the discussion of the intersection of heritage and nationalism.

Anderson (1991), holding an anthropological view, interprets essence of nationalism as ‘cultural artefacts’ (Anderson 1991: 5). According to Anderson’s definition, the nation is ‘an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign’ (Anderson 1991: 6). He argues that a nation is ‘imagined’ because ‘the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion’ (Anderson 1991: 6). Therefore, he asserts that a certain group of community can be identified by the way they are imagined. Apart from ‘imagined community’, ‘limitedness is also essential concept in

Anderson's theory (1991:8), because the boundary of nations is set by including people who are regarded as belonging and excluding others as outsiders. Anderson's theories, with its original attempt to understanding the nature of national identity as a product of imaginative construction, have inspired a number of researchers further exploration into how national identity and national consciousness have been formed through the communication of certain narratives to its citizens. .

In the field of nationalism studies, Smith is another influential theoretician. For Smith, nationalism is neither a modern 'invention' of the past (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Anderson 1991), or a natural occurrence according to the primordialist theory (Cole and Kandiyoti 2002). Smith (1991) approaches nationalism from an ethnic-symbolic view. Smith defines nationalism as 'an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential 'nation' (1991: 73). Smith rejects to view nationalism as a mere ideology of modern politics, because it denies the significance influence of cultural norms and values already formed in the pre-modern period (Smith 1991). Smith, instead, highlights the significance of pre-existing ethnic ties and sentiments—the *ethnie*—as the foundation for the modern nation building, because 'these dim memories and elements of culture and alleged ancestry' once revived will pave the way for future political transformations of national state (Smith 1986: 17).

The theories of Smith and Anderson are complementary to each other. Anderson's theory offers an innovative perspective of understanding of the 'imagined' nature of nationalism. Smith's theory, however, helps to explain the existence of a certain collective memory—the *ethnie*—before of the process of modernism in some national movements. This collective identity plays the role as foundations of these modern countries. Therefore nationalism is not completely a product of modernity. Smith's theory offers an alternative way to understand the construction of nationalism in some countries with different tradition and culture from

the European nations. Both theories will be discussed and applied in my study of national narrative of heritage in China, a modern nation with pre-modern cultural background.

2) Nationalism: an elite discourse via cultural, historical and heritage narratives.

Quite a number of studies show that the intelligentsia usually plays dominant roles in constructing representations of national identity through heritage discourse (Adamson 1999; Woolf 1996). Adamson (1999) and Woolf (1996) argues that intellectuals, cultural elites and influential political figures played a critical role in the process of creating national identity, because they provided ‘much of the raw material of the national imagination as well as the leadership of national movements’ (1999: 49). As Nairn (1988) identifies, in the late 19th and the early 20th century, elite discourses legitimates the power of Britain’s nationalism by creating accounts of nostalgia through heritage narratives. It is read as a response to the first sign of the decline of Britain’s global domination, in the form of a new ‘wilful’ nostalgia, in which national identities and traditions were appropriated and ‘invented’ by the British state in order to prove its cultural superiority over ‘backward’ colonized societies (Roberson 1990; Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983). Wright (1985) also observes how ‘national identity’ expands to include coal mines and tenements as populist heritage as the response to appeals to nationhood under Thatcherism in the 1980s (Billig 1995).

The arch-modernist theoretician Gellner points out the importance of media for message spreading. He suggests that it is through modern means of communication, such as radio, museums and newspapers that the imagined sentiment of allegiance can be spread widely and effectively. Anderson (1999) also emphasizes that a national consciousness is created by ‘official’ institutions, especially schools and museums. Popular culture also plays an important role in representing and communicating messages related to national identity (Edensor 2002). Macdonald (1996) makes a detailed analysis of the role of museum as an effective media to connect national identity with heritage as its materialized embodiment. s

a social-cultural institution, museums serve as an important space to cultivate people's sense of national cultural in objectifying culture, creating a sense of 'order' and presenting the 'boundaries' (Macdonald 1996: 7). As Macdonald (1996) remarks, museums is a place to materialize culture by turning it into an object. He argues that interpretation of material collections within museums, should be understood as narratives embedded within the nationalist discourse which construct and represent history and culture.

3) The impact of UNESCO on national narrative

As Smith (2006) contends, the working system of UNESCO, despite its claim for a universal ambition, has actually strengthened national identities and support national narratives. I find it an important view to understand the relationship between UNESCO and national narrative of heritage. Smith argues UNESCO authorized nation-state as the main heritage stakeholder for a number of reasons. First of all, the 1972 Convention states that nation-state is a key stakeholder, together with experts, responsible for the conservation and management of World Heritage Site. Second, UNESCO as an intergovernmental agency, has practical need to cooperate with governmental bodies in carrying out projects of heritage conservation and management in many countries. This structure of UNESCO has further marginalised role of local civil societies and discourages their participation. While local committees and NGOs play an increasingly important role in heritage conservation in many places in the world, they are still left out of the meetings of UNESCO.

4) The positive role of national narrative of heritage

In some cases, national narrative of heritage also plays a positive role. It can empower individuals or social groups finding themselves marginalized or even threaten in social, political or cultural sphere. It can help build a sense pride for people in those countries which are suppressed by more powerful nations. It is also a useful tool by people that long for national unity or to tackle the serious problem of divisions between classes (Triggers 1995). Through the development of heritage sites and museums, the national narrative can

strengthen national unity by glorifying the political and cultural achievements of the ancient civilization. There is also, as Wilson (1876, I:247, cited in Trigger 1995) notes, ‘a tendency to glorify the primitive vigor and creativeness of people assumed to be national ancestors.’

Some of such heritage narratives are created and communicated to bolster patriotic sentiments in the pre-oppressed and non-Western countries such China, Korea and South-eastern countries. The national narratives of heritage in these countries are related to both unity in domestic territories and resistance to the western dominance (Trigger 1995). Kim’s (2005) study on Korea shows, national narratives of heritage has been used as an important tool in many non-Western countries to resist the influence of globalization. Naturally, national narratives of heritage in these countries also tend to emphasize the outstanding values of their culture to the rest of the world. This is also the usual practice in countries in eastern Europe, where heritage is used as a means of glorifying their past and bring people as sense of belonging and pride (Kohl and Fawcett 1995).

5) The negative role of national narrative of heritage

As Smith (2006) points out, one of the negative impacts of the national narrative of heritage is that it encourages the values of elite social classes. Meanwhile, it tends to marginalize a range of other cultural values and social experience.

Despite the positive role of intellectuals in the early stages of construction of national identity, their narratives of elite culture and heritage have caused negative impacts on the further development of cultural heritage. Such inclination of high culture celebration has been criticized by researchers with different academic backgrounds. Some scholars are unsatisfied with the absence of the representation of women’s role in the national narrative (Johnston 1993; Smith 1993; Dubrow 2003); some criticizes its neglect of working class and labor history (Johnston 1993; Dicks 1997 2000). There also occur critiques on its limit on the

representation of the history and culture of minority ethnic groups and indigenous communities (Leone et al. 1995; Shackel 2001). However, in the national narrative system, these critiques have been constrained and limited.

In order to constrain and limit these critiques, the national narrative system implements the policy of privileging the dominant role of experts over those of non-experts. In this system, experts have been playing a dominant role as spokespersons for heritage values who translate the meanings of sites to visitors, while visitors are perceived as passive listeners of the heritage message. This strategy strengthens the discourse of unity and suppresses the heritage's potential in constructing different versions of collectivities.

In UK, there has been a major concern of left historians who express their fear that heritage has been used as an instrument for hiding the conflicts and dissonance and present a sense of harmony through its nostalgia interpretation (Dicks 2000:61). Wrights argues that heritage has been used as a political tool to form an imagined sense of belonging and security for people experiencing the deindustrialisation. For Wright (1985), people should be alert to the phenomenon 'Heritagiaztion', which is another form of hegemony to strengthen individual's connection with an imagined national community. In this new hegemonic discourse, the ideology of nation is performed in the form family values, traditional values, conservatism. Wright emphasises, however, such representation of the past is in fact a political practice, which deeply embroils heritage in cultivating ordinary people's political consciousness.

The studies in this part indicates that heritage narrative has been continually applied by elite and political power to construct a unified identity of the nation. Owing to its instrumental role, the emphasis of the national narrative of heritage changes according to the political and social need in different times and areas. Although the value emphasized by this system of official narrative varies to meet different political purposes, it shares similarity with the AHD

of UNESCO in the aspect that it always aims to control the interpretation of heritage values via the construction of a set of stable and standardized principles. Despite the obsessive preoccupation in academia with the attempt to theorize the construction of nationalism, few academic studies have focused on the change of heritage narrative with the shift of ideology of nationalism. And thus this study will move on to discuss this issue in the following chapters.

2.4.3 Heritage narrative in tourism industry

As it has been argued in the last part, official narratives are purpose-designed. In this sense, the heritage interpretation for tourism marketing is also a product of official narrative at both national and regional levels. With the advent of mass tourism in 1970s and 1980s, heritage sites were developed into tourism destinations. In order to attract more visitors, new approaches were applied to heritage interpretation in the forms such as costumed narratives, films and pictures as illustrations in guidebooks and on information panels. Meanwhile, a strand of discussion came to focus on this variant of official narrative. The attitudes of scholars towards this trend can be divided into democratic and conservative ones. Scholars taking an optimistic view towards heritage tourism believed that it promoted the democratization of heritage interpretation aiming at public outreach. Other scholars, however, took a more conservative or even negative attitude towards the commercialized heritage industry.

1) Heritage narratives for tourism

Wright and Hewison are the representative critics holding a conservative view towards this trend. They both perceived the rise of heritage industry as a nostalgic yearning for good old days, which reflected a loss of confidence to the British culture in decline (Wright 1985, 1991; Hewison 1981, 1987). Wright (1985) identified the increasing public interest in the past as a

phenomenon which reflected certain elite values have been reinforced and propagated. In this process, heritage plays the role as a ‘conservative backlash’ against social and economic changes (Hewison 1987:53; Lowenthal 1985; Walsh 1992).

With the rapid development of mass tourism in 1980s, there occurred heated criticism on the negative impact of commercialization on heritage sites. Malcom-Davies, criticised the practice of transforming historical resources into tourism products for consumption and in the ‘heritage phase’ (2004:279). Wright (1985) also expressed his concern that the heritage landscape in Britain was appropriated as a vast heritage theme park. Greenspan reported the concerns of heritage professions about the ‘low brow’ advertising (Greenspan 2002:175), which highlighted ‘fun side of the site ... over its educational role’ (Greenspan 2002:175). Smith argued that commercialization of heritage resources, when they are closed joint with tourism consumptions, reinforced the idea of understanding heritage as a material object which can be consumed.

Worries about the cultural standardization represent another powerful strand of critiques in the debate. In order to be competitive in the tourism market, each site has to take the strategy of creating a ‘unique sense of place’ and offering a ‘particular appeal—yet one that is not difficult to decode by visitors’ (Urry 1995:147-50). The requirement is for attractions and sites that will both offer something different from the norm, yet appeal to as wide a number of visitors as possible. It will depend on carefully translating the specifics of the history into the familiar tropes of a community which will be recognized by outside tourists. The result is that heritage interpretation has become a professionalized industry, which packages heritage attractions into standardized commodities which deliver a familiar and predictable kind of visitor experience (Macdonald 1997).

There is thereby a tension between the generalized demands of the tourist gaze and the parallel need for authenticity, a unique sense of place and the credibility of the spectacle as

vernacular history (Dicks 2000). This has induced the fear that heritage sites are reduced to industrial products rather than sites with distinctive cultural appeals. It has also fueled argument and critiques on the interpretation of the authenticity of heritage sites.

Among the debate of this market-oriented development of heritage industry, authenticity of heritage interpretation has become a central issue. Scholars are concerned that the on-site reconstruction of historical texts will produce bogus historical stories to attract gullible visitors. Hewison (1987) accuses heritage industry of commodifying and creating a false past, which consequently stifles cultural development. He also argues what heritage industry offers to tourists is nothing but false and inauthentic history. This critique has been echoed by other scholars who believe that heritage tourism removed unacceptable and controversial message of the past and presented palatable aspect of heritage (McCrone et al. 1995; Brett 1996; Choay 2001:4-5; Burton 2003). Lowenthal (1994, 43), stresses that heritage narratives are selective and partial because in the process of message transmission, the complex historical processes and relationships are removed and only the most pleasing facet of the past is presented to the audience.

2) Democratizing heritage interpretation promoted by mass tourism

Some other researchers, however, take a more positive view on this trend of heritage interpretation (McCarthy's article 2003; Jameson 2004; West and McKellar 2010). They point out that as a response to the increasing public interest in the past and the burgeoning tourist visit to museums and heritage sites, professional heritage interpreters have devoted great effort in promoting public education and outreach activities. Effective approaches and practices have been worked out and encouraged to reconnect the visitors to heritage sites and to engage the audience's participation in heritage interpretation (Jameson 2004).

This visitor-oriented approach was further developed in 1990s and 2000s, when global travel

became more frequent. More professionals in the field came to realize the importance of inclusiveness and heritage values of multi-dimensional constituents. A series of programmes at national or local levels were promoted to encourage public interest and to convey professional knowledge in the field to lay public. Exemplary programmes in the U.S. have been led by government agencies, archaeology departments and academic institutions such as the National Park Service, Sonoma State University's Anthropological Studies Center, the Chicago Field Museum (Field Museum 2006), and the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM 2006).

West and McKellar (2010) quote the example of the costumed interpretation project designed and promoted by the management team Blenheim Palace. This popular programme of telling stories about the family and servants in Blenheim Palace by professional actors reflects professional heritage interpreter's great effort to remove the disconnection between visitors and the heritage site. West and McKellar argue that this way of interpretation suggests a shift of focus from elite culture to common people's life. However, they also admit that the sustainability and universality of such expert-led and high-investment projects are still under question.

In order to explore new roles of narrative in professional heritage interpretation, archeologists McCarthy (2003) and Gibb (2003) experiment with the application of the interpretive narrative approach in the writings of stories and plays relevant to objects/places to be represented to the public. They describe it as a new trend to presenting and interpreting archaeological data in the form of meaningful stories and interesting plays to attract broader audiences. They argue that instead of just presenting archeological data, experts should actively participate in creating meaningful narrative stories via story-telling. Their exploration of the narrative approach indicates the trend that as a response to changing social demand, experts are also actively adjusting their role and looking for better approach to connecting visitors to heritage.

The above case studies on the professional heritage narrative indicated that narrative is frequently utilized by professionals as an effective instrument to reach out to the public, to convey information to the audience and to get visitors connected to museum exhibitions and heritage places. However, these studies also expose the limitations of professional heritage narratives which are still closed narratives dominated by professional, without offering any media for visitors to participate in the interpretation process and thus still positioning visitors as passive readers, listeners and consumers.

Although the heritage critique of market-oriented interpretation appears to stand in opposition to the AHD, it in fact reproduces some of the work the AHD in constructing heritage visitors or users as passive consumers. The concern with authenticity, and commodification, and the identification of 'heritage' with social and political reaction, share all too much conceptual ground with the AHD. Within this critique visitors are redefined as tourists, which further distances heritage visitors from an active sense of engagement with heritage sites. As tourist, they are by definition culturally foreign to the heritage site in question and may be conceived as simply passers-by. In sum, the critiques on heritage industry, which identify heritage either elitist or commercially inspired pastiche, are not productive enough to explore any intellectual room for alternative uses and interpretations of heritage.

2.5 Heritage narrative as a social practice

As it has been argued in the critical discourse analysis of AHD, heritage is a dynamic cultural process which involves continuous interpretation and reinterpretation situated in the present socio-cultural contexts. Therefore, heritage interpretation is much more than a closed, standardized and stable system controlled by official narratives of governments, scholars and

custodians of heritage places. Advances in heritage thinking give shape to a new approach to heritage interpretation, which is inclusive, dynamic and interactive. This new approach is grounded on the assertion that heritage is something everyone can engage with and the non-professional public can are also experts in heritage interpretation.

In this part, I intend to make a discussion about the existing research on the participation of local communities and tourists in unofficial interpretation (Newman and McLean 1998; Hodges and Watson 2000; Dicks 2000; Byrne 2004; Staiff 2014). These works present an alternative way to understand the relationship between heritage and non-professional public and explore new functions of heritage interpretation in the present society.

2.5.1 Narratives, memory and identity

Extensive debates about community participation in heritage interpretation has been carried out in heritage studies in late 20th and early 21st century (Hayden 1997; Newman and McLean 1998; Hodges and Waston 2000; Gard'ner 2004). The academic criticism of community involvement can be classified in to three stages. The issue of community participation is originally promoted by indigenous people in post-colonial countries such as Australia, USA and Canada. These indigenous communities not only claim for the 'ownership' of particular relics and artefacts, but also ask for more power of discourse in the cultural politics to define their identities and to further establish a sense of community belongings. In response to this indigenous agitation about identity, academic research are carried out to criticize the traditional dominance of intellectual author in relevant field represented by archaeologists, museum curators and historians (Cleere 2001).

It is not long before such criticisms on indigenous issues extend to discussions in other fields and other countries around the world. Ethnic communities, together with various local

community groups in UK, start to seek for greater involvement in government heritage policies (Hall 1999; Littler and Naidoo 2004). Traditional heritage practices and interpretation are challenged by communities with different interest. They assert that traditional heritage, while telling grand stories of a nation, has failed to reflect the collective memory and personal experience of these subaltern groups. The criticism concerning this issue points out that the authorized heritage narration has ignored or trivialized the social role of these groups, and therefore is another form of social inequities and political marginalization (Watkins 2001; Littler and Naidoo 2004)

The third stage of academic studies on community participation has been facilitated by the post-modern concern of multivocality (Hodder 1999). In response to this trend of acknowledging divergent and multiple interpreting the past in academic and public policy context, many government heritage agencies conduct outreach programmes and international heritage organizations set inclusive policies to encourage greater community participation in heritage conservation and interpretation (Newman 2005). With the development of community participation in practice, research works shift from theoretical discussions to pragmatic studies on conflicts and problems observed in case studies of community involvement.

With the increasing academic interests in community involvement, various definitions of 'community' have been created for different research purposes. However, it is redundant to take an overview of all the definitions of community. Instead I introduce Shield's concept of community called 'social spatialization' which will be applied in my research. Shield's concept of 'social spatialization' is a term developed from Anderson's theory of 'imagined communities'(1991:62). It refers to 'the processes through which space is socially produced through discourse which ascribe particular associations to particular place's. This definition indicates that particular places come to be related to specific experience and connotations. Therefore, the local community member's interpretation of heritage sites is closely related

with their memories of the place.

The issues of local memory and place identity are central to the discussion on community's heritage interpretation. It has been argued that compared with the discourse of history usually perceived as an objective narrative, memory is something more subjective and specific (Halbwachs 1992). For Halbwachs, collective memories are socially constructed and shared by the groups with common interests and perceptions of collective identity. With the broadening definitions of heritage, the local landscape can be identified by people with interest in their surroundings and stories connected to these surroundings, which are kept as memories by local inhabitants. It is these memories that create local people's conceptual connection with the landscape as a heritage. They attach value to the places through forming their identity by keeping, shaping and passing on these memories. In this sense, local heritage is not a material construct, but something they create and keep in terms of the memories, stories and values they attach to particular places or things. Different from the official narrative about iconic places, distinctive buildings, narratives of local communities concern familiar surroundings, daily life experience and neighborhood memories.

However, in the present system of heritage management, an official sanction of place as a heritage site means that the place is separate from the land in which it is located and from the actual users of the land. It is transformed into a special space, artefact or practice outside the mundane of everyday life. The traditional principle of conservation 'conserve as found' has hindered community group's active interaction and engagement with heritage (Hewison 1987; Bender 1998; Skeates 2000). The connection between local communities and the places are broken and communities participation and involvement in heritage conservation and interpretation become hindered. The role of local communities has thus been transformed from 'landowner's to non-professional outsiders to be educated and administrated.

Another question about memory is that the idea of memory is also connected with the

possibility of forgetting. Memory has been passed on through the action of remember. It is consistently shaped and reshaped in the process of transmission between members of the same community. The grand national narrative of heritage tends to emphasise a collective memory for the national community and meanwhile marginalises personal, local and regional memory. Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) focuses on the role of ‘invented’ tradition used as an important measure in the process of constructing collective memory . Dissonant memories are often marginalized in the authorized narrative of heritage (Graham et al. 2000).

Shield’s theory also emphasized the contested and shifting nature of collective representation and interpret community as a fluid term, because ‘contradictions are always being encountered and old notions abandoned’(1991:65). As Dicks and Van Loon (1999) suggest, while the affirmation of one version of collective identity silences others, it also, in turn, creates an opportunity for the unrepresented to call for attention. Therefore, event at a local level, community identity, as a collective representation, is both the tool for unity and also the subject of dispute.

Dick’s (2000) study on the vernacular heritage in the Rhondda is a work exploring an alternative approach to community involvement in heritage. Drawing on her case study of an industrial heritage park in Wales, Dick discusses the participant role of local community in the heritage interpretation. In the process of heritage construction, although local community is still packaged into a commodity to attract visitors in vernacular ‘place-myths’ (2000:241), it also works as a ‘cultural arena’ of heritage, in which professionals coordinate with local people and produce locally situated interpretation of place-myth. As a result of the active participation of local community, especially in the form of ‘memorialism’ (2000:149), local labour voice, insisting on the vibrancy of the local collective spirit, is represented in the show Black Gold in heritage site. However, Dick’s study also shows that in the process of encoding the local knowledge and memory in heritage narratives, it is still outside consultancy firms who really ‘authored’ the final heritage texts while the local narratives are used as raw

materials for further adaptation.

Dick's detailed study reflects the typical conditions of the local community's participation in heritage interpretation, which is also observed by Smith that the current policies of multivocality and inclusiveness are 'often tend to be assimilationist and top-down in nature rather than bottom-up substantive challenges to the AHD' (2006:37). Pendlebury et al. also express the similar concern that 'merely enabling more people to enjoy heritage, or extending how it is defined to recognize the diversity of society, does not in itself challenge power relations and control over the process by which heritage is defined and managed' (2004:23). Community consultation can merely become gestural politics, if professional practitioners and local communities do not develop an active sense of negotiation with each other.

From this overview of academic discussions on community involvement in heritage interpretation, it can be noticed that the significance of community participation in heritage interpretation has been gradually recognized in heritage studies. Existing literature shows that the social demand for inclusive and multi-vocal heritage interpretation has promoted a new approach to understanding heritage interpretation as a media for communication between local communities and heritage places. Different from the expert-dominant methods which aim at power control, this new approach intends to establish an open, interactive and dynamic way of interpretation, which aims to courage the more active participation of local communities and requires the adjustment of expert's role to be guides and facilitators. Nevertheless, owing to the limited research based on empirical researches of the local narratives of heritage, much remain unknown about how local narratives have been shaped, spread and interact with other official or no-official narratives in the present context of heritage. Therefore, further empirical researches in this field at the local scale are really meaningful and will be one of aims of my research.

2.5.2 Tourists' narratives

One of the consequences of the AHD is that it legitimizes the authority of archaeologists and historians as experts in heritage management. Subsequently, it discourages non-expert users' active engagement with heritage. Visitors to heritage are, therefore, often conceptualized as passive consumers of heritage resources. The popularity of the education-oriented approach of heritage interpretation further legitimizes the dichotomy between visitors and experts (Staiff 2014). Reflected in the realm of heritage interpretation, experts have been playing a dominant role as spokespersons for heritage values who translate the meanings of sites to visitors, while visitors are perceived as passive listeners of the official heritage interpretation. In this context, heritage visit is not an active process for visitors to get engaged with, but a well-structured space to deliver heritage message to visitors. This preference has obscured the role of memory work, performativity and acts of remembrance occurring at heritage sites (Nora 1989; Urry 1996; Bagnall 2003). Visitors' interpretation of heritage has been condemned by heritage professional as amateurish, unauthentic and sanitized (Mason 2004, 2005).

As a result of this bias, the role of visitor narratives has been underexplored in academic discussions, compared with the attention which has been paid to professional narratives. While the practices of professional narratives at tourist sites have been documented (Graham et al., 2000), the role of tourist' personal narratives has not received enough attention. There is still a paucity of research into how visitors actually interact with heritage representations.

Staiff's (2014) research argues against this miscomprehension of tourists' role in heritage interpretation. Staiff suggests that there are various relationships between heritage and visitors rather than the didactic mode. For Staiff, the function of heritage is not to provide knowledge or information in a direct way. Rather, it is a special space for visitors to engage in a series of interconnections which will lead a variety of responses. Such deepened

experience can be represented via narratives by visitors later in their blogs, travelogues or biographies. Staiff (2014) asserts that owing to diverse background of visitors, it is impossible to control the meaning-making process because meaning is perceived by visitors through negotiation. Tourists' narrative is an issue that concerns the relationships between heritage and visitors' reminiscence, identity, and personal biography. It is an enquire about how visitors make sense of heritage knowledge they receive in relation to their visiting experiences, personal memories and cultural background.

While Staiff's study suggest multiple possibilities of reconfiguring the way to think about communications between visitors and heritage sites, Dick's (2000) empirical study on the role of heritage visitors focuses more on the specific process how visitors' interpretation has been constructed. Dicks draws on theories of media studies and defines heritage interpretation as public communication involving three elements—production (of professionals), texts and consumption (of visitors). Dicks points out that heritage visitors' consumption is neither a passive reception nor the immediate response to message of exhibition within the space of heritage site itself (Fyfy and Ross 1996). It is central to the complex communication process. According to Dick's analysis, visitors at heritage site should not be perceived as empty containers ready to receive the message of the heritage text. Rather, they are with varying kinds of pre-constituted image of the place, which have been constructed by wider cultural discourses. Therefore, visitors' consumption is a social practice which is structured by their different backgrounds in class, gender and culture.

Dicks uses the circus of encoding and decoding as an approach to explaining the interlinked relations between the production of heritage text and visitors' interpretation of the text. She believes that just as TV audience has the ability to actively decode the media discourse, heritage visitors are capable of reinterpreting the message they receive in heritage site. The meanings of heritage are not a fixed and 'unitary identity' that exists in texts themselves (Crang 1994:37). Instead, meanings are generated through the encounter of visitors and

heritage texts when visitors reinterpret the message and therefore create a connection between the public knowledge of heritage with their personal memory and experience.

Just as Morley (1992) suggests, all readings are negotiations. In the model of encoding and decoding, visitors' interpretation may be partly affected by the 'preferred reading' of the heritage texts, but their own frameworks of knowledge will enable them to reproduce this kind of reading to meet their personal demand. Through the circus of encoding and decoding, visitors appropriate the space-time narratives of the display into their own life stories. These stories are less the outcome of decisive decodings than the production of a negotiation between readers' own social positionings and interpretative frameworks. Viewed in this way, heritage is a constantly shifting performance, in which 'to each exhibit, people bring a host of metonymic others—personal resonances that are set off, memories and connections triggered by the display' (Crang 1994:345). In this perspective, heritage is not so much sight-seeing (the public display of the other) as cultural biography (the public recognition of the self and its stories).

Dick's heritage approach also produces a new understanding of authenticity. For her, authenticity is produced in the interaction between exhibition and visitor, text and reader, rather than being a property of the text itself. This suggests that investigating the cultural proximity between visitors' lives and the lives 'in the texts' is a necessary dimension of understanding heritage communication. This idea of emotional and experiential authenticity is different from AHD's perception with its emphasis on material qualities and suggests an alternative way of understanding authenticity from a visitor's perspective.

Dick's approach to thinking of heritage as social communication, which involves a circuit of encoding and decoding, can be applied as a theoretical basis for the further study on the positive role of visitors in heritage interpretation. It is not only helpful in analyzing both how heritage texts are developed and how visitors respond to them but will also contribute to the

development of a better interaction between production and consumption.

Rickly-Boyd's study (2008, 2010) shows tourists construct their narrative of heritage site through their imagination in the 'storyscape' of heritage sites, which bridge the divide between heritage sites and their self-identities. It analyses how tourist narratives have been constructed in the traveling process by tourists using multisensory experience to connect profession narratives of heritage sites to their personal memory and identity.

As Bruner (2002:64) argues, 'it is through narrative that we constantly construct and reconstruct ourselves to meet the needs of the situations we encounter, and we do so with the guidance of our memories of the past and our hopes for the future'. Drawing upon Bruner's theory, Rickly-Boyd (2013) takes narrative mode of thinking as one of the basic ways to understand personal experience and surrounding environment. Based on this theory, Rickly-Boyd perceives heritage sites as the stage of narrative performance. A successful heritage site should present an authentic and valid landscape which 'allows visitors to jump from the visible and the tangible, to the invisible and the experiential' (DeLyser 1999:626). In his case study on Spring Mill Pioneer Village as example, Rickly-Boyd (1994) observes how the 'storyscape' engages tourists' imagination with the site's metanarrative of national and local significance and meanwhile also recollect their personal memories triggered semiotically by signs with special meanings to them. In this process, a personal connection is built through their personal narratives by combing the external (metanarratives) and internal (memory and imagination) and developing the stories of their own visiting experience. Through the construction of personal narrative, tourists obtain personal connection to place, which are regarded by Burner as what tourists are truly seeking at heritage site. Rickly-Boyd's (2008, 2010) case study further reveals that tourists have the competence to take an active role in transforming heritage sites from static and frozen objects into dynamic and interactive experience by constructing heritage narrative of their own. Visitors can no longer be perceived as passive audience peering into scenic view but active participants and interpreters.

Their narratives are essential in heritage interpretation and management.

2.5.3 Non-official narratives and heritage communication

Academic studies on unofficial narratives (Dicks 2000; Scofield 2014; Staiff 2014) suggest a new perspective of understanding heritage sites as public spaces for the communication between exhibitions and visitors. These works break a new ground for understanding the nature of heritage interpretation by applying methods of media and communication studies to heritage studies. They demonstrate that the nature of heritage interpretation is to translate particular information (about local history, knowledge of handcraft, ect.) through mobilized forms (such as narratives, images or objects) to an unspecified audience. It shares common nature and character with other communication activities through other media. Therefore, heritage interpretation can be studied as public communication in heritage sites.

The studies on unofficial narrative redefine the roles of professional production and audience's consumption. In traditional heritage approaches, production is equated with the practices of professional exhibition designers, interpreters and curators to create the 'source' of the message, while consumption confined to the 'reception' of visitors to the messages (Silverstone 1988; Hooper-Greenhill's 1994). Dicks, however, defines production as 'all of the works done to put together of the exhibition's; texts as 'the exhibitions themselves including slideshows, audio-visuales, tableaux, etc.; and consumption as 'the active interpretation of texts by visitors'. Such definitions suggest a new understanding of the roles of professional interpreters and heritage visitors.

These studies also emphasise that communication at heritage sites is embedded in the social context in which heritage is produced and the production of heritage is more complicated than it has been understood according traditional approaches. Professional interpretation on its own does not produce heritage. The processes of production of a heritage is the practice of mobilizing various signs, history, folklores and tradition into heritage text according to

certain narrative structures. Heritage texts are not, therefore, only 'authored' by professional designers and interpreters, but instead constructed in a broader local context in cooperation with local communities. Since the heritage production is also carried out in a wider social and economic context, it will also be influenced by the conflictual or cooperative relationships between heritage site, local agencies of government and tourism enterprises.

The last aspect is that they offer a new interpretation of the relationship between heritage production and visitors' consumption. Drawing on Hall's (1980) study on television communication, Dicks (1997, 2000) proposes a model of understanding heritage communication in terms of a circuit of encoding and decoding. Following this model, the heritage texts do not have meaning in themselves. Instead, meaning is generated through the encounter between visitors and texts. Although all heritage texts will structure the history and present it in a certain way to encourage a particular kind of reading (Hall 1980), visitors' interpretative reading will depend on the cultural context in which their pre-visiting knowledge has been situated. The meanings of the displays thus do not originate in an individual act of creation, but are represented and reconfigured through the practices of encoding and decoding. The encoding/decoding model suggests that in the process of communication, 'production, representation and response' are not discrete elements, but rather to be 'understood as dynamically interconnected' (Silverstone 1988:232). All of the three elements are interactive with each other and play important roles in determining the final effect of heritage communication.

Dick's approach of encoding and decoding challenges the traditional view fostered by AHD, which sees the public as passive audience of heritage. It copes with the problems of heritage 'at an intellectual impasse between the AHD and the heritage industry critique' (Smith 2006:42). It suggests an alternative way of understanding the role of heritage and nature of heritage interpretation. It also redefines the relationship of professional interpreters and non-professional visitors. Therefore, this approach provides a new way of understanding how

heritage interpretation are developed.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed previous research on the subject of heritage interpretation. The consideration of academic debates on critical discourse analysis of AHD heritage interpretation at different levels has helped me corroborate the view that it has inspired new thinking of heritage interpretation. It has broadened the concepts of heritage definitions and shifted the focus of heritage studies from objects to people, from past facts to the present values and from authorized values to multi-vocal interpretations.

By taking a close look at the existing academic literature of narrative studies, I summarises main characteristics of narrative which justify its wide application as the basic structure of most heritage interpretations. Drawing upon the works of Abbott (2002), Lyotard (1990), Wertsch (2008) and Cronon (1992), I identify that narrative is so overwhelmingly powerful in meaning making by all people and in all cultures that it is not mere a rhetoric genre but has developed into a basic perspective for people to understand and interpret the world. Therefore, narrative has been adopted as a useful instrument for me to understand the nature of heritage interpretation across the difference of time, culture and media.

Apart from its universality, I also notice that narrative is never a neutral reflection of events but a socioculturally situated representation. In heritage interpretation, narratives can be used by different groups or individuals to produce a variety of stories associated any single heritage place for their own purposes. I want to point out that it is owing to these features of narrative that make heritage interpretation both as a cultural tool to control the power of discourse and also a device for subaltern groups to challenge the authorized voices. In the following chapters these themes will be drawn out and analysed in more detail alongside the new research presented here.

3. World Heritage management, tourism and community in China

3.1 Introduction to West Lake Cultural Landscape



Figure 3.1 Map of Zhejiang Province, with the location of Hangzhou and West Lake marked; SACH

West Lake Cultural Landscape of Hangzhou (hereinafter referred to as West Lake), with the property area of 4235.76 hectares is located west to the urban center of Hangzhou City, Zhejiang Province (Figure 3.1). The construction and conservation activities of West Lake Cultural Landscape started early as in the 9th century, carried out on a large scale in the 13th century and became, has been renowned for its beautiful scenery and prosperous culture.

After the construction and conservation over hundreds of years, this original lagoon has evolved into a fresh water lake comprising an area of 6.39 km², surrounded by cloud-capped hills on three sides (Figure 3.2). Man-made elements including three islands (in the lake), causeways (across the lake), numerous temples, pagodas, pavilions, gardens and various plants (around the lake) have been added at points during its history. The most famous sites are the Ten Poetically Named Scenic Places (PNSPs) of West Lake, designed by artists in the 13th century when Hangzhou was the capital of China. They are regarded as typical examples of the classical Chinese landscape design and the best embodiment of the unique Chinese landscape aesthetics.



Figure 3.2 Map of West Lake, the location of field work; Google

According to the Nomination Dossier of West Lake Cultural Landscape(SACH 2011), the value of West Lake Landscape is mainly embodied in six aspects: beautiful natural landscape, unique landscape layout with the two causeways and three isles, City-Lake spatial relationship featuring ‘cloud-capped hills on three sides of the Lake and the City on the

fourth', Ten Poetically Named Scenic Places of West Lake which are the most original and representative serial poetically named scenic places, the various historic monuments and sites, the distinctive flora of both historic and cultural values, and Longjing Tea Plantation. All these elements carry the aesthetic features typical for traditional Chinese landscape. Owing to its poetic and picturesque appeal, West Lake has been used as a popular theme and subject in literature and art works of poets, scholars and artists since the 9th century. It is also perceived as a physical embodiment of Chinese philosophy proposing the 'harmony between man and nature' and therefore been regarded as a spiritual home of Chinese elites.

The property area and buffer zone of West Lake Landscape take up a large proportion of the city built-up area. Hence there exists a close connection and interdependence between West Lake Landscape and the urban area of Hangzhou. There are about 107,000 people living in the property area and buffer zone of West Lake Landscape. Most of them are tea farmers (Nomination dossier). Over 9.6 million people reside in the urban area of Hangzhou(Hangzhou Bureau Of Statistics 2017). Although these urban residents do not have ownership of any land property in West Lake Cultural Landscape, they have also benefit from this heritage site and have developed an intimate relationship with the site.

West Lake has long been perceived as a tourism destination ever since the imperial time. It receives over 20 million travelers each year (HBLCR 2011) and its popularity among foreign visitors is also rising, especially after its designation as a World Heritage Site in 2011. In 2012, Hangzhou attracted 80 million visitors, five percent of which were international tourists (HBLCR 2011).

West Lake Cultural Landscape has been selected as the place for field research for several reasons. The first and the most important reason rests with the potential of collecting suitable heritage narratives addressed by various social groups and at different levels in such a place as a World Cultural Landscape, a national iconic site of traditional Chinese aesthetics and a

popular tourist destination. Another reason is that narratives of West Lake can be treated as a typical example of cross-cultural communication in the sphere of heritage interpretation. Designed and constructed according to the traditional aesthetics of Chinese landscape, West Lake faces the challenge of presenting the cultural values and features which are often not obvious in the tangible forms in the perspectives of foreign visitors with aesthetics fostered in a different culture. In order to bridge the gap and connect visitors with the site, the cultural values must be interpreted and translated through narratives in a cross-cultural way so as to properly convey the fullness of their meanings to foreign visitors. Therefore, the discussion on the cross-cultural interpretation of West Lake will have a broad implication on similar research in other contexts. The appropriateness of this choice can also be justified by my familiarity with the place as my hometown and my network with government officers, academic researchers, professional experts, tourism agents and local communities, which will be of value when carrying out fieldwork. The features of West Lake introduced above put the landscape in an advantageous position as a site for comprehensive research on heritage interpretation. Some issues of heritage interpretation in this site are also observable in other World Heritage Sites. Therefore, the case study on West Lake will have a wider implication for researches on other World Heritage Sites in China.

3.2 The changing national narrative of heritage in China

Heritage policy in China is complex and ever changing with the shifts of economic and political contexts in different stages. A brief review of how heritage policy in China has changed and evolved offers a background knowledge for comprehensive understanding of today heritage fever and the deep drives for heritage conservation in present China.

Heritage has long been used by different groups of stakeholders for various purposes, including political propaganda, moral teaching, community unification and economic development. Inheriting a traditional historical approach of the past, official heritage

narrative in China does not emphasize the truth but pragmatic functions. In different stages, therefore, heritage policies were adjusted in response to the changing demand of national ideology, in the form of destruction, exploitation or preservation. This tendency has been proved to be very dangerous. In order to guarantee the sustainability of heritage conservation and management, heritage narrative should be more than a political instrument.

In the first three decades after the foundation of People's Republic of China, heritage-related activities, such as archaeological excavations, building conservations and museum exhibitions, were all conducted for political purposes. The state government issued the first official order to protect artifacts, books and historical sites in 1950(Zhuang 1989). In 1961, the State government issued the first set of regulations for cultural preservation, the *Provisional Regulations on the Protection and Administration of Cultural Relics*. The National Cultural Relics Bureau was established to conduct conservation management for artifacts and cultural sites. The Bureau published in the next year the *List of National Cultural Sites* which included 180 cultural sites of national significance. These sites were classified as either patriotic education bases or national protected work unit sites (Svensson 2006:). The former were mainly historical sites connected to the Communist Party, while the latter included sites such as tombs, grottoes, buildings, and stone carvings that predated the collapse of Qing authority (Bai 1983).

Heritage study and archeological work in this period were expected to interpret their findings in accordance with a particularly political ideology. A meta-narrative of Chinese history and socialism was created and communicated at museums and historical sites which were entitled patriotic education bases, as spaces for public education about a political interpretation of Chinese history.

However, all these effort to set up a national system for heritage conservation was disrupted by the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), during which tangible objects and building were

ruined, intangible traditions were banned and society's collective memory of the past was damaged (Shepherd and Yu 2013)

The widespread material destruction was not only a product of the revolutionary theory of Leninism, but was also spurred by the iconoclasm with a link with the century-long modernization movement in China that began with Sun Yat-sen attack on Qing rulers as foreign occupiers before the 1911 Revolution, continued with the New Culture Movement critique of Chinese traditions beginning in 1919 and the Kuomintang's early attacks on Confucianism in the 1920s, and reached its logical conclusion with Mao's 'call to youth to mash the old' in 1966 (Li 1987:17). It shows that since the very beginning of the 20th century, cultural heritage together with traditional practices have been defined as conservative elements against modernism, which therefore have been attacked by modernizers of all political persuasions in China, not just Marxists.

'What makes the current politics of China different is the fact that cultural practices and materials have been redefined as resources which can contribute to the development of modernization and more recently to sustainability of this development' (Winter and Daly 2011:19). After the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the state strove to re-legitimate itself by embarking on a promotion of previously derided 'Chinese culture' (Nyiri 2006:6). In 1982, the State Council issued *Law of People's Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relic*. They also issued an expanded list of national protected sites, including '43 revolutionary sites, 19 grottoes, 13 stone carvings, 26 tombs, 105 buildings, and 36 ancient sites' (Liu 1983:97). The 1982 law, as China's first law on heritage protection, laid the basis of heritage policies in China and established guidelines for heritage categorization, archaeological excavation and site protection.

In the same year, State Bureau of Cultural Heritage Relic (renamed, in 1988, the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, abbreviated as SACH) was established as a national

official agency responsible for cultural heritage conservation in China. State conservation organizations at provincial, municipal, and local levels were also established to implement heritage policies, raise funding and conduct conservation projects in their respective areas. Other government departments are also involved in the process because their resources and administrative functions are related to the heritage sites. Thus, in most places of China, heritage governance is a complex and dynamic process with a multi-management framework.

The introduction of World Heritage system into China made the issue of heritage narratives in this country more complicated. After Chinese government ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1985, China had the first six world heritage sites inscribed in 1987, including the Great Wall, Beijing Forbidden City and the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor outside of Xi'an, and Mount Tai. These sites, devaluated as remnants of building and sites in the imperial time, were redefined as the testimonies of the glory of the past. This indicated a big shift in the grand narrative of Chinese culture and history.

In the post-Maoist period, the Communist Party today has shifted away from the radical ideology of class struggle and starts to promote a carefully controlled narrative of heritage to strengthen the national-identity building in China (Lee 2008). Thus, the revolutionary narrative of Communist Party of China (CPC) is now linked to a patriotic narrative in the display and presentation of heritage (Svensson 2006). No longer is the official narrative a story of liberation from an oppressive regime of bourgeois class; instead, it is a story of a collective national struggle against a foreign invader. Heritage conservation in China is not an aim for preserving the past itself, but has been conducted to build and strengthen a national consciousness, convey socialist values, and support economic development in the present.

Heritage plays an essential role in the CPC promotion of cultural nationalism. Cultural tourism becomes a means of reconstituting 'shared cultural grammar' (Nyiri 2006:12). The net result is that heritage sites, museums, and artifacts also serve a pedagogical purpose, to

simultaneously educate visitors about the past and shape them as modern citizens in the present. Although the representation of the past in heritage interpretations seems changeable, inconsistent and fragmented, these self-contradictory ideologies and discourses are not incompatible. The present narratives of Chinese national identity through official interpretations in museums and heritage sites appear more stable, though multi-layered.

China's heritage policies have changed over the course of Chinese exploration for its national identity in a global context of modernization. The changes of national heritage policy in China over half a century has been in response to changing ideologies (from Maoism to cultural nationalism) and changing demands (from political indoctrination to a market economy). Heritage narrative plays an essential role in the construction and reinforcement of China's national ideology.

3.3 The drive for World Heritage in China

China's World Heritage fever started in the 1990s. Since its ratification of the 1972 World Heritage Convention in 1985, China has 53 world heritage sites enlisted, including six in 1980s, 17 in 1990s, 15 in 2000s and 15 in 2010s. In addition, it has a long Tentative List of World Heritage including 59 sites, the second longest among all tentative lists of state parties. More sites in China are now awaiting their turn, to be chosen as suitable candidates by the SACH. A huge sum of money has been spent on the preservation and renovation of these sites. Despite a few debates on the negative impacts of this phenomenon, there is not yet any sign of a slowdown in the competition for the label of World Heritage Site in China.

China's enthusiasm for the World Heritage has been driven by a number of factors. One of drives stems from China's desire to meet international standards and to redefine its national identity in the international community in a global era. While China's accession to WTO in 2001 indicates China's gesture to obey the international agreement on business, China's

ratification of the World Heritage Convention suggests the nation's attempt to reinterpret its identity as a nation with both the ancient civilization embodied in cultural heritage and the present modernization in heritage conservation and management at an international level (Shepherd 2006).

Apart from the administrative governments and official agencies at different levels, UNESCO's cluster office in Beijing and Non-governmental organizations such as World Heritage Training and Research Institute for the Asia and Pacific Region (WHTRAP) also play an essential role in guaranteeing the implementation of convention and its operational guidelines.

UNESCO Office in Beijing is the main platform for the communication between UNESCO and state members in East Asia covering the People's Republic of China, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It takes up two responsibilities—to implement UNESCO programmes of education, culture, social and human sciences, natural Sciences in East Asia and to report the needs of the Member States in this area to UNESCO (UNESCO 2015). It means that World Heritage programme takes a small portion among all its responsibilities. Owing to its limited number of staff members and multi-tasks, its impact on World Heritage management in China is not as influential as it is supposed to be.

Comparatively, WHTRAP exerts more influence on World Heritage management in China. WHTRAP has three offices in Shanghai, Suzhou and Beijing. The Shanghai office, specialized in the field of heritage conservation, is responsible for capacity building of heritage professionals involved in conservation and management of World Heritage Site in the Asian and the Pacific region. This office has developed a close cooperation with major heritage departments and institutes through projects, trainings and conferences in the field of heritage conservation. Suzhou office is responsible for research, knowledge sharing, and

heritage education. It has a close relationship with the education bases at schools and management offices of many World Heritage Sites.



Figure 3.3 Institutional framework of WHITRAP. Source: from the website of WHITRAP

The work of UNESCO Beijing office and WHTRAP reveals China's attempt to employ the international principles in heritage conservation and to promote international communication and cooperation in this field. However, it should also be noticed that while China is eager to follow the international principle, these principles are not necessarily taking a dominant role in the narrative of World Heritage in this country. This characteristic of heritage management in China reflect the nature of this World Heritage campaign as a new stage of the continuing construction of national identity through heritage narratives.

3.4 Management of heritage in Hangzhou

After being listed in the National Tentative List of World Heritage in 2006, West Lake

Landscape has been protected and managed through implementation of international conventions, Chinese laws and regional regulations concerning heritage conservation. In keeping with UNESCO's requirement of world heritage protection, conservation of West Lake was conducted in compliance of 1972 *World Heritage Convention* and its *Operational Guidelines*. Other laws and regulations related to conservation and management of West Lake at national, provincial and municipal levels were shown in the following table (Figure 3.4).

Type of law	Name of law	Promulgation institution	Date of Promulgation
Law	<i>Constitution of People's Republic of China</i>	National People's Congress of P.R.C.	1982.12.4
Law	<i>Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics</i>	Standing Committee of National People's Congress of P.R.C.	Amended on Oct.28,2002
Administrative regulations	<i>Regulations on the Implementation of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics</i>	State Council of P.R.C.	2003.5.18
Ministerial regulations	<i>Regulations on the Conservation and Management of World Cultural Heritage Sites</i>	Ministry of Culture of P.R.C.	2006.11.14
Normative document	<i>Management Measures for the Monitoring of World Culture Heritage in China</i>	State Administration of Cultural Heritage	2006.12.8
Administrative regulations	<i>Regulations on Scenic Areas</i>	State Council of P.R.C.	2006.9.19
Administrative regulations	<i>Regulations on the Protection of Historically and Culturally Famous Cities, Towns and Villages</i>	State Council of P.R.C.	2008.4.22
Governmental regulations	<i>Regulations on the Conservation and Management of West Lake Cultural Landscape of Hangzhou</i>	Hangzhou Municipal Government	2008.11.11
Regional regulations	<i>Regulations of Zhejiang Province on the Administration of Scenic Areas</i>	Standing Committee of Zhejiang Provincial People's Congress	1996.7.8
Regional regulations	<i>Regulations of Zhejiang Province on the Conservation and Management of Cultural Relics</i>	Standing Committee of Zhejiang Provincial People's Congress	Promulgated in 1988; amended on Nov.18,2005
Regional regulations	<i>Regulations of Zhejiang Province on Protection of Historically and Culturally Famous Cities</i>	Standing Committee of Zhejiang Provincial People's Congress	1999.7.30
Regional regulations	<i>Regulations on the Management of West Lake Scenic Area of Hangzhou</i>	Standing Committee of Hangzhou Municipal People's Congress	Promulgated in 1983; amended on June 16, 2004
Regional regulations	<i>Regulations of Hangzhou Municipality on the Protection and Management of West Lake Water Area</i>	Standing Committee of Hangzhou Municipal People's Congress	Amended on May.28,2004
Regional regulations	<i>Regulations of Hangzhou Municipality on the Protection of West Lake Longjing Tea Base</i>	Standing Committee of Hangzhou Municipal People's Congress	2001.7.16
Regional regulations	<i>Several Regulations on the Protection and Management of Cultural Heritages in Hangzhou</i>	Standing Committee of Hangzhou Municipal People's Congress	Promulgated on Jan. 10, 2000. Amended in 2004
Regional regulations	<i>Regulations of Hangzhou Municipality on the Administration of Parks</i>	Standing Committee of Hangzhou Municipal People's Congress	2001.2.18
Governmental regulations	<i>Regulations of Hangzhou Municipality on the Protection of Historic and Cultural Districts and Historic Buildings</i>	Hangzhou Municipal Government	2004.11.12

Table 3.1 Laws and regulations related to conservation of West Lake Landscape; Source::SACH

Apart from these laws and regulations, a systematic management mechanism has been established to guarantee the conservation and management of West Lake Landscape. It consists of the administrative department and professional management agencies at national, regional and local levels. The administrative management system consists of: the State Council, Provincial Government, Municipal Government, and West Lake Administrative Committee (WLAC), as the official heritage agency as the local level took the overall responsibility for the conservation and management of West Lake Landscape, supported by professional consultancy from the provincial bureau of cultural heritage in Zhejiang and the national State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH). The following frame map shows the structure of the management System of west Lake Cultural Landscape of Hangzhou (Figure 3.5).

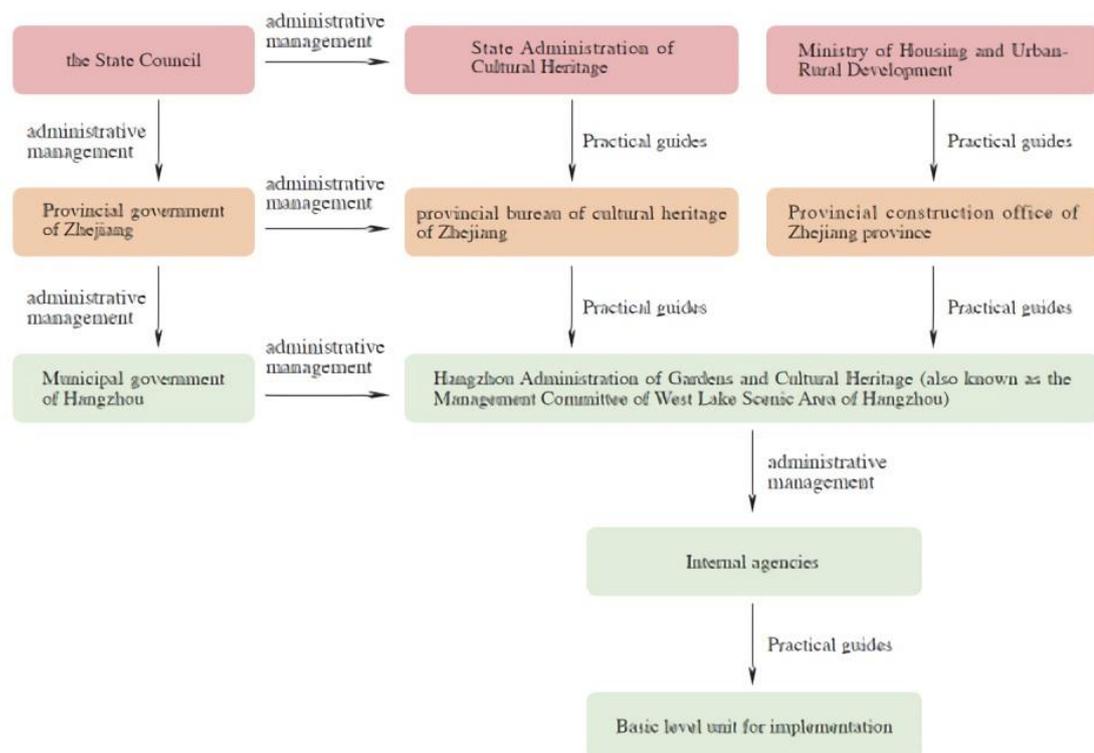


Figure 3.4 The management System of West Lake Cultural Landscape of Hangzhou; Source: SACH

As a result of the 1998 and 2003 administrative reforms of Chinese government, the national government delegated its power to local administrative departments. This is also the case in the realm of heritage governance in today's China. In Hangzhou, West Lake Administrative

Committee (WLAC), an official heritage agency at the local level, plays an essential role in World Heritage Bid, conservation and management of West Lake Landscape. It is also responsible for coordination with a variety of stakeholders of this site.

WLAC has been responsible for the management of West Lake since 1949. But during the Cultural Revolution, historical buildings, sites and monuments around West Lake including tombs of historic persons, stone statues of Buddha, Buddhist temples and Taoist temples underwent serious destruction. In 1980s, WLAC regained its governance of this landscape and conducted a series of projects to renovate or reconstruct these sites. West Lake has been placed under comprehensive protection and management since 1982 when it was designated as a National Scenic Area. The protective measures include the establishment of the management mechanism, the formulation of protection policies, regulations and plans, and adoption of measures for a systematic protection and management. The subordinate administrative departments of WLAC include the department of landscape management, the department of planning and construction, the department of cultural heritage, the greening office, the department of economic and social development, the Office of Laws and the Office of Comprehensive Renovation (Figure 3.5).

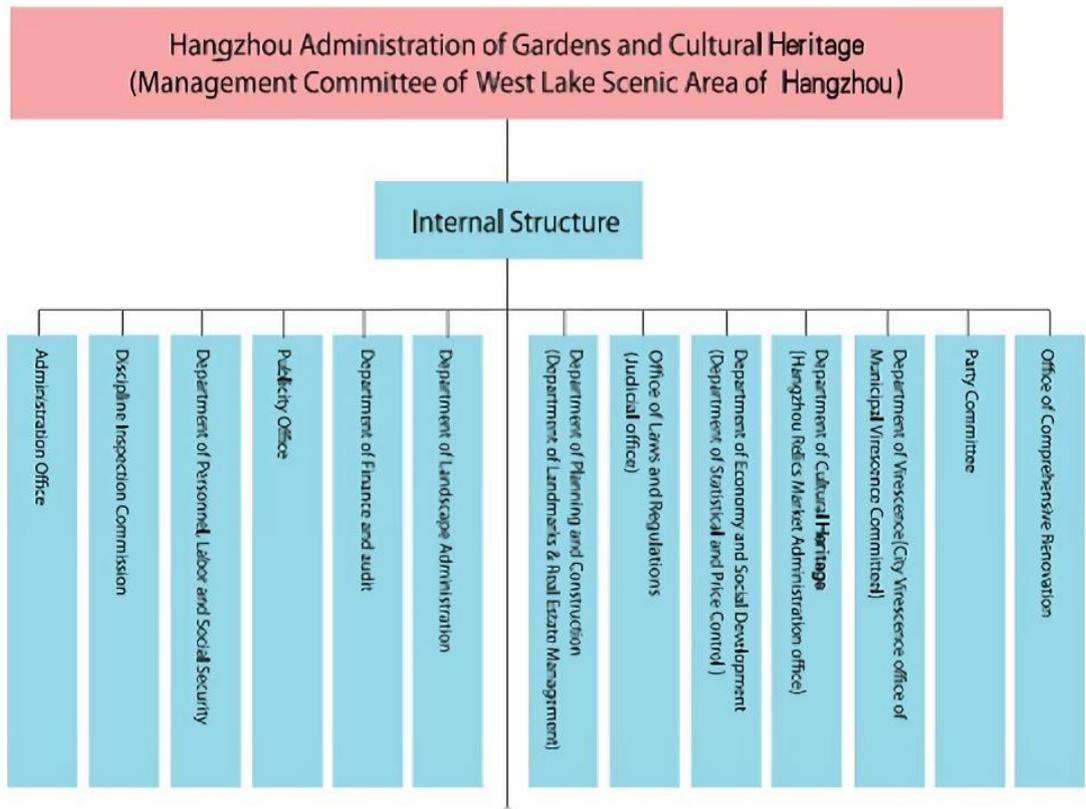


Figure 3.5 Organizational chart of West Lake Administration Committee; Source: SACH

The Department of Cultural Heritage under WLAC is in charge of the specific works of heritage protection within the property area, responsible for organizing, implementing, auditing and supervising programs on conservation, repair, management and use of the cultural heritage across the city, supervising and managing antique market, offering guidance to heritage conservation activities at district and county level, and assuming routine work of the office of the Hangzhou Municipal Committee for the Protection of Historically and Culturally Famous City. Under the organization and management of the Cultural Relics Department, administrative offices in eight subzones of the West Lake are responsible for implementing the day-to-day protection, management and utilization measures for the cultural relics in their respective sub-zones; the Hangzhou Institute for Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage is responsible for organizing and implementing the repair and conservation projects on cultural relics; and the Hangzhou History Museum (the Hangzhou Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology) is in charge of archaeological excavations and researches of immovable cultural relics.

The management system of West Lake suggests that heritage management of this site involves multiple aspects such as cultural heritage protection, construction, tourism services, rural and urban communities. Therefore, an essential issue for the local authorities and its administrative department, WLAC, to consider is the priority objectives in heritage management—if more attention should be given to physical conservation, economic development or sustaining the local culture.

Funding is a crucial issue for heritage preservation. The decentralization of state government has provided more authority in decision making to local governments but also requires them to generate their own revenue sources. When local authorities is in charge of paying for preservation and conservation, it gives priority to the development of tourism industry to generate revenue sources. Moreover, officials are evaluated mainly by their success in promoting economic development. This leads them to attach more importance to short-term results. Inevitably, the market-driven interpretation of the West Lake is to be created and communicated.

Another problem of local management stems from the complexity of management and law enforcement responsibilities. Like most heritage sites in China, West Lake is under the administration of state, provincial, and municipal government. This seemingly systematic mechanism has caused several challenges to cultural heritage management, including a lack of coordination between different agencies; conflicts of interest among departments at the local, provincial and national levels; and tension and disagreements between government officials, private investors, and local communities (Jiang 2010). The newly added international standard of UNESCO has further make the issue of policy making and implementation and site management of the West Lake more complicated. The involvement of these government departments, tourism enterprises and local communities have generated multi-layered narratives of the heritage site in accordance with their different interests.

Further empirical studies will focus on how these narratives have been created, how they have been spread and exerted impacts on the public and how they have interacted with each other.

3.5 Local stakeholders and local narratives

The land covered by the West Lake Landscape consists of two parts: state-owned and collective-owned. A total of 933.9 hectares are collective-owned, comprising some land of Manjuelong Village, Longjing Village, Jiuxi Village, and nine other villages and settlements for construction and farming purposes. The remaining 3,180.86 hectares of the area are owned by the People's Republic of China. The land administration body for land in the area is the Sub-Bureau of West Lake Scenic Area under the Hangzhou Municipal Bureau of Land and Resources (SACH 2011).

According to the nomination document of the West Lake, the stakeholders of West Lake Landscape include governments at different levels, Hangzhou Tourism Commission, service enterprises and local residents. The residents located within the World Heritage site of West Lake are estimated to be 25,000 persons, with other 82,000 persons in the buffer zone, reaching 107,000 persons in total. The majority of the population consists of tea planters and farmers (Figure 8). Although these tea growing villages are not the landscape elements of the West Lake Cultural Landscape, they sustain the existence and continuity of the ecological environment of the surrounding hilling around the West Lake and therefore form an indivisible co-existence relation with the West Lake.

With the arrival of more visitors after the designation of West Lake, the villagers of an increasing number (abandoned the tea-growing tradition and) started to run businesses offering tea-drinking, catering, and accommodation. These local services attract not only local residents for casual activities at weekend, but also visitors with interest in tea drinking

and tea-growing culture from other places to have a taste of local food and a close contact with local life.

Through the frequent contact with visitors and guests, local villagers also have opportunities to interpret their memory, knowledge and understanding of the local culture, West Lake, and Hangzhou in brief introductions or casual chats with guests. Owners of B&Bs are in more advantaged position of making their interpretation of cultural elements relevant to both West Lake and local traditions, through the decoration, furnishing, and presentation in B&Bs, advertisements on various tourism web sites and oral communication with guests. Some villages have even set up local museums to present and illustrate their local culture. These museums are not only to tourism resources to attract more visitors by improving their visiting experience, but also places to express the pride of local community on their tradition and culture.

These grass-root presentation and interpretation enriched the narratives of West Lake and local culture by offering lively and up-to-date accounts of local resident's feeling, experience and thinking. As a living cultural heritage, the West Lake, together with its surrounding villages, cannot be preserved as a window-screened museum in a rigid and unchanging way. The local communities narratives should also be collected in the reservoir of multi-vocal interpretations of West Lake, and to be analysed and studied for the deeper insight into the interpretation and communication of World Heritage in China.

However, the development of tourism businesses such as catering and accommodation services means that apart from villager's own living places, extra houses need to be built for tea rooms, restaurants and guest houses. As a result of urbanization, the tea-growing tradition is shrinking and non-agricultural population keeps growing in these tea-growing villages. This has placed the traditional villages under pressure and threat in scale, characteristics and environment.

Local governments have set a series of regulations to address the problem of the

multiplication of population, and to control the construction and business operation within the landscape area. The new non-agricultural population have been encouraged to move outside the landscape area, compensated with better living conditions and working opportunities. The dwellers within the property area of the West Lake, according to these regulations, can properly improve their infrastructure and build new houses for their grown-up children with professional evaluation and administrative approval. But all shall follow the basic protection regulations for the property and its setting, posing no threat or damage to the cultural landscape and being effectively monitored and administrated (SACH 2011) .

In general, these policies and regulations have been understood, accepted and supported by the stakeholders. But there still exists some occasional conflicts between residents' demands for local economic development on the one hand and the requirement of conservation of the World Heritage Site on the other hand. The conflict between the official policy of protection and local communities demand for economic development (mainly in tourism industry) is a long-standing problem in most World Heritage Sites in China.

The local villager's narratives will inevitably involve these conflicts, their confusion about the heritage policies and their wish to address these problems. The collection of these negative narratives will provide more information regarding the tension between the local authorities and local communities. Analysis of the information can clarify this debate and help coordinate needs of all stakeholders, and to strike a balance between conservation on one hand and local economy on the other hand.

Apart from tea planters and farmers in the property area and buffer zones, local urban residents also play an active role in the interpretation of West Lake. Owing to the long-existing interaction and interdependence between West Lake and the urban area of Hangzhou, urban residents of Hangzhou have developed a close emotional connection with the landscape through their daily activities in this area. Some of these activities, such as viewing peach blossom in spring, lotus and in summer, moon and osmanthus in autumn, and snow and plum

blossom in winter, are inherited as customs which have been practiced for hundreds of years. Therefore, these activities form an essential part of the urban culture fostered by West Lake.

3.6 Tourists' perspectives of West Lake

With its rich historical and cultural resources and beautiful landscape, West Lake is one of the most visited tourist destinations in China. According to the CCTV news report on the Golden Week in May 2015, the visit number of West Lake ranked the fifth among those of all the scenic sites in China. The overall trend of the number of visitors of West Lake Scenic Area over the past thirty years was as follows (Figure 3.6). The average annual number of visitors peaked at about 24.61 million from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, owing to the unprecedented growth of tourism market spurred by China's economic reform. It dropped to 18.44 million from the mid-1990s to the late 1990s, owing to the decline of tourism market resulting from the economic turmoil in Southeast Asia. It picked up again rapidly and overloaded the environmental capacity of the property area because of the introduction of the Golden Week holiday system in October 1999. It has risen year after year since 2002, as a result of the growing influence of West Lake in China and abroad. During this period, the management body began to develop neighboring scenic places to divert tourists and used the price leverage to reduce the number of visitors to a rational level. It also began to innovate services and strengthen conservation of the site. These efforts heightened the overall quality of this landscape and rationally controlled the number of tourists. As a result, the number of visitors has been growing steadily in recent years, at about 23.43 million a year on average.

Year	Number of tourists(in 10,000)	Ticket revenue(in RMB10,000)	Number of scenic places with admission
1979	965	61.45	10
1980	1477	91.31	12
1981	1659	101.29	12
1982	1775	109.35	11
1983	1959	123.91	13
1984	2429	175.8	17
1985	2682	284.85	16
1986	2922	446.22	17
1987	2830	489.73	18
1988	2555	526.34	19
1989	2384	584.21	23
1990	2449	2449.4	26
1991	2471	2471.22	27
1992	2615	2615.94	31
1993	2249	2249.89	31
1994	1990	1990.57	32
1995	1953	1953.59	25
1996	1794	1794.43	25
1997	1895	1895.29	27
1998	1755	1755.72	30
1999	1872	1872.54	29
2000	1904	1904.14	31
2001	2086	2086.77	32
2002	2019	23789.92	29
2003	1581	16968.41	23
2004	2133	25222.07	23
2005	2304	26143.07	23
2006	2518	24759.66	23
2007	2745	26260.99	23

Figure 3.7 Number of Tourists in the Property Area of West Lake Landscape (1979-2007); HTC

The popularity of West Lake among domestic tourists has also been reflected from the number of travelogues uploaded to tourism web sites such as Ctrip, Mafengwo and Qunar. Visitors produced rich narratives of West Lake with both words and pictures in their travelogues. On the web site of Mafengwo, 9694 travelogue of Hangzhou have been uploaded since 2012, among which more than 2000 are about West Lake. On another tourism web site Ctrip, over 5000 travelogues are about West Lake, were written and uploaded between 2000

and 2015. Compared with the top three heritage sites among foreign tourist, The Great Wall (3177 travelogues), Beijing Forbidden City (3673 travelogues), Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor (2533 travelogues), West Lake Landscape is more popular in the domestic market.

All of the travelogues of West Lake present the picturesque view of the landscape with a large number of pictures of scenic spots around the lake. The most frequently presented sites include Broken Bridge, Leifeng Pagoda, Xiaoying Isle, Solitary Hill, Su Causeway, Bai Causeway and Yue Fei's Tomb . The narratives in these travelogues suggest that domestic tourists not only appreciate the beautiful scenic views of the West Lake in reality, but also are inspired by pre-tour narratives of West Lake, which they learned from literature works and popular culture products. Their narratives suggest that visitors have got quite rich pre-tour imaginations of and a variety of expectations for their West Lake tour. Therefore, their visits to West Lake are not the result of casual choices but were promoted by the narratives of West Lake created in a broader cultural context in the forms of literature works, travelogue programmes, popular songs, TV serials and movies. And the big number of comments on travelogues also indicate that narratives produced by tourists in their travelogues also further influence other potential tourists' imagination, prospect and expectation of West Lake, which is suggested by the high reviews of these travelogues. As a result, the visits to West Lake by domestic tourists are conducted not only in reality but also further promoted by intertextual narratives of West Lake.

Compared with the popularity of West Lake among domestic tourists, the visit number of foreign tourists is not high and keeps growing slowly even after the inscription of West Lake in the List of World Heritage. Overseas visitors mainly come from Eastern-Asian and South-eastern countries, like Korea, Japan, and Thailand, which were largely influenced by Chinese culture in history. For example, according to a research on the international image of West Lake (Liu 2012), only 1.878 million foreign visitors paid visit to Hangzhou in 2010, increased by 19.4% over the last year. This number is merely a little more than the visit number of

domestic visitor (1.722 million) in three days during the Golden Week in May in 2009. Among the limited foreign visitors, Korean and Japanese tourists take 43.3%, which means only 1.065 million visitors are from the rest of the world that year. (<http://news.qq.com/a/20090504/001677.htm>)

Compared with the large quantity of narratives of West Lake produced and shared by domestic tourists in tourist diaries, reviews and travelogues, very few narratives of West Lake can be found in foreign tourists' online posts. Brief reviews on tourism web sites such as Tripadvisor are the main resources for the researcher to understand foreign tourists' narratives of this site. According to these reviews, although most visitors perceive West Lake as a must visit place in Hangzhou, most of them just spend one or even a half day on their visit of the site either by cycling or taking a sight-seeing bus around the lake. Although they generally make positive remarks on the beautiful scene of West Lake, they are not satisfied with and feel confused by the official interpretations on information panels at several sites. They also find the oral interpretations of tourist guides are too professional which are often literal translation of the Chinese version.

Quite a number of reviews indicate that some foreign visitors cannot sense the outstanding value of West Lake. The comments, like 'West Lake is just a lake', reflects not only some foreigner's disappointment at 'a common lake with low rolling hills around, but also the gap between the outstanding values of West Lake developed in traditional Chinese culture and foreign visitors' motivations and preferences fostered in different cultural backgrounds. Some reviews also suggest foreign visitors' low interest in those intangible values of the places such as Broken Bridge, Su Xiao Xiao's Tomb and Leifeng Pagoda, because of the lack of contextual knowledge of related legendary stories of these sites in their own culture.

Different from domestic visitors with a high familiarity with West Lake, most foreign visitors have never heard of the lake before. The lack of pre-tour information of West Lake hinders

their pre-tour imagination and on-tour understanding of the multi-layered symbolic meanings of the sites in this landscape. After West Lake's inscription in the World Heritage List, tourism guide books like *Lonely Planet* started to make introductions to West Lake, owing to its branding influence as a World Heritage Site. *Lonely Planet's* introduction to West Lake is composed with some obvious features of Western perspective. Its brief introduction to West Lake describes a 'cultivated landscape' with 'traffic-free causeway', 'half-moon bridge's and 'Emperor Qianlong's 18th-century holiday palace and garden's and 'island'. This typically western and middle-class narrative presents a picture with extinctive oriental feature -- 'the very definition of classical beauty in China', to foreign visitors. As a tourism bible, *Lonely Planet's* introduction to West Lake has an undeniable influence on foreign visitors' expectation for West Lake Landscape.

After the inscription of West Lake in the World Heritage List, the number of foreign visitors from North America and Europe started to increase more rapidly than before owing to the branding effects of World Heritage. Tourist agencies in both Europe and North America also promoted marketing of West Lake. They lengthened visitors' stay in Hangzhou and rearranged the activities of their trips according to Westerners' preferences.

The municipal government of Hangzhou also launched a new campaign to promote tourism around the world. Hangzhou's marketing strategy encompasses 20 big action plans and 77 smaller projects. The goal of this campaign is not only to attract more international tourists and also to present an innovative cultural image of China to the World. Despite the local government's big investment in the campaign, the positive effects will still be limited if there remains the low awareness of the importance of understanding how tourists from different cultural backgrounds form their imagination of West Lake, how they experienced the site during their visits and how they communicate the value of this World Heritage Site via their after-tour narratives

The sharp contrast between the high popularity of West Lake among domestic tourists and its low international recognition among foreign visitors, especially westerners, offers an interesting point for the researcher to make a further exploration of the hidden reasons for this phenomenon through an empirical study on tourists' narratives of West Lake. The findings of the study are thus expected to offer a better understanding of tourists' narratives of their visit experience in this World Heritage Site.

3.7 Conclusion

After taking a comprehensive review of the World Heritage Management system in China, I have developed an overall understanding of stakeholders of West Lake and the power relationship between these groups. Three types of official narratives have been examined, including super-national narratives of UNESCO, national narratives and market-oriented narratives. What should be emphasized is that although these three types of narratives are produced by different organizations (sometimes by combined work of them) for different cultural, political and/or economic purposes, they share the common nature that they are all products of dominant power to control or impact other groups. The problem with the official narrative is that although it disguises itself as an objective and even scientific representation of the past, it is always directed towards particular ends. As Smith (2006) and Staiff (2014) argue, the critiques on market-oriented narrative is still restricted in the repetition of AHD, because the problem of this kind of official narrative does not rest in whether it represents a true history or 'bogus history'. No matter how accurately history is represented by this form of heritage narrative, it is inevitably produced to satisfy a particular national or regional interest at the expense of marginalizing the well-beings of other social groups. The problem of officially sanctioned narratives is that allied with the dominant power, they always aim at controlling the power of discourse by operating a close, stable and authorized system of interpretation. This pursuit of control and stability forms the root cause of tension and conflicts in heritage management. In the next chapter I will move on to explore heritage

interpretations at both official and unofficial levels.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Compared with most research on heritage narratives with their focuses on one group of stakeholder each time, my research is more complicated with the aim to understand the multi-vocal narratives of a landscape by four groups of stakeholders. What makes it even more difficult is that West Lake Cultural Landscape, the place for my field work, is a vast open area with 22 sites designated as essential attributes of this World Heritage Site. In order to complete my research task, I borrowed several methodological elements from a range of research approaches and combined them into a multi-disciplinary approach.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the rationale for the research philosophy and paradigm that have been employed, and an analysis of the suitability of a qualitative approach to the research design, data collection and data analysis. This chapter will also justify the use of multi-disciplinary and will discuss the need for research triangulation. It is followed by the discussion on the various research approaches that have been used within heritage studies, on heritage interpretation and the specific approaches that have been adopted for this study. Finally, the chapter discusses the procedures carried out in the fieldwork undertaken for this thesis. This section discusses the fieldwork location, explaining why West Lake was chosen as the most suitable place addressing the key questions for this research. This section will detail the methods and techniques used to collect data for analysis.

4.2 Research questions and objectives

In order to rationalise why a qualitative approach has been employed by borrowing a set of

methods from several disciplines, it is helpful to reiterate the research questions and further clarify related objectives, to rationalise why these approaches have been used.

As introduced in the first chapter, this research focuses on the multi-vocal narratives of West Lake, a Chinese World Heritage. I intend to examine both official interpretations by governmental agencies and non-official voices among local communities and tourists

The two key research questions as the foci of my discussion are:

- What narratives of West Lake have been created and communicated by official stakeholders?
- What narratives of West Lake have been created and communicated by non-official stakeholders?

In order to answer these questions, I set a number of objects to meet:

- Collect data of a range of narratives created by official stakeholders, including WLAC and HTC, and non-official groups, including tourists and local communities
- Summarize the major themes in the narratives of each group
- Identify the similarities and conflicts between these narratives
- Explore the underlying mechanism of these narratives by setting them in a broader socio-cultural context

4.3 Philosophies and paradigms

To answer the research question stated above and achieve the objects step by step, a set of approaches has been utilized. In order to identify the most effective approaches, it is first necessary to understand the philosophical assumptions and research paradigms on which these methodological approaches are based. In general, this research is a social science study of the production and communication of World Heritage values by a range of stakeholders connected to the site, either as institutions or as persons and their relationships of individuals as members of society.

In social science, positivism and phenomenology are the two basic currents of philosophies (Silverman 2005). These two sets of philosophies stand for two different ways of knowledge development and sociological inquiry. While positivism assume the social world as an independent existence which can be understood by using objective methods, phenomenology focuses on the important role of subjects in constructing and interpreting meanings of social phenomena and patterns.

In terms of paradigm, two different paradigms have been developed to examine the world in accordance with these two philosophical views. Quantitative research methods underlay by positivism is thus more scientific and objective, whereas qualitative research methods have developed on the basis of phenomenology which emphasizes the subjective elements of social world. Accordingly, two approaches have been used to examine the issues under discussion. The aim of deductive approach is to use a representative sample of a population in order to prove a theory based on previous hypotheses. The inductive approach is often applied to explore new ideas based on a small sample within a specific context (Leedy and Ormrod 2001).

Considering the main focus in this study is to understand subjective dimension of groups and individuals who produced the narratives of a World Heritage Site, qualitative approach is more workable. Its interpretive nature will provide more opportunities to interpret and analyse participant's experiences, feelings and perceptions. It also allows for deeper exploration and interpretation of narratives so as to identify the themes from participants' discourse.

4.4 Research approaches

Studies in heritage area benefit from the application of the kind of qualitative research

approach commonly found in other fields in the social sciences. Qualitative research within heritage studies has witnessed a historical development. Heritage studies, which were historically dominated by architectural, archaeological and museum disciplines, have moved towards an anthropological concern. This new legitimacy for heritage research within the discipline of anthropology coincided with a turn towards more ethnographic methods.

The use of multi-disciplinary method to form an exploring process of a research carries a number of benefits. First, each method, developed on their own assumptions, has its advantages and disadvantages. An integrated approach of employing multi-disciplinary methods could have the benefits of reducing any weakness. For example, different strategies and methods were used to collect and analyse data of official interpretations and non-official accounts, because they were produced in different spaces and communicated through different media.

This research involves examinations on multi-vocal narratives of a World Heritage Site by a variety of stakeholders and on the social, cultural and political contexts in which these narratives have been produced. In order to achieve its objective to make multi-facet enquiries into the study subject, no single research approach is workable for covering every aspect of this research. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a range of research approaches based on established methodologies within heritage studies, tourism studies, and some political science on the manifestation of identities. I employed a multi-disciplinary methodology by borrowing a number of methods for qualitative research from relevant disciplinary areas and combining several methods into a multi-disciplinary approach.

The multi-disciplinary approach used here refers to an integrated use of several methodologies employed in heritage studies in conjunction with methods from other related disciplines all of which look into heritage narratives as a contact zone for contacts and negotiations between dominant discourses and alternative voices. In order to achieve the best

effect, I adopted several methods from different disciplines and developed them into a systematic methodology. In this study, my research methods consisted of observations, interviews, textual analyses of archives, photographs and other relevant materials. The benefits and challenges of using these research methods will be discussed in the following section.

4.5 Field work and data collection

In this section I will explain the key process of data collection, including site selection, participant recruit, and the ethnographic fieldwork. In the fieldwork, conducted between November of 2015 and June of 2016 in Hangzhou, China, I collected a range of data from related groups and individuals via a number of methods including document collection, observations and in-depth interviews. In the following parts of this section, I will first present the process of how I selected the site for fieldwork and recruited participants, then show how I conducted in-depth interviews with the participants and observations at the selected sites, and finally outline how I collected data about tourists' reviews from tourism sites that supported my analysis on their non-official narratives of the World Heritage Site under examination.

By conducting this fieldwork, I aimed to collect sufficient data to support my analysis on the key issues in next chapter and to gain a basic understanding of the key issue, such as who are producing the narratives of this World Heritage Site, which group is in dominance while which are marginalised, why and how such hierarchical system has been developed, the social and political contexts influence.

A general time arrangement of my fieldwork: from November 2015 to December 2015, I placed the focus of observations on the West Lake museum, ten scenic spots, ten historical sites, five tourism service kiosks and five volunteering kiosks scattering in the landscape.

During these two months, I visited each place and collected data of official heritage interpretations in various forms. Meanwhile, I also collected on-line tourist reviews from two popular websites, one for international tourists, the other for domestic travellers. On the basis of data collection and site-observation, I decided on the initial group of participants in semi-structured in-depth interviews and set interview schedules including museum curators, director of West Lake Monitoring Centre and director of Cultural Relic Office. From January to February 2016, I shifted my focus on the interpretations of West Lake produced in tourism industry. I made participant-observation by joining groups travels at the site and interviewed officials at Hangzhou Tourism Committee, tourism operators and tourist guides who are most relevant to the issue. In March and April, I dedicated my time on paying visits to local communities and collecting data through participant and non-participant observation, interviews and casual talks. The last month of field work was occupied by revisiting sites to collect some more images and contacting some interviews to make further confirmation of some information.

Methods	Setting	To understand
Collection of textual and virtual documents	Library, bookstores and internet	The narratives of tourists The circulation of these narratives
Ethnographic observation	Open setting	The circulation of official narratives The behaviours of group and individual tourists The behaviours and talks of tourist guides
	Close setting	The behaviours and talks of tourists The behaviours and talks of local communities
Semi-structured interviews		WLAC officials' understanding (of West Lake) and motivations of (producing their narratives) HTC officials' understanding (of West Lake) and motivations of (producing their narratives)

		<p>Tourist guides' understanding (of West Lake) and motivations of (producing their narratives)</p> <p>The local communities' understanding (of West Lake) and motivations of (producing their narratives)</p>
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Table 4.1 A list of methods applied; by author

4.5.1 Selecting studied subjects

The initial important task is to select the site for fieldwork. West Lake Cultural Landscape, a World Heritage Site in Hangzhou (China), has been selected as the place for field research for several reasons. The first reason rests with its significance as a heritage site at international, national and local levels. Before its designation as a World Heritage Site in 2011, this site has long been taken as a national iconic site of traditional Chinese aesthetics and a popular tourist destination. In the process of its 10-year preparation for World Heritage nomination, this site was gradually reinterpreted to fit into the frame of UNESCO discourse and thus was also endowed with some Universal Values. Thus this is a sit with the potential of collecting heritage narratives created at different levels. Its easy accessibility is another important reason. The easy accessibility here does not only refer to its location in one of the most populated and developed areas in China, the Yangtze River Delta, which thus is taken as the favourable tourism site by a big population of middle class in this area. It is also attributed to its nature as an open-space without walls. Thus, compared with many other similar cultural heritage sites, such as Summer Palace and Classical Gardens of Suzhou, West Lake has a very close connection with its local communities. Therefore, it is possible to collect data of narratives addressed by a variety of stakeholders at both official and non-official levels.

For all the above reasons, West Lake can be treated as a typical contact zone of cross-cultural

communication in the sphere of heritage interpretation. Therefore, the discussion on the cross-cultural interpretation of West Lake will have a broad implication on the similar research in other contexts.

4.5.2 Document collection

I did document collection through the whole process of my fieldwork, which can be generally divided into three stages: at the initial stage of fieldwork design, during on-site observation and after interviews. At the very beginning, I collected virtual documents including the documents on UNESCO's website, such as its nomination dossier, ICOMOS assessment reports, governmental policy documents, news reports and published articles during its ten-year-long World Heritage Bid. Reading these documents helped me build an initial understanding of the narration of West Lake, especially from an official perspective. I also collected some digital materials such as documentaries, promo films and tourists' video clips on websites (Youtube and Tudou). (a brief summary of the basic understanding of West Lake, such as a national scenic area—something similar to national park in western society, an open space to public with easy access to local residents, a place of high symbolic significance to Chinese culture, West Lake Dragon Well Tea, became World Heritage Site in 2011, the story of its World Heritage Bid). Based on this type of understanding, I designed my fieldwork and started it in November 2015. During my on-site observation, I noticed more materials for collection, such as brochures and leaflets at tourist service kiosks, guidebooks at gift shops, and a collection of books on key attributes of West Lake at the reading room of West Lake Museum. I also noticed that Wechat (similar to a combination of Facebook and Twitter), the most popular social media in China were adopted by WLAC in joint with Qianjiang Evening New to circulate its official interpretation of West Lake. I noticed a number of posters of the public account of ... After adding these public account to my Wechat, I could do online observation of their social media posts. The document collection at this stage helped me

choose my samples and formulate my targeted interview guide for the relevant stakeholders. These collected materials not only help produce contextual data for my formulation of interview guides, but also allow me do the double check /cross examination of the information given by interviewees.

Apart from these materials representing the official voices, I also collected tourists' narratives from two most popular travel reviews sites--Tripadvisor and Mafengwo—the former among international tourists while the latter among Chinese tourists. The tourist reviews on West Lake between November 2015 and Jun 2016 on these two websites were collected as the main materials for further analysis in chapter six. I chose to collect tourists' narratives via this approach for three reasons. First, for easy collection. This is the most effective way to collect tourists' narratives, although researchers can also collect tourists' remarks and feedbacks via participant observation, it usually takes a long time over several years. Considering the limited time attributed to my data collection among this group of stakeholders, I chose to collect data from travel review websites. Second, for content sufficiency. Compared with inclusive and complete accounts of their travel destinations in their after-visit reviews, the on-tour remarks and comments tend to present more temporal and emotional feelings, which cannot be used as appropriate samples for analysis. Comparatively, the tourist reviews, via their circulation on travel websites used as travel networks now are more influential than on-tour narratives which can only be exchanged between a few tourists during their group travel or occasional encounters.

Compared with the traditional media dominated the powerful agencies, internet is a media which enable researcher to trace more narratives of West Lake composed, uploaded and shared by common individuals. Audio-visual materials such as promotional films of West Lake, promotional films of Hangzhou, and video clips uploaded by tourists were also downloaded and collected for the analysis and discussion in the next two chapters.

4.5.3 Observation

The aim of my research is not only to identify the themes in the narratives of West Lake but also understand how these narratives have been created and communicated. For a deeper understanding of the context in which these narratives were generated, I borrowed some methods of data collection from Ethnography.

I did some micro-ethnographic observations in both participant and non-participant ways. The non-participant observation was conducted in open settings such as scenic places, museums and open spaces in local communities. I carried out my non-participant observation at several places in the West Lake Landscape to gain a basic understanding of the context of the data collected from the proceeding interviews with the stakeholders. In these open settings, I watched the behaviours of tourists, tourist guides and other tourist workers (for example, boatmen) at scenic places and listened to their talks. In order to avoid making people around uneasy, I assumed a covert role as a common tourist without disclosing the fact that I was observing people around as objects of study as a researcher. Sometimes, I also tried to engage some of them in brief conversations to probe into specific issues.

In order to get a closer observation of tourists and local communities, I also tried to get access to some closed settings by joining some group travels and visiting the local families, tea houses and B&Bs. In order to get access to these closed settings, I had to use the overt or semi-overt strategies. When I tried to approach the local villagers and residents, I preferred to disclose my identity as a scholar so as to gain their trusts and invitation to their business or living places. But when I wanted to join some group travels, I would only disclose my identity to the tourist guides but joined tourists as a covert participant observer, in order to avoid people under observation feel intruded.

The ethnographic approaches have been useful in the study of heritage issues, in large part because of the flexibly afforded by possibilities of triangulation, or multiplicity of methods

brought to bear on varied sources of data. Material can be drawn from a variety of sources: official guide literature, advertising material, testimony from as full a range of respondents as possible, including members of relevant official bodies in heritage and tourism departments, local communities, visitors.

However, in the process of conducting the field work of this research, the research also found out that a pure ethnographic observation is not enough. Observation can only help with identifying what narratives have been communicated, but it is very difficult to interpret the motivations and perspectives of stakeholders who produced these narratives. In order to fill the observation gaps, interviews should be conducted with the appropriate participants among these relevant stakeholders.

4.5.4 In-depth interviews

Apart from identifying what kind of narratives of West Lake have been produced and circulated, another crucial object of this research is to understand why these narratives have been generated. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to understand the connection between these narratives and a range of discourses cultivated in the wider historical, economic and socio-cultural context. Indeed, effective research will seek to identify the gaps and also try to define as wide a range of contextual factors as possible for interpreting the phenomena under consideration.

Accordingly, the approach of qualitative interview is used to contextualise the collected data of narratives concerning West Lake in the political, social-economic and cultural context, in which a range of on the influence of heritage tourism on both tourists and local communities.

1) Participant identification and sampling approaches

Participant recruit is also an essential step for the research study. In order to identify the most suitable participants, I employed a combination of purposive sampling and snowball sampling. I used in general typical case sampling approach to exemplify a dimension of interest of a specific group of stakeholders. But meanwhile I also considered the approach of maximum variation sampling so as to reflect a wide variation of stakeholders and their interests involved. I used the strategy of snowball sampling also because it was quite difficult to identify appropriate participants and to get suitable samples from interviewees from the very beginning of my fieldwork. Different from the usually sequence of using purposive approaches with clearly identified key participants/figures first and snowball approach to broaden the number of participants, in this research snowball approach was used from the very beginning of my fieldwork. The main reason is that it was not easy to find appropriate interviewees even after identifying the samples of representative official interpretations through on-site observation, because at the official level, either heritage interpretation or tourism guide interpretation have been taken as the secondary responsibility at their respective official agencies and there is no specific official in charge of the management of interpretation of West Lake. As a result, I had to gather information about the relevant stakeholders from some unpurposive talks with staff members at these two official agencies first. Initially, I made contacts with an official at WLAC (whose work is not directly related to the research subject) and gained a basic knowledge about the administrative system of heritage interpretation of West Lake. Through her network in this official agency, I developed contacts with the offices involved in the relevant works and managed to identify the key stakeholders, including the director of West Lake Monitoring Centre, the vice-director of cultural relic office, the curator at West Lake Museum, the directors at some management offices of scenic places.

Overtime, my initial participants introduced me to their friends or recommend people I could approach. In this way, I not only identified the appropriate participants and also established

my understanding of the network of people involved in the narratives of this World Heritage Site. By using a multi-disciplinary of purposive sampling and snowball sampling, I recruited and interview a wide variety of stakeholders at both official and non-official levels, including the director at and community leaders who were most possibly engaged in the official interpretations of this World Heritage Site. Through the contacts with these people, I got a basic understanding of the different roles they played and identifies other groups and individuals also engaged in heritage interpretations and presentations.

Anyhow, the issue of sample size was also taken into consideration. I need to balance the sample size suitable for critical discourse analysis on the samples and the sample size necessary for the heterogeneity of stakeholders. Since the approach of conversation analysis is to be employed, comparatively smaller samples can be more appropriate for an intensive analysis. However, in order to reflect the variability of stakeholders from which the sample is drawn, a larger sample requires that data should be collected from a variety of interest groups.

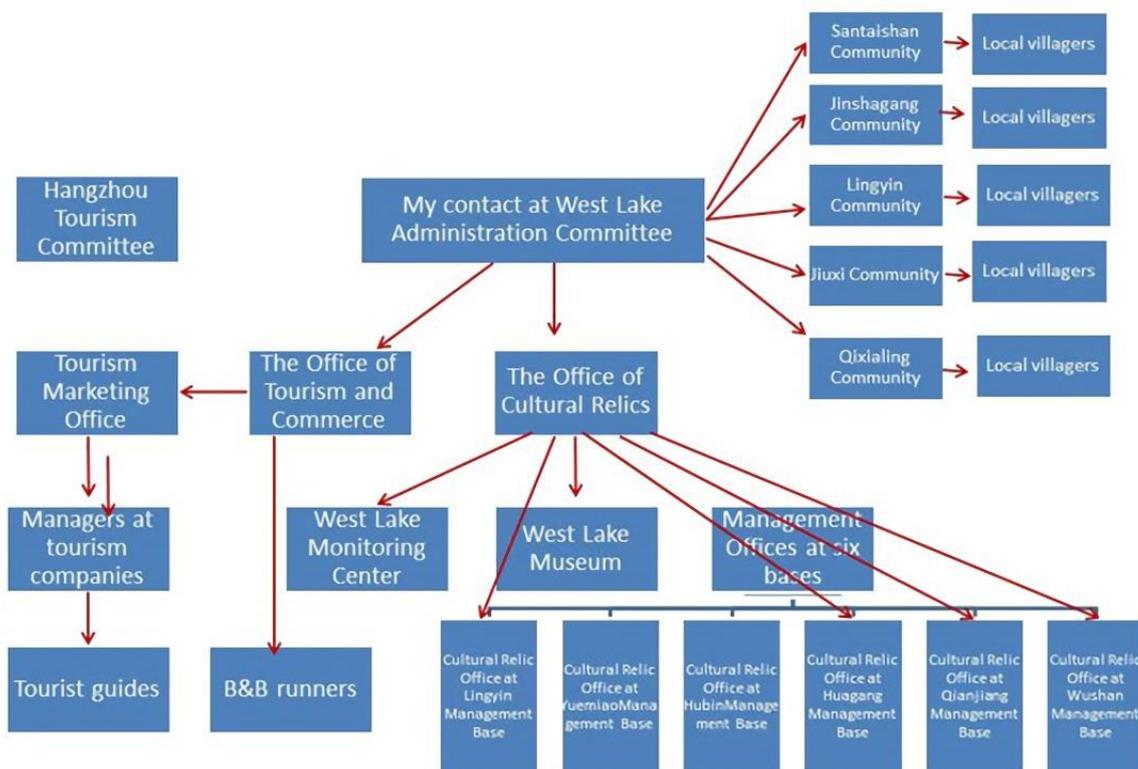


Figure 4.1 The process of participant identification; by author

2) Semi-structured interviews

I used the semi-structured interviews because the questions in such interviews are more open-ended and the communication with interviewees is more flexible and interactive. Although I did formulation of interviews and set an interview guide for each group of stakeholders, I kept reviewing and revising my interview questions according to participant's responses so as to encourage participants to share their own perspectives. The initial interview with local villagers is a good case. In my first contact with local villagers, I wanted to know their understanding and knowledge about West Lake. But to my surprise, the participants showed little interest in the topic and claimed that they had neither knowledge about or interest in West Lake as a World Heritage Site, which made me quite frustrated. I regarded it as a failed contact. I had to adjust my formulation I need generate a better appreciation of what the

interviewee sees as significant and important in relation to my research and identify some new issues which should be formulated into my new interview guide. It means that my questions must cover the areas I need to cover in order to address my research questions but from the perspective of my interviewees. I found it easier to focus on the notions of I thus adjusted the emphasis of my interview and encouraged the interviewees to talk more about their working and living experience in this landscape topic and the changes of the surroundings they witnessed. The villagers showed more interest in such talks about these familiar things and became quite active in sharing their living experience and knowledge of tea farming and production with me. Through the recursive process of formulation and adjustment, I finalize the interview guide each group and thus identified multi-vocal narratives of the same landscape from a range of stakeholders involved, as listed in the following form. (including WLAC officials in heritage department, directors in the Conservation Monitoring Center of West Lake Cultural Landscape (who represent of the interests of the UNESTCO in the local), director of marketing office at Tourism Committee as well as leaders and villagers in local communities.

Stakeholder groups	Themes of narratives
Officials at West Lake Committee,	Prototype of Chinese garden design Historical values National identity
Heritage professionals (archaeologists, historians,)	World Heritage Status as a tool for conservation
Officials at Hangzhou Tourism Committee	World Heritage Status as an international brand
Tourism operators	a recreational, leisure space
Entrepreneurs	
Local citizens	public spaces for exercises and group activities
Local villagers	Tea farms, fields, leisure space
Tourists and recreational	recreation, connection with nature, appreciation of

users	cultivated nature's beauty
volunteers	Helping others, leisure, heritage, social activities

Table 4.2 Themes of narratives by a variety of stakeholders; by author

3) Transcription and edition

I will not go into much details into the transcription and edition of collected data which were undertaken in accordance with the usual process. After each interview, I transcribed the audio record into a textual material in Chinese and sent every transcript to the interviewees as I promised to them in the consent forms. Most interviewees verified the content they have said. Some interviewees pointed out some minor misunderstandings and asked to make some correction or changes. These corrections and changes were documented. After seven and a half months fieldwork, I collected a number of materials, comprising audio recordings and transcripts of interviews, field notes and observation diary documents (such as posters, brochures and press statement), and related images.

4.6 Data analysis

Considering the multi-forms and resources of data, I also employed a multi-disciplinary to data analysis. The first stage of data analysis is to extract themes of narratives produced by each group of stakeholders via thematic analysis, which is used as the basis for a generic approach to qualitative data analysis (Bryman 2016; Clarke and Braun 2013).

The first step is to do the initial coding by giving names to each small portion of text and then elaborate them into themes. This approach is quite useful to the analysis on most collected materials. Take the analysis of tourists reviews as an example.

To develop a coding frame, I first read a selection of 50 domestic tourist reviews to identify key themes around their visit at West Lake and create thematic categories in the initial coding

frame. A number of codes, such as 'paradise on earth', 'poem's, 'beautiful view', 'Jiangnan area' and 'Buddhism', were used to name these categories. After coding of all of the selected tourist reviews was conducted, five themes were identified: 'a place of scenic view's, 'a place of historical significance', 'a place of romantic legend's and 'a place of collective memory'; and 'a place of heroism'. After carrying out such kind of coding and thematic analysis on the narratives of each group of stakeholders, I made comparison between these themes to discover the similarities and conflicts among them. Through the coding, interpreting and summarizing process, I managed to identify major themes in the narratives generated by each group of stakeholders and thus ready for further discussion.

4.7 Ethical Issues

Before conducting my fieldwork, I took research ethics into consideration, because it is related to integrity of a research. The first step was to get familiar with the ethical guidelines of University of Birmingham by attending the ethical training courses and reading through the documents. In addition, I also read the relevant contents in books of social science studies. Thereafter, I developed a good understanding of appropriate codes of practices in conducting a social science research and made a careful examination of ethical concerns which may arise in my research. The chief concerns, as suggested by Bryman (2016:120), are related to four aspects: 'potential harms to participant's, 'informed consent', 'privacy' and 'deception'. This kind of understanding was also confirmed by Denzin and Lincoln's (2000: 662) emphasis on 'informed consent', 'right to privacy' and 'protection from harm' as the three main areas in research ethics.

In order to avoid any potential ethic transgression, I submitted my proposed research including the methods of data collection and participants recruit together with the recruitment letter and the participation consent form (see Appendices) to the ethics committee of my university to make sure that my research was guided by the ethical principles. Hence I did

not start my field work until I obtained approval from the ethics committee in November of 2015.

During my fieldwork, I also kept these ethical principles in mind and followed these principles in practice. Among all of the methods of data collection, interview, due to its in-depth communication and close contact, is the one most possibly related to a number of ethical issues, including informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, and the right to quit or withdraw before or after interviews. Therefore in order to protect participants from any potential harm, a consent form was offered to each participant before their interviews. The most important function of the letter was to make participants well informed of their rights and risks in accepting the interviews. The letter offered a comprehensive explanation of the purpose of the research and asked for their agreement to participate in this research as interviewees. It mentioned clearly that the information obtained from their interviews would be used in my research, appropriately stored and only accessible to me. The letter coped with issue of privacy and anonymity, informing the participant of their right to protect their privacy and keep their identities anonymous (under requested). Most participants were no concerned about the issue of anonymity because they did not sense any potential risks or harm in their participation. For those who wished to remain anonymous, several approaches were take to protect their anonymity and privacy, such as including using codes instead of their name in all related research materials and the thesis. But participants were also made aware of the risk of their identities being recognised by people familiar to them. The participants were also well-informed of their right to quit or withdraw from this research before, during or after their interviews. After making sure that the participants had a complete understanding of the research purpose, their rights and risks, I asked for their grant of consent in the form of signature on their consent letter.

When I collected data via observation, I also assess the possibility of ethical transgression before I took any action. During the no-participant observation of tourists, local communities

and interpreters in public spaces, I did not find it necessary to reveal my identity to people around, as there is little possibility for my activity of examining the physical space and people's activities there to cause harm to any specific individual. But if I need take pictures of them or have a talk with them, I would make a brief explanation of my research purpose and ask for their permission. When I joined some tourist groups for participant observation, I also informed the tourist guides and company managers of my research activity in advance so as to obtain their approval. I would always ask for local communities consent if I wanted to take pictures of their private space and their activities in that kind of space.

4.8 Research Limitations

In the process of writing up my research, I continually took reflection on my research process and gradually got a clearer understanding of the limitations of my research methodology. In general, I identified the following three aspects which should be improved in the future research.

The first one is the snowball sampling approach, which has both strengths and weaknesses. While this approach did help me develop a network with such a variety of stakeholders and recruit interviews participants from each group, it took a lot of time in the process before I finally developed a contact with the stakeholders at terminals of this network. These people, especially B&B runners, gift shop runners, free-lance tourists guides and volunteers, played active roles in producing non-official narratives of West Lake and thus suitable samples for observation and communication. But when I finally got the access to these people, not enough time was left for me to collect more data from these people via observation. From the interviews with these people, I got the second-hand information of their activities, but did not have to opportunity to do participant-observation. This lack of involvement in their activities meant that I had to rely on their account and could not cross examine the contents with my own observation. If I will have another opportunity to do a more focused study on these

people, I will do a deeper exploration to achieve a much more detailed result.

Another issue is the difficulty in following the updates of the official heritage interpretations. The official interpretation of West Lake remained unchanged ever since its designation as a World Heritage Site in 2011 until 2015 when the local authorities started to make preparation of G20 in September of 2016. But these new updates were not released to public before that. I finished my fieldwork and left Hangzhou in June 2016, and in September of that year, a large amount of official narratives including new exhibitions, promo films and guide brochures were produced and disseminated during G20. As a result, the relevant documents I collected during my fieldwork seem out-of-date and being already replaced by the new ones. If I neglect the new appearing ones and still rely on already collected data, it will be a big defect in my research. But it is impossible for me to go back to collect these new data. Therefore I chose to cope with the problem by carrying on an online observation of the social media of relevant stakeholders and adding new ones into analysis. But anyhow, compared with the first-hand data collected from museums and sites, the virtual documents seem insufficient.

The third issue is the language incompetence and data collection from non-English-speaking international tourists. When I tried to collect international tourists' narratives, I identified the problem with language incompetence. I noticed that apart from English-speaking Westerners, there also exist a large number of non-English-speaking international tourists including Korean, Japanese and French. I could not get access to the narratives of these groups of tourists via participant observation or online reviews. Since I could only get second-hand information of these tourists' account of West Lake, I did not include data concerning these tourists in research. Therefore, my analysis on the international tourists' narratives was not inclusive and thus incomplete.

4.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the research objectives, and the qualitative research approaches and other research methods that were considered to be appropriate for achieving the objectives of this study. In order to fulfil the research objectives, I used a multi-disciplinary approach by borrowing a number of methods from several disciplines in social science, including anthropology, ethnography and heritage studies.

I have also discussed the philosophy of the disciplines to which this research belongs, together with the philosophical concerns, and the research approaches that have been appropriate for research the topic of multi-vocal narratives of a World Heritage Site in China. Based on the discussed philosophy and research approaches, I described in some detail my seven months fieldwork in West Lake Cultural Landscape in Hangzhou China. I described the multi-disciplinary methodology of this study which borrows a number of methods from several disciplines in social science, including anthropology, ethnography and heritage studies. I made a review of the methods used in my field work involving in-depth interviews, participant and non-participant observations. I then illustrated how I went about analysing the collected material, from categorizing to coding the data, together with the ethical issues, es. In the last section, I discussed the limitations of the approaches and methods used in this research.

In the next two chapters, I will present data collected from the field work and discuss the issues related to multi-vocal narratives of West Lake at in both official and non-official spheres.

Chapter 5 Official narratives of West Lake Cultural Landscape

5.1 Introduction

It was discussed in chapter two how heritage can be used by different stakeholders for different purposes. It has been used not only as an economic resource but also as a vehicle for national-identity construction. We also saw how these diverse groups of stakeholders have mobilized the concept of heritage in different ways within the strategies of national-identity building, tourism marketing and cultural renovation in different nations. In this sense, heritage tells us more about the present than the past.

The case of West Lake's heritage narrative serves as a great example for the further discussion on how heritage resources have been appropriated through interpretations by different social and political forces behind them. The narratives under the examination are divided into two types, official interpretations produced by official agencies and non-official narratives created by local communities and tourists.

What I wish to explore in this chapter is to examine how diverse players, with their different motives, participate in the production and communication of official interpretations of West Lake. Its main body consists of two parts, in accordance with the two bodies of stakeholders involved in the official narratives of West Lake — WLAC (the official agency for West Lake management) and HTC (a tourism marketing department) —with their own priorities in the appropriation of this World Heritage Site. The first part focuses on the discussion of official narratives of West Lake communicated by WLAC with its emphasis on heritage conservation. Through the analysis of narratives collected from three subordinate official bodies in charge of heritage interpretation, the writer intends to explore the motivations of different players

and aims to display the power relationship promoting the creation and circulation of these narratives. The second part presented another kind of narratives of West Lake, generated and circulated by HTC for tourism marketing and city branding. Three narratives, an outdoor show in West Lake Landscape and a promotional film of Hangzhou tourism broadcast on CNN are selected as examples to illustrate how the heritage resources, either tangible or intangible, have been transformed into economic capital for local development. Promoted by the competition between cities for international resources, investment and tourism markets, these narratives aim to form a new international brand of the city with World Heritage Site. The third part, based on the analysis of Hangzhou Impression, a promotional film of the city broadcast at Times Square during G20, shows how heritage has been appropriated by political forces as a discourse for reconciling conflicts in the process of modernization in domestic area and for the construction of a new identity of the place and the nation in front of an international audience.

Through the analysis of production and circulation of West Lake's official narratives, this chapter aims to draw a picture of West Lake as a cultural space for the performance of different voices of heritage stakeholders and also make a sketch of the complicated relationships between these diverse social and political groups involved in shaping the official heritage interpretations of West .

5.2 Official narratives of a World Heritage Site

This part focuses on the analysis of official narratives communicated by WLAC. Starting with a brief introduction to the interpretation practices of this official agency in charge of heritage management in this landscape, it moves on to a detailed discussion on the causes and motives of their practices. It aims to explore how the official interpretation has been produced and presented, and why its production and communication have been conducted in this way.

As introduced in its nomination dossier, West Lake is a landscape of 4235.76 hectares. Owing to its vast area and diverse cultural elements, the interpretation of West Lake, though namely under the charge of the cultural heritage office, is, in fact, managed by a number of agencies including West Lake Museum (WLM), Monitoring Centre of West Lake (MCWL) and seven site management offices.

WLM and MCWL are the agencies established during the West Lake's Bid for World Heritage Status, and therefore, their works are originally in service for the public presentation and education of West Lake as a World Heritage Site. The seven site management offices are long-standing on-site agencies with responsibility for the conservation, management and interpretation of scenic, historical and monumental sites in the areas under their management. After the World Heritage Listing of West Lake, these offices updated interpretations of the sites which have officially sanctioned as key elements of this World Heritage Site, including Ten PNSPs and fourteen historical sites and monuments. A further probe into the interpretations produced by these agencies will present what narratives were created and explain why these narratives were communicated to the public.

MCWL, established after the World Heritage designation of West Lake, is an official agency in charge of monitoring, research and education of this landscape. The center has been authorized to produce and communicate its official interpretation of West Lake in the forms of funding book publications, public engagement activities and education projects. Two of the cases are selected here as representative examples for detailed discussion of the motivations and power relationships behind these narratives.

One of the examples is about an introductory book called *West Lake Culture Reader*, the publication of which was funded by MCWL. Xiaozheng Yang, a journalist of *Qiangjiang Evening Newspaper* (a local press), was invited to write this book, because she was the

special correspondent for the news reports of West Lake's World Heritage Bid. Yang explained in the preface that she was initially motivated to write this book because she sensed a big gap between the official interpretation of West Lake's heritage value in its nomination dossier and tourist guides' interpretations of this site. She wanted to present the 'true value' of West Lake to a broader audience (Yang 2012). This statement reveals the existence of conflicting voices between two groups of stakeholders, heritage professionals' intention to communicate authorised heritage values and tourist guides' practice of amusing visitors with bogus historical stories. The statement also implies that, currently, tourist guides' (mis)interpretations are more popular and influential among tourists than the official ones. But most importantly, it authorised heritage professionals' interpretation because it communicates the 'true value of the landscape, and should gain the dominant influence among visitors of the site. West Lake's World Heritage Listing strengthened author's confidence in the authority of heritage professionals' interpretation was largely shaped by the AHD of UNESCO and its advisory bodies.

In order to exert the influence of its power rendered by the AHD, the Monitoring Centre offered an intelligent support to the book writing, providing official documents, academic books and relevant research papers as referencing materials, most of which were the achievements of research during the preparation process for its World Heritage Bid. Based on these referential works, *West Lake Culture Reader* turned out to be an official guidebook with a high fidelity to the nomination dossier and its related research works. The book consists of eleven chapters, covering the contents about West Lake's layout, its Buddhist culture, its Confucius culture, its hermitage culture, the scenic view and cultural practice of Ten PNSPs, and its Zen tea culture. All of these contents drew upon the description and justification sections of West Lake's nomination dossier, in which six elements were selected as the key supporting elements to justify the OUV of this landscape. The aim of this book, as its author introduced in the preface of the book, was to 'interpret West Lake to the world'(Yang 2012:1). Owing to West Lake's World Heritage Listing, the nomination dossier

was accredited as an authorized version of the official interpretation of West Lake because it ‘successfully communicated the value of a Chinese cultural landscape to an international audience’(Yang 2012:3). Thus the writing of *West Lake Culture Reader* made a good reference to the nomination dossier and claimed to ‘communicate the real values of West Lake’(Yang 2012:2), to ‘an audience broader than international heritage experts, cultural elites, and staff of WLAC’ (Yang 2012:3). In brief, the book was produced as a popular reading material for the official communication of West Lake’s OUV to a non-professional audience, mainly including local citizens and coming tourists.

But a close reading of the book suggested that there existed a disproportion of contents in the book, with more emphasis on West Lake’s national values rather than the interpretation of its universal values as a World Heritage Site. Despite the author’s claim to present the true values of West Lake to an international audience, its interpretation still focused on national values of the landscape. Among all of its eleven chapters, only four illustrated the beyond-national or cross-cultural influence of West Lake, through the stories of the replicative constructions of landscapes with similar layout and essential elements in East Asia, the cross-cultural influence of its hermitage culture and Zen tea culture, and the long-lasting cultural practice of naming scenic sites with poetical names in other places in China and East Asia. The rest seven chapters, nevertheless, tell the stories of historical sites of national significance. The over-emphasis on national significance can also be sensed in the eleventh chapter about Zen tea culture. Despite the fact that Zen tea culture was not approved as the essential elements of West Lake’s OUV in the final decision by UNESCO and its advisory bodies, it was still interpreted as an integrated and indispensable cultural element of the West Lake Landscape in this book. In contrast, the important statement about West Lake’s OUV under the criterion ii, with its emphasis on the cross-cultural influence of Indian Buddhism on the landscape, was neglected, not only in this book, but absent from any media exposure of West Lake in China after its designation. The inclusion of Zen tea culture and the absence of any account about the transnational introduction and communication of Indian Buddhism among East

Asian suggest that the so-called OUV of West Lake only serves as another supporting story for the narrative about the international recognition and acceptance of Chinese culture. Despite its claim to illustrate West Lake as a World Heritage Site to the world, this book was written in Chinese instead of in a bilingual Chinese-English version, and as a result turned out to be a reading material merely suitable for local residents and domestic tourists, adding to the understanding of West Lake as a cultural reservoir of Chinese traditional culture, boasting Chinese visitors' sense of pride about the international recognition of a Chinese cultural heritage of an international significance, and strengthening their sense of belong to an unified national identity through this process.

This preference in heritage interpretation was also reflected in the case of another project, West Lake Ambassador, organised by MCWL. According to its introduction on Wechat, this project aims to educate and train local university students as qualified volunteers, being able to interpret West Lake as a World Heritage Site to a broader audience. After receiving a series of training sessions and conducting some field work on West Lake, these volunteers are expected to organise on-site interpretation activities and to give lectures of this World Heritage Site at schools and in communities. But through the participation in this project, researcher found out that these volunteers' interpretation failed to communicate the OUV of West Lake as a World Heritage Site to the audience. Take its activity called Reading West Lake on the National Heritage Day of 2016 as an example. The activity was organised in the area around the Solitary Hill. This area was selected for this activity because of the existence of a large number of designated sites in this area, including one PNSP and four historical sites. This initial motivation suggests that the organisers aim to communicate the World Heritage values of these sites along the route of this visit walk to a broad audience. However, the interpretations on each site turned out to be narratives of its historical, aesthetic or monumental values of at a national or local level. For instance, Tomb of Lin Bu was one of these sites at the Solitary Hill. It is an important site as the testimony for the global influence of this landscape. The story about Lin Pu's trans-national influence as a hermit poet in the

East Asia was based on researches during the West Lake's Bid for World Heritage Site and was narrated into details in the appendix of nomination dossier and later in the book *West Lake Culture Reader*. The following is part of the story quoted from the nomination dossier:

Through the cultural exchange activities among East Asian countries between the 9th and 20th centuries, literature works and paintings of West Lake by Bai Juyi, Su Shi and Lin Bu were introduced to Japan and the Korean peninsula. Lin Bu's poems and paintings and his legendary secluded life aroused a great interest in the West Lake Landscape among the aristocrats and monks in Japan, promoting its influence and spreading among scholars in East Asia and Confucians in the Korean peninsula from the 11th to 18th centuries.

(SACH 2011)

Nevertheless, West Lake Ambassadors' narrative merely focused on the national significance of Lin Bu as an iconic symbol of Chinese hermit culture and the historical and artistic values of Emperor Kangxi's calligraphy work, Stele of Wu-he-fu, a testimony for the official approval of Lin Bu's hermitage practice. The story about Lin Pu's role as a cultural ambassador introducing West Lake to other countries in East Asia, was completely ignored.

This World Heritage Day activity, like many other heritage activities, despite its claim to interpret West Lake as a World Heritage Site to a broad public on a Heritage Day, failed to achieve its original design and did not communicate West Lake as a World Heritage Site. What were repeatedly emphasised were historical, aesthetic and monumental values of these sites. Such narratives have been widely applied to strengthen the sense of cultural priority and the ideology of cultural nationalism. Just as Pyburn states, 'no nationalist agenda is complete without a World Heritage site' (Pyburn 2007:172). It suggests that the World Heritage Convention can be seen to legitimize the literal and symbolic 'ownership' of 'a particular site on the part of a particular group, simultaneously increasing the importance of

the site, while allowing that one group to dictate policies regarding access to and usage of the site' (Monteiro 2011:314). This restricts the meanings attached to World Heritage Sites and discourages diversity in the historic fabric. Moreover, it contradicts the World Heritage Convention stating that 'World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located' (UNESCO 2017).

The analysis on the interpretation practice of MCWL suggests that this official agency, as the only one with the responsibility for offering World Heritage education of West Lake to the public, has not yet fulfilled its duty in communicating the OUV of this World Heritage Site to the public. Owing to the dominant influence of nomination dossier, the official interpretation communicated by the centre was largely shaped by the authorised heritage discourse of UNESCO and its advisory bodies. As a result of its bid for World Heritage status, a set of new narratives to interpret the cultural heritage values of this landscape was created. The successful result of its designation was attributed to its nomination dossier which made a successful cross-cultural communication of its heritage values to international heritage experts. Thus a new set of official interpretation was developed on the basis of this document, with the ambition to communicate the aesthetic, historical and monumental values of West Lake to an audience broader than the international heritage experts of UNESCO and its advisory bodies. But when local citizens and domestic visitors became the main body of its audience, the strategy of its interpretation were also adapted. Although the interpretation still revolved around those values of the site, instead of building a bridge for cross-cultural communication and diverse-cultural understanding, its emphasis was on their national significance which help build a sense of cultural priority among the domestic audience only.

Apart from MCWL, West Lake Museum, with its large space and professional staff, is another important agency for the presentation and interpretation of West Lake Landscape as a World Heritage Site to visitors. Its location, next to UNESCO's World Heritage Site emblem (figure 5.1), also places it in a quite advantageous position to serve as a tourist centre, providing an

overview of the official interpretation of this cultural landscape of outstanding universal values.



Figure 5.1 The location of West Lake Museum next to the UNESCO emblem; By author

The museum is as a major public space for the public presentation of the spatial and temporal features of West Lake as a cultural landscape. Among the six sections of regular exhibition, two sections, The Diorama of West Lake and The Dredging History of the West Lake were given more priorities than others.

In its entrance hall, a three-dimensional diorama of West Lake (figure 5.2) was set to display the layout of this landscape. This model shows a panoramic view of the spatial feature of the lake and its two-causeway-and-three-isle layout, both of which were inscribed as essential elements of West Lake's OUV. A number of touch-screen kiosks were set around the model for detailed introduction to the essential elements of West Lake as a World Heritage Site. This 3D model presents the spatial dimension of West Lake and interprets it as an object to be viewed, appreciated and understood as a unity.



Figure 5.2 The diorama of West Lake at West Lake Museum; By author

Apart from the physical representation of its spatial features in a minimized model, the history of the landscape's evolution and construction through continual dredging projects was also displayed on information panels in the main hall. The second section of its exhibition, Dredging History of the West Lake, occupying the most of the space, offers a detailed account about the history of West Lake's evolution into a cultural landscape in a chronological order. In addition, a 3D movie of West Lake's landscape evolution is also regularly shown in its cinema. This cinema, together with the entrance hall and the main hall, have attracted the most of the audience in the museum.

The great priority given to the interpretation of West Lake as a cultural landscape indicates an obvious influence of the heritage discourse of UNESCO and its advisory bodies. Cultural landscape is a concept imported from the UNESCO into China. In the process of West Lake's

World Heritage Bid, there occurred a heated debate on what type of World Heritage Site West Lake should be classified as, a natural heritage or a cultural heritage, because the site has features of both types. The final decision to define it as a cultural landscape was regarded as a milestone in the preparation process for its bid. It could be regarded as a result of local heritage professionals' effort to integrate the interpretation of West Lake's values into the heritage discourse of UNESCO, which has exerted a great impact on the official narratives of West Lake in the post-designation stage.

Compared with the detailed presentation of its spatial features and the historical development of the landscape in the spaces with easy access, the stories about the national and trans-national influences of this landscape, with its key attributes, including Ten PNSPs and fourteen historic monuments and sites, were displayed in a dark, small, and isolated area (figure 5.3), which could be easily neglected by visitors.

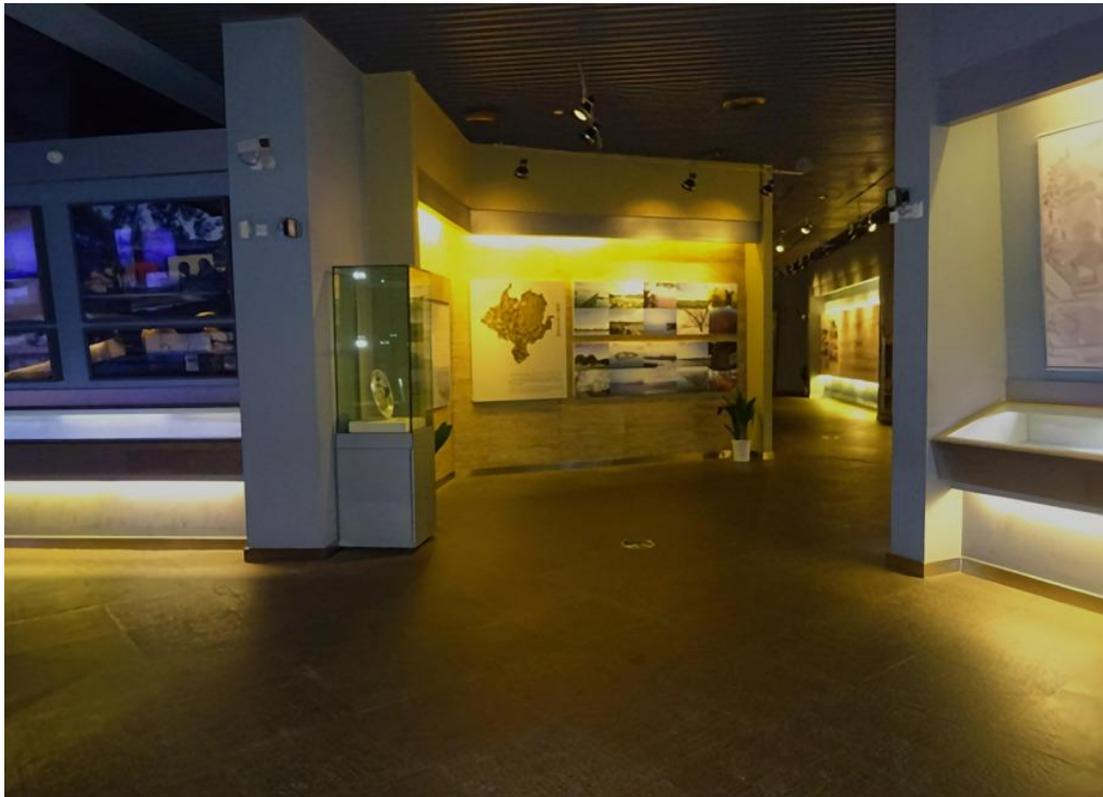


Figure 5.3 The exhibition hall of Ten PNSPs and fourteen historical monuments and sites; by author

When I asked a staff member of the exhibit department about reasons for this kind of spatial arrangement, she gave me the following answer:

It is not our duty to interpret West Lake as a World Heritage Site. The Monitoring Centre is in charge of this work. Our exhibition is an interpretation of the artifacts selected by the cultural relic department among the collections of the museum. It is the cultural relic department that makes the selection and decision on the subjects and contents of exhibitions.

(WLM 2)

This staff member's answer released some important information about the reasons for the disproportion of contents in the exhibition of West Lake. First of all, she denied the direct impact of UNESCO's heritage discourse on the interpretation of West Lake in the museum, which explains why presentation of the trans-national influence of the landscape in this space appear marginalised. But meanwhile her statement about the artefact-based interpretation admitted the power of heritage professionals in the cultural relic department. In this sense, the wide application of concepts such as landscape, authenticity and integrity in its interpretation could be understood as an intentional effort to integrate the official interpretation into the heritage discourse of UNESCO. Considering the education background of these professionals in history, archaeology and museology, it is not difficult to understand why historical, aesthetic and monumental values of this landscape were emphasised, at a national or local level instead of a global level though.

As Anderson (1991) points out, museums are the mirrors of their places, and help us understand the social-political transformations that have taken place. As a response to the trend of traditional cultural renaissance, WLM justified preservationist's conservation activities through its narrative in a space authorised by an internationally recognised heritage discourse. The heritage discourse of UNESCO, at least some terms and concepts, has been

used as a useful instrument by heritage professionals to justify their conservation practice and to strengthen their power over the interpretation of the values of West Lake. However, the scarcity of global narratives of the World Heritage Site indicates that the museum's interpretation aims at fostering a local and national cultural identity against the challenge of Western modernisation in the cultural area, which often strengthens a sense of cultural priority for individuals and a cultural nationalism in a national scope. It, anyhow, lacks any sense of responsibility to deliver UNESCO's cultural policy for achieving world peace through cross-cultural communications.

While the interpretation of WLM offers an outline and a general introduction to West Lake as a cultural landscape, the seven on-site management offices undertake the responsibility of presentation and interpretation of specific sites, especially the Ten PNSPs and fourteen historic monuments and sites designated as the essential elements of West Lake (figure 3.4). Although, in theory, it is the department of cultural heritage that is in charge of this work, it was admitted by the director of this department that it is the heritage professionals at each site office who are responsible for the presentation and updating these interpretations.



Figure 5.4 Information panels at some sites in West Lake Cultural Landscape; By author

The contents of the on-site interpretation at these sites show an obvious impact of AHD of World Heritage with emphasis on the historical, aesthetic and monumental values of these sites. Nevertheless, it is also worth noticing that more national rather than universal significance of these sites has been communicated through their official narrative. Take the information panel at one of the Ten PNSPs, Su Causeway in the Morning of Spring, as an example. The interpretation of this scenic site consists of three parts: 1) physical features of Su Causeway, including its location, its physical structure, the construction project, and distinctive flora along the causeway; 2) description about the scenic views, as summarised in the four-character name about the picturesque view and the poetic ambience; 3) the evolvement of this scenic spot from the 12th century to 18th century, when its name was authorised by the Emperor Kangxi in the form of an imperial stele with the Emperor's calligraphy. Each part was presented in order to communicate respectively the historical and aesthetic values of this scenic site. Such an emphasis on its physical authenticity, under the impact of AHD, limited its value to its material existence and features and thus fails to interpret the universal meaning of this site as an embodiment of a cultural practice of naming scenic sites with poetic names, which was widely practiced in China and later in East Asian countries over nine centuries. As a site manager pointed out, Ten PNSPs, at the core, are not merely scenic views, but more significantly a cultural tradition, evolving and inherited in an Oriental civilisation which attaches more importance to the intangible values rather than the tangible forms of a heritage site. But the present interpretation of Ten PNSPs, due to the intention of adapting itself to fit into the heritage discourse of UNESCO, only tells half of the story about the values of these designated sites.

Compared with the interpretation of Ten PNSPs, on-site interpretation of fourteen historical monuments and sites indicates a stronger influence of the discourse of nationalism. According to the data I collected from on site observation, the interpretation of these sites can be classified into two kinds: the introductions to their physical authenticity as a result of continuous inheritance and repeated renovation, and the national significance of these sites in forming Chinese cultural identity. A summary of the themes and protagonists of the

narratives of these sites in the following form offers a clear indication of their preference and emphasis.

Number	Historic monuments and sites	Themes	Protagonists	Significance
1	Linying Temple	Buddhist culture	Monk Hui Li, Emperor Kang Xi	A Buddhist Temple of a great national significance
2	Statues of Feilafeng Peak	Buddhist culture		Buddhism; cultural communication between ethnic groups in China
3	Jingci Temple	Buddhist culture	Emperor Kangxi	Buddhism
4	Leifeng Pagoda	Buddhist culture	King Qian Chu Lady White	Buddhism; country reunion; a national ICH attached to the site
5	Baochu Pagoda	Buddhist culture	King Qian Chu	Buddhism; country reunion
6	Liuhe Pagoda	Buddhist culture	King Qian Liu	Buddhism; country reunion
7	Yue Fei's Tomb (and Temple)	Confucius culture	General Yu Fei	National hero, embodiment of loyalty and filial piety, importance doctrines in Confucianism

8	Stele of Wu-He-Fu and Lin Bu's Tomb	Hermitage life and culture	Hermit Lin Bu Emperor Kangxi	Hermitage culture of national influence
9	Xiling Seal Engraver Association (China Sigillography Museum)	Chinese sigillographical culture	The founder and members of Seal Engraver Association	Sphragistics, a typical Chinese art of both local and national significance
10	Site of Temporary Imperial Palace of Qing Dynasty	Royal visits	Emperor Kang Xi	Imperial sanction
11	Wenlange Imperial Library	Royal visits and book collection	Emperor Kangxi and Emperor Qianlong	Book collection, a typical cultural practice of Confucianism
12	Baopu Taoist Monastery	Taoist culture	Ge Hong	Taoism, a typical Chinese religion
13	Longjin Well	Zen culture		Zen Tea Culture
14	Site of Qiantang Gate	Urban transformation		A feature of the landscape of local significance

Table 5.1 Themes of official interpretation at fourteen enlisted historical sites; by author

Among all of the stories narrated at these sites, it is their national significance rather than their universal value that has been emphasised. While the narration of stories about these cultural sites were supposed to demonstrate the integrity, authenticity, and continuity of this landscape evolvment, they, in fact, made a stronger assertion for West Lake's role as a reservoir of typical Chinese cultural elements, including Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism as well as affiliated cultural practices, doctrines and beliefs. The Yu Fei's Temple is used as

place for the teaching of Confucius doctrines of loyalty and filial piety, while Lingyin Temple serves as the place for presenting the culture of Zen, a China-originated school of Mahayana Buddhism that developed in combination with Chinese local religion Taoism and was popular among Confucius literati and official ever since the 9th century. These narratives have been communicated to strengthen the symbolic meaning of West Lake as a spiritual home of Chinese elites, rather than a testimony of trans-national cultural communication and dialogue.

Through the heritage narratives at these sites, the symbolic meaning of West Lake was connected to all its political, social and economic impetus in a national scope. The whole landscape, together with its large number of historical monuments and sites (not only those listed as essential elements of its OUV), was used to shape it into a reservoir of semiotic signs, a monument for the regeneration of Chinese national culture. As Halbwachs (1992:200) argued, 'if a truth is to be settled in the memory of a group it needs to be presented in the concrete form of an event, of a personality or a locality'. Achievements can be remembered through a wide array of material culture, expressions and performances.

A variety of acts were carried out at these selected historical sites in the West Lake Landscape to remind local citizens of particular parts of a narrative of their shared past. They were, in fact, not encouraged to remember personal experiences but what they have been taught, through education and the media, and this act of remembering was intended to evoke emotions of group identity that bind a group and underline boundaries of 'insider' and 'outsider'.

As such, historical sites and monuments can be interpreted in such a way that they carry relevant morals, doctrines, beliefs, cultures and traditions long into the future, acting as signs in the West Lake that efface time by equating past history with present generations: 'remember the culture our ancestors have developed for our present identity and prosperity'. Yet, even when these are the messages communicated at these sites, thus contributing to

fixing a state's grand narrative of a shared past and collective, these sites have proved to be far more complex, their meaning changing with time and with use.

Narratives of the reconstruction of some monuments on their original sites also worked to shape memories, creating a sense of identity or give meaning to heritage. The story of Leifeng Pagoda, its collapse in the times of wars and chaos in 1930s and its reconstruction in the time of peace and prosperity in 2004, serves as such a symbol for the renaissance of Chinese culture and society in the 21st century. The place has become such a potent symbol that its meaning has become divorced from its material architectural authenticity and integrity.

This is also the case of in the interpretation of the whole West Lake Landscape. A significant part of its heritage values lies in its symbolism, symbolism that has been built up and built on for over a thousand years through a rhetoric system of words and images that has coupled them with an array of causes and meanings. West Lake thus serve as a 'barometer' of traditional Chinese culture, instead of a 'container' of artefacts, offering a spatial experience that is shared with the group of 'self'— local citizens and some domestic tourists, instead of foreign visitors.

The stories created and circulated by WLM, MCWL and on-site management offices suggest that the official narratives of West Lake were shaped by both AHD of UNESCO and the discourse of cultural nationalism. The interpretation of the past of the site is made out of selections of a large amount of materials, which demonstrate either the material authenticities of the landscape as a cultural heritage and the symbolic value of the site for the national identity construction. As Weber (1949: 81) put it, 'all knowledge of cultural reality is always knowledge from particular points of view'. The value of West Lake is not inherent, but something constructed. It is through 'a complex filtering process that certain elements of the past have been shaped into heritage by some dominant group'(Harrison 2004:1).

Although UNESCO and its affiliated agencies have not participated in the official interpretation of West Lake, it does not mean that World Heritage status has an insignificant effect on the interpretation of this heritage site. The findings suggest that in practice the AHD of UNESCO has fundamentally shaped WLAC's official narratives of this World Heritage Site. Smith (2006:29) rightfully points out that AHD 'defines who the legitimate spokespersons of the past are'. With 'the authority of expertise', WLAC has been empowered by this discourse to develop its official narratives to highlight the historical, aesthetic and monumental values of specific sites. This narrative has also, in turn, affected its management policies. Much of the activity in the process of its heritagisation continues to control what can be built, where, in what style and using what materials in order to preserve its World Heritage features (Dearborn and Stallmeyer 2010). Equally it mandates what can be removed and this includes cultural practices as well as architectural fabric. Despite the fact that claims of valuing community participation, preserving intangible culture and so forth are commonly asserted, fields like anthropology or social history rarely receive the same attention as the techno-scientific discourses or architecture and architectural conservation.

However, it is also observed that UNESCO has very little power to enforce its particular conception of 'universal significance' into the official heritage narrative of a World Heritage Site in its post-designation period. The emphasis on the physical authenticity of West Lake has reduced the management of its World Heritage values to questions of aesthetics and the technicalities of material conservation. Memories and events in the landscape were interpreted through the kaleidoscopic lens of nostalgia of a lost past with elite culture. Local citizens in the modern urban area can thus come to 'reconstruct' the homeland in the imagination. West Lake was frozen into an iconic testimony of traditional Chinese culture and a prototype of landscape in Oriental Civilization, which made it easily absorbed into a wider narrative of cultural tourism.

Nevertheless, the different memories or interpretations of those memories can divide the

societies. Tensions can arise when citizens' imagined-scape of the landscape frozen by the official narrative collides with local villagers' experience-scape which is more complex and continuously changed in reality.

5.3 Narratives of West Lake as a tourism destination

Apart from WLAC which produced and communicated a heritage-discourse-based narrative of West Lake, a variety of other top-down stakeholders with their political and economic interests in this World Heritage Site, including the municipal government, HTC, and government-sponsored tourism enterprises, were also brought in to create or uphold their narratives which serve their diverse ends.

Ever since 2008, a strategy of developing international tourism industry has been implemented by the municipal government of Hangzhou as an attempt to lessen tensions among the opposing forces and achieve a sustainable development of in social, economic and cultural spheres. The local authorities made significant effort in attempts to upgrade Hangzhou from a provincial capital city and a destination of domestic tourism to a city of greater national or even global significance. A number of World Heritage Sites and intangible heritage assets have been employed as useful labels to brand the city.

Hangzhou's development policies and implementation measures are part of a conscious effort that aims to put Hangzhou at the 'top of the national class'. Local authorities are also contemplating how to use city branding policy in international positioning efforts. As a result, the municipal government, especially the tourism committee, has exerted great efforts in constructing a city's memorable identity and conveying it in a convincing manner. Promoting Hangzhou as a tourism destination in the international market is an essential part of this city branding strategy.

With the belief that every new inscription on the WH list spurs tourism (Breidenbach and Nyiri 2007), the local government and the local tourism industry quickly embraced the notion of World Heritage and employ it as an international brand to produce a commodification effect for the local tourism industry. A series of promoting movies and performances were created and presented to prospective tourists through different media, including TV channels, outdoor screen, automobile advertisement and on-site performance.

In this section, the discussion focuses on three representative examples to illustrate how alternative narratives about West Lake have been used to build up a new identity of the city and how these non-conservation-oriented narratives has further appropriate the historical and cultural resources of West Lake, and thus brought West Lake into new capital relations. These three examples include a promotion film of West Lake on CNN, the West Lake Impression performance and a promotion film of Hangzhou during 2016 G20.

Through the analysis of these representative narratives, this study shows that HTC, a bureaucratic organisation in charge of tourism planning and operation in Hangzhou, has a clear intention of using West Lake's World Heritage status as a quality indicator and selling point in the promotion of this site as a tourism product in an international market, which would improve visitor profile and boost the sale of local products. Some government-funded companies, through their joint cooperation with local authorities, also appropriated the cultural resources of this World Heritage Site in the production and promotion of their cultural or tourism products. Three narratives of these stakeholders were chosen as examples for a further analysis, which would illustrate how these different political and economic interest groups were involved in producing official narratives of West Lake for tourism marketing. These examples were selected to advocate that the international tourism industry of Hangzhou was promoted by the pursuit of modernisation of economy and could hardly avoid the impact of the global trend of commercialization on the local culture. The process

of tourism development, as an experience of modernity, generated a situation in which new representations of place and construction of place-identity were asserted.

5.3.1 Our story of Hangzhou: a visit to a heritage theme park

The discussion starts with the first example, *Our Hangzhou Story*, a tourism promoting movie produced by HTC and broadcast on CNN to USA audience (figure 5.5). It is a visual narrative about an American family's visit in Hangzhou and the eighty per cent of the scenes are in West Lake



Figure 5.5 A scene of *Our Hangzhou Story*; By CNN; Screenprint by author

The story was narrated by the wife, presenting the visiting experience of the family in a day trip around Hangzhou. It started with the scene of a Western woman (the narrator) in Qipao, a Chinese costume popular in early 20th century. It was followed by a series of activities including a boat travel on West Lake, a bike travel around the lake, a lunch at Louwailo, a renowned local restaurant of Hangzhou cuisine, a walk along the main street of the old down

town, and shopping at a cloth store of traditional Chinese Qipao. The movie ends with the scene of the family watching the performance 'Impression West Lake' on a rowing boat in vast water area of West Lake. The narrator drew a summary of their experience in West Lake and made an invitation to prospective visitors by saying that '[This is] Our Hangzhou story. What's yours?'

In this promo film, the cultural landscape was transformed into a tourist-scape through a narrative constructed in a logic familiar to Western tourists based on the dichotomy between modern and tradition. West Lake was presented as a pre-industrial oriental world through a careful selection and organization of visual semiotic codes. The historical and cultural resources of West Lake have been tripped off from their social and historical contexts, and presented as semiotic codes, including a Chinese pagoda in the style of 13th century, a rowing boat, an old down town with traditional buildings, local cuisine, a terrace with a pastoral view, Qipao in Chinese red with elaborate hand embroidery performers in Kunqu costume, a rural landscape as background, red carps and cranes. With these visual semiotic codes, this tourism narrative fosters a social action that contributes to the (re)construction of Hangzhou by fostering a re-imagination of a pre-industrial society, which has not been affected by the modern civilization. Although the narrative aimed to build a Utopia of a rural society, the modern elements can hardly be completely screened off. The American family's visit itself means the inevitable encounter between the West and the East, between a modern civilization and a pre-industrial culture in a world of highly commercialized global economy. Each scene of the movie suggested that Chinese elements have been successfully transformed into cultural products which can be consumed by the Westerners. The silk culture was embodied in a red Qipao consumed by an American woman. The local boat woman dressed in a traditional rowing outfit offers service to tourists enjoying the view in relaxation. Local snacks and local cuisines satisfied the visitors' desire for exotic food and a performance for tourists transformed local cultural elements into a modern show which could be watched and appreciated by foreigners without any background knowledge of relevant legends and

folklores.

As a result, despite the density of cultural codes, the movie did not present West Lake as a World Heritage Site of high authenticity and OUV for cultural tourism. Instead, it introduced a theme-park-like vision of the landscape, suggesting that visiting West Lake is an experience of sightseeing, shopping, local food eating, and some performance watching for tourists. In this narrative, the World Heritage status of West Lake was employed merely as a brand marketing tool. At the end of the movie, the notion of ‘West Lake, UNESCO World Heritage Site’ appeared at the very bottom of the screen under a promoting slogan ‘Unseen Beauty, Hangzhou China’ for local tourism industry. Such a notion without emblems of UNESCO and World Heritage Site could be easily neglected.

This theme-park strategy was developed from the marketing experience based on large-scale domestic tourism with the main motivation for pleasure-seeking. It is also a strategy targeting at American tourists with strong preferences for sight-viewing, shopping and dining and less interest in historical sites or cultural heritage. According to a 2014 report by Tourism Development International (TDI), sightseeing and shopping rank the top two among the 15 leading activities of United States Travellers while cultural heritage sites are listed as the eighth item. The data shows that curiosity about World Heritage may exist among American tourists but only as a supplementary motive for visiting sites like West Lake. In general, this theme park approach to heritage management is lucrative and pleases many tourists. In this vision, the integrity and authenticity of the historic structures and traditional customs are easily sacrificed.

This strategy was set and implemented by the Municipal Tourism Committee partly because of its attitude towards the World Heritage status of West Lake. In my interview with the Tourism Committee, the officer readily admitted that

World Heritage status is merely a branding tool, which has been used to present Hangzhou as a tourism destination with international recognition. It is just the same as ‘New World Wonder’s and CNN’s ‘Top Ten Places to view the sunset’. Now Hangzhou has a second World Heritage Site—the Grand Canal (Hangzhou section) and may have a third one in future. Therefore, West Lake is only one of the tourism resources we try to promote to the international tourists.’

This simplified understanding of the OUV of a World Heritage Site and the open neglect of its vulnerability to mass tourism indicate a very dangerous preference of the Tourism Committee, which will later cause conflicts with the conservation-motivated Management Committee of West Lake in both management and interpretation practices.

However, the TDI report also showed that among all of the expectations of United States travellers, ‘authentic experiences in new destination’s was identified with the top priority, followed by ‘rest and relaxation’ (68%) and ‘desire to spend time with loved ones’ (48%). The authenticity pursued by international tourists, however, is not necessarily the same authenticity required by UNESCO for a World Heritage Site. Tourism, as a process of commercial development and integration in which the authenticity of place may be ‘commodified’ through the marketing of increasingly standardized images. What have been identified as authentic views and traditions by tourists are ironically something that has been renovated and reinvented. The authenticity tourist look for at tourism destination is often an effect of something created and ‘performed’ (MacCannell 1976: 91–107).

At the very beginning of the promo movie, the Leifeng Pagoda, a pagoda in typical Chinese style, was presented as a landmark of West Lake. Its standing on the bank of the lake generated an authentic view of this landscape in Southern Song Dynasty (in 13th century), when the Ten Poetically Named Sites were originally created and designated. However, the physical body of this pagoda was a modern product of the reconstruction in 2002. This pagoda, despite its inauthenticity in material existence, is an iconic building in the landscape,

not only because of its aesthetic appeal, but also because of a diverse values attached to it. After its construction in 10th century, it has been used as a religious site until its collapse in 1924. In his second essay 'On the collapse of Leifeng Pagoda', writer Lu Xun gave its collapse a symbolic meaning, as a metaphor of the declining Chinese society in 1920s. Thus the reconstruction of the pagoda was given a symbolic meaning as the renaissance of China in 21st century. However such narrative can hardly arouse international tourists' interest. In stead, it has been presented as an iconic landmarks of West Lake for its aesthetic appeal.

The picture of Leifeng Pagoda in sunset the picture of West Lake Landscape in the 2015 edition of World's Heritage by published by UNESCO.

The case of Leifeng Pagoda indicates that, in a tourist-scape, authentic subjectivity is made possible by embracing inauthenticity itself. While the tourist gaze seeks to construct a landscape of stasis, isolated from the world of change, the place upon which the gaze rests is characterized by dynamic process. In the process of transforming a living landscape with on-going process of change figurees into a tourist landscape requiring stasis and authenticity, physical structures have been renovated and local traditions have been invented so as to represent the so-called original scenes and culture that the tourist gaze thrives on.

In the CNN's promo movie of West Lake, Leifeng Pagoda, together with other cultural codes including the wooden sight-viewing boat, boatwoman in traditional outfit, red Qipao and Chinese knot, lunch on a terrace with scenic view, put on a performance of 'staged authenticity' (1976: 98). In the context of tourism, it might be argued that the authenticity of heritage is performed for the benefit of tourists. What have been presented to tourists is the past which was sanitised by the promoters of tourism industry.

5.3.2 Impression West Lake

The above example has shown how tourism industry has promoted or exacerbated the process of commoditisation of physical heritage resources. The discussion on the following example about Impression West Lake attempts to show how intangible cultural resources can be appropriated to satisfy the tourist gaze through artistic adaptation.

Impression West Lake is a performance sponsored by the tourism committee of the municipal government as one of the tourism products to strengthen Hangzhou's competition in both the national and the international tourism markets (figure 5.6). It was directed by famous film director Zhang Yimou. On its official website, it was introduced in the following way: 'searching for the ancient folk legends and myths of Hangzhou, relying on real scenic theatre to reflect traditional culture, incarnate natural specialties, historic details and folk cultural deposits of Hangzhou' (Impression West Lake 2016).





Figure 5.6 A scene of Impression West Lake; by the Impression West Lake Company

According to the introduction in its brochure, the story of the performance is based on the narrative structure of 'the Legend of the White Snake' which has been perceived as a local legend with a national influence. Another romantic story the Butterfly Lovers with a close association with West Lake is also recounted. As a local legend created in the space of West Lake, several places such as the Broken Bridge, the Leifeng Pagoda and even any water area of West Lake (where the protagonists of the White Snake once took a ferry) can contribute to the imagination of the storyscape of this legend. As it is introduced in its leaflet to audience, '[w]hat lies in front of you is the West Lake with thousands of year's history. ... In your peaceful time, Bai Juyi, Su Dongpo (Su Shi), Su Xiaoxiao, Yue Fei and Lin Pu are walking towards you ...'. Set on a beneath-water stage in the water area of the landscape, this outdoor performance has been designed to narrate the story to the audiences in a storyscape full of cultural codes depicted in the original story. In doing so, the performance engaged tourist with the fantasy of local legend with their embodied experience.

However, as a tourism product to attract an audience of broad cultural backgrounds, including local residents, domestic visitors and international tourists, the performance presents a modern adaptation of the original story. This is sensed not only in the addition of the elements

of modern performance such as dancing, singing, music and lighting effect, but also in the elimination of some specific elements connected to the specific context in the original narrative.

The whole performance is a five-act play, including the acts of Meeting, Fall in Love, Say Goodbye, Memory, and Impression. The initial encounter between the two protagonist is presented in the following way according to the official introduction of the performance:

A white crane flied from the remote horizon, landed and changed to a young scholar. At the same time, another white crane flied here and changed to be young lady. They fall in love with each other at the first sight. They enjoyed wonderful scenery under an umbrella (the keepsake of their love) in rain around the lake of thousands of years of history.

Here, the characters Lady White and Xu Xian in the original version were universalized as any young scholars and young ladies who meet and fall in love with each other in the landscape of West Lake. Their love and marriage life was represented not through the development of a plot with specific events, but instead in a metaphorical scene of red carps swimming, chasing and playing with each other, which is often employed to illustrate an interactive and sweet relationship between the lovers in Chinese culture. The conflict of the story between the protagonists and their antagonists was also treated in an abstract way. Their separation in the third act was not caused by any embodied characters such as Monk Fa Hai, but was implied by the roar of drums as an inevitable force which is doomed to break up the lovers. This treatment leaves a large space of imagination and interpretation for the audience. The Fourth Act is about the scholar's revisit to the place of their initial meeting, which has been transformed into a storyscape full of symbolic scenes, such as the rain, the umbrella and the boat, which keep on reminding him of his love. Different from the reunion as the closure in the original narrative, this performance ends in a separation and forever lost. But this end is not interpreted traditionally as a tragedy. Instead, it is presented in a modernized rendition which renders a universal significance of West Lake not only as a storyscape for the two protagonists but also for all lovers, with semiotic codes full of symbolic meanings scattering around the landscape, such as wavering lotuses in breeze, swimming red carps in groups, the

lake in rain and mist, lingering water with the shadow of lovers.

Through such a strategy of keeping the skeleton structure of the original story and depriving it off the specific characters and local cultural contexts, the story is presented as a performance with a universal theme of love and freedom. It is designed to create a narrative that is 'least objectionable' to a large, diversified audience. In order to meet the needs and tastes of different groups of audience, specific content was removed while a number of semiotic codes of so-called Chinese culture were used.

The performance is beyond a representation of traditional local culture to a contemporary audience with broad cultural background. It has ambitiously communicated a narrative about a new national cultural identity through its modern adaptation. The use of traditional icons not necessarily related to the local space highlighted its role as a cultural show presenting a Han Chinese culture instead of a mere local performance. For instance, the major images of performers are in Kun Opera costume and makeup. The director has combined popular culture with modern media technology, representing a new cultural identity of China. The merging of art, architecture, history and nature generates an array of sensation that adds to the total 'experience package'.

Through the application of this strategy, the local folktale was transformed into a modern melodrama about romantic encounter and suffering, which is easily translatable into Western cultural narratives while also corresponding thematically and stylistically to work of other contemporary works of love stories. This cultural translatability is reinforced by its musical style with the Japanese musician Kitaro as the composer and Jane Zhang as the singer. The former is a Grammy and Gloden Globe-winning artist who used the electronic synthesizer to demonstrate the spirit of oriental culture. His *Silk Road* (Kitaro 2010) provides a connection between the cultural heritage of China and Japan. Jane Zhang is Chinese pop star with a great popularity in the young generation. With the music composed by Kitaro and theme-song sung by Jane Zhang, the performance created an appealing atmosphere for both domestic and international audiences.

The mobility of intangible cultural resources serves as a marketable feature in tourism

industry, especially when it is tied to an imaginative form in a foreign tourism land, as is the case with the Impression West Lake performance. The performance transformed intangible features of land including the local legends of White Snake, Butterfly Lovers, Plum Wife and Crane Son, and the well-known remarks about The Misty Lake in Rain into an imagined landscape in the forms of cranes, carps, and rain based on novel technologies of the eye. Its setting in the real water area of the lake with Yudai Bridge and rolling hills as the background attached these intangible representations to the physical features of the space, which thus created and communicated a new interpretation of the place to a broader audience.

Although Impression West Lake is a local tourism product created through the collaboration between the local government and director Zhang Yimou, this cultural product makes a quite ambitious narrative of Chinese national culture. Impression West Lake is sometimes compared to a micro version of Beijing Olympic Opening Ceremony. Spurred by the local authorities' desire to attract international tourists, cultural products such as Impression West Lake, together with other performance of Zhang's Impression Series, was produced to present a staged authenticity, China as a landscape full of stereotypical oriental images and exotic local traditions, to international audience..

5.3.3 A harmonious landscape

In the above examples, West Lake, was presented a park for leisure. The example discussed in this section, a promo movie of Hangzhou during G20 summit (2016) is a more ambitious narrative which aims to construct a 'harmonious' image of the city, motivated by not strictly economic forces, but as an instrument for political purpose to balance the conflicting voices in domestic and present a new image as a 'peaceful rising' power in the international community.

This promo film, drawing upon both historical legacies and modern achievement of the city to communicate this imagined image to an even broader audience, including international political leaders, prospective investors, and potential tourists. The following analysis intends

to analyse how such a narrative has been created and circulated.

During China's G20 summit, a promo film of the scenic landscapes of Hangzhou as the G20 host city, together with the other two films introducing China and G20 Summit, was presented to American audience on the huge screen in New York City's Times Square.



Figure 5.7 2016 G20 promotional films on the screen of New York Times Square; resource: news.cn

This promo film called Impressions of Hangzhou consists of four sections, 'City of Glamour', 'City of Inheriting', 'City of Dynamic's, and 'City of Harmoniousnes's. The key theme of the film was about a harmonious city with a sustainable balance between natural surrounding and civil life, between people, and between tradition and modernity through the twinning of cultural conservation with urban development.

The first section 'City of Glamour' serves as a prelude and a general introduction to the city,

in which West Lake, the iconic landscape and the essential cultural space of Hangzhou, is still widely used to represent its fundamental identity. The film opens with a dramatic view of West Lake Landscape as a pastoral world, in which a Chinese pleasure boat is cruising across its serene water area, without any trace of modern anxiety and disorder. It is then followed by iconic scenes representing other major heritage sites in the city, the Grand Canal (Hangzhou Section) which is also a World Heritage Site and Xixi National Wetland. It is thus introduced as ‘the most livable city in China’, ‘a place for meditative and spiritual retreat in times of trouble’ to an international audience. A series of visual semiotic codes, including a panoramic view of the layout of the West Lake, blossoming lotuses, a dancer in a traditional costume dancing along the Long Bridge, with Leifeng Pagoda in her background, were presented to support such a statement.



Figure 5.8 Impressions of Hangzhou; Film buy the Hangzhou government; Screenprint by author

The second section ‘City of Inheriting’ displays city’s historical and cultural legacies, with a series of semiotic codes, including Liangzhu Culture (5300-4000 BC)—the origin of the local civilization, Lingyin Temple—a legacy of Buddhist Country in South-east China (between 10th to 13th century), Landscape of Tea Plantation—Longjin Green Tea Culture, Hu Qin Yu Tang Chinese Herbal Medicine Museum—traditional Chinese medicine, and four properties

of World Intangible Cultural Heritage, (The art of Chinese Seal Engraving, The traditional Firing Technology of Longquan Celadon, The Guqin and Its Music, and Sericulture and Silk Craftsmanship of China). All of these resources have been presented as semiotic codes in specific cultural spaces, which all together generate ‘a historic and cultural city with 8000 years of history’.

This promo film was produced and broadcasted to American audience with the aim to communicate a new image of modern China, with both glorious past and prosperous present. Hangzhou, together with West Lake Landscape, was presented in a very symbolic way. The long-held notion of West Lake as Paradise on earth, the spiritual home of Chinese elites and the embodiment of the harmony between human and nature, neatly fits into the central and local government’s programmes for international tourism development and urban renovation which align representative landscapes with the prosperity of the imperial times and the retreats from modern turbulence and anxieties.

With the shifts of the background music to a fast rhythm, the film starts the narration of the second section, ‘Hangzhou, a City of Dynamic’s. Qiantang River Tidal Bore, one of the World’s top three tidal bores, is presented as a metaphor, symbolizing the fast pace of social change and economic development in the modern Hangzhou. With the presentation of new iconic buildings, Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre (built for the 2022 Asian Games), Alibaba Hangzhou Headquarters, the story of the city is narrated in a context beyond its traditional cultural spaces, but in a variety of recently developed areas, such as the Qianjiang CBD, Binjiang CBD, Hangzhou National High-tech Industry Development Zone and business incubator. The shift from the serene scenes of heritage sites to the view of Qiantang River full of vigor hints that the city is advancing from a city rich in historical and cultural resources to a modern metropolitan area with booming technological development and economic growth.

In order to bridge the gap between the traditional Chinese culture and the modern scene of the urban development, the last section ‘Hangzhou, a city of harmoniounes’ s tries to present Hangzhou as ‘a city that masters the art of turning the sense of calmness and happiness into productivity and fortune’. A series of examples of the coexistence of the traditional and modern elements in a variety of harmonious scenes were selected to present the new identity of Hangzhou, ‘a wonderful oriental city full of happiness and harmoniousness’.

This promo film shows that the municipal government together with the central government aimed to use the WH status of West Lake and international events such as G20 as a platform for the communication of a new identity of the city and the nation to the international audience. Harmony discourse is used as a fundamental instrument to structure selected cultural and natural resources of the place into a narrative of a society in a sustainable development based on the harmonious balance between human and nature, social relationships, and ethnic tradition and international (Western) modernity.

The harmony discourse delivered by the film can be understood at three levels. At the first level, the concept of harmony emphasises the integrative relationship between the humans and the cosmos. Originally deriving from Taoism, this concept develops into an essential part of China’s traditional cosmology and culture, which believes that human and nature, forming a totality of the world, are operated by a certain unified law and controlled by the same forces. West Lake is perceived as a landscape created according to the Chinese aesthetics developed under the influence of this concept. The visual impact of its Ten PNSPs is only part of the value of this landscape. The really essence of Ten PNSPs could not be fully appreciated unless the viewers understand this Chinese approach to aesthetic appreciation with greater stress on spiritual empathy as a ‘fusion between man and object’ (Zhou 1999; Han 2006). Therefore, its nomination document used this meaning of harmony and incorporated it in to characterising the OUV of the property. In order to bridge the cultural gap between China and the West, this concept was interpreted as the core value of the concept of ‘cultural

landscape' which was defined as the masterpiece of human and nature. As this concept was often used to address the issues of ecology and environmental problems, West Lake was thus presented as a good example of sustainable development through environmental protection and heritage conservation.

The second level of this discourse stresses the harmonious relation between man and society. This perspective of harmony is derived from Confucian doctrines, which advocated a social regulation with both principles and diversity, achieved through personal virtues, harmonious family relationships, a stable political system and national unity. In Chinese philosophy, especially in the ethical field, the influence of this Confucius doctrine was far-reaching. Many important Chinese ethical notions, such as loyalty, filial piety, and worship for ancestors, can be traced back to this doctrine. It was also employed in the present society as an advocacy of a distinctly Confucian value of paternalistic authoritarianism, respect for authority, interpersonal relationships, concern of social equality, savings and diligence. In this sense of governance and social relationship, the concept of harmony was integrated in the public discourse of the top leadership. In West Lake Landscape, a number of historical monuments and sites have been used as places for communicating this sense of harmony discourse. Yue Fei's Temple (and tomb), together with Yu Qian's Temple and Zhang Cangshui's Tomb has been employed as places for the public education about Confucius loyalty and filial piety. The value of King Qian Temple and Baochu Pagoda rests in their symbolic meaning for national reunion. And Lin Bu's tomb has been used to interpret an ideal story about a hermit with high virtues who sacrificed material pleasures for his pursuit of a harmonious life in nature. The presentation of these sites in the promo film display Hangzhou, as well as China, as a society cultivated in a long history of peace, nobility and stability.

Due to the inclusiveness of the concept, harmony has been employed in the political discourse of Chinese government to balance the multiple forces in the modernization of Chinese society. Party's official narrative of a 'Harmonious Society' is related to the state-led revival of

Confucianism in 1990s. It reflects a shift from China's primary focus on development to a more balanced, 'Confucian-style' approach, which seeks to maintain economic growth while addressing social issues such as increasing income inequality, environmental degradation, and domestic political corruption. This propaganda theme emphasizes the Party's benevolent concern for all Chinese citizens, their efforts to balance growth more evenly. Nevertheless, this discourse also implies that CCP is responsible for this new socially responsible growth, which thus requires people's loyalty to its leadership.

Applied in the narrative of Hangzhou Impression, this discourse structured a society with a harmonious balance between the traditional heritage and the modern development. With its great attempts to bridge the gap between the past and the present, this promotional film communicated a very ambitious narrative to communicate the city's new identity to the audience. Hangzhou has been depicted as a city with both a prosperous past and also a thriving present, a representative image of today's Chinese society. Its historical legacy has contributed to its present development and may further promote its booming future. Through such a narrative strategy, West Lake, the traditional icon to defined the local identity, is redefined as an essential element, which not only testify its high achievement in the agrarian civilization, but also as an cultural resource of glamour, attracting tourists, investors and high-quality labour resources to come, visit and even settle down for a better career and life in this city. This ambitious narrative closes with such a statement that 'this is Hangzhou, a city where citizens have the top sense of happiness among China'.

It is clear that the national interest is being served and a harmonious discourse is communicated by portraying West Lake to visitors, domestic and foreign alike, as a place in which people live harmoniously with each other and with the natural environment. Hangzhou, with West Lake as the core of its identity, was presented as a physical embodiment of feelings that tied immutable pasts to tumultuous presents (Schama 1995; Woodward 2001). This narrative of harmony and balance was also echoed in the latest version of Hangzhou Travel

Guide (2016). Remarks of foreigners from six countries were selected as representative voices (of foreigners) from Hangzhou. And one of the remarks recommended Hangzhou as a place with ‘a perfect balance of modernity and history, nature and civilization. That’s why we feel balanced and in harmony living in this city.’ (Yuko Yanagimoto, Japan) (Travel Guide 1)

As a promo movie also shown to the international community, this discourse of Harmony has also implied the government’s intention to present a new image of China at the international level, which was created in accordance with Chinese foreign policy phrased in the term ‘peaceful rise’. This policy can also be read as an extension of the harmony discourse in its domestic policy. As a response to the ‘China threat theory,’ the term peaceful rise refers to China’s commitment to pursue ‘harmonious’ and ‘peaceful’ relations with its neighbors as it continues to develop. The image of Hangzhou, with its balanced ecology, numerous World Heritage Sites and WICH and booming modern economy, was employed as a symbol of a harmonious co-existence of traditional Chinese civilization and Western modernity. Hangzhou, together with its landmark West Lake, played a role of an ambassador communicating the new image of an affluent and peaceful China to the world. The promo film Hangzhou Impression shows an attempt of the central and local governments to put a Confucian ‘gloss’ on China’s image abroad and calm the fears of Western observers over China’s rise.

Despite the frequently conservation-rhetoric statements, the local government’s motive for World Heritage inscription derived from its expectation for a World Heritage Site site with recognition of the international community to bring an enormous boost for tourism and attract foreign investment. Reasons for embracing the World Heritage status by the national government can be summarised as follows: 1) to build an advanced Chinese culture with strong national identity; 2) it promoted national pride and China’s image in the world; 3) it offers a global brand, and 4) was a prerequisite to developing human resources, attracting

foreign investment, especially in tourism; and 5) it could be a good and convincing tool to introduce China's national identity to the world, especially its age-old history and rich culture.

It was these non-conservation-oriented motives of the national and local government that resulted in the official narratives of West Lake, rather than representing 'Our Common Heritage', and 'treasures of all mankind', is 'a mirror of new cultural practices and ideologies that reflect the country's different historical traditions, view of development and the 'good life', structures of social order, and positions in the current global order'.

And the trajectory of Hangzhou development and the staging of the G20 also exemplify how cities have an ever greater reliance upon tertiary sector economy like tourism and leisure consumption. But as with other mega-events like the Olympics, such spectacle are heavily bound up in the identity theatrics of nation-building as governments seek to construct specific identities both at home and on the international stage. The narrative of the promo film of Hangzhou at G20 set a vivid example of how heritage becomes enmeshed in the political economies of sub-nation, regionalised identities as a country project itself on the international stage. Of course, Hangzhou is not alone in identifying such a relationship, as countless local and central government authorities have looked to appropriate the past for the socio-economic regeneration of urban environment.

5.4. Conclusion

Through the exploration of the official narratives created by two official agencies—WLAC and HTC, this chapter finds out how West Lake Landscape has been shaped into a cultural landscape through official narratives by these two official stakeholders.

The official narratives of West Lake were created and promoted by three domestic forces, the

pursuit of development in economy, the confirmation of CCP's leadership in politics, and the demands of conservation of traditional culture. These three forces, embodied in their respective governmental agencies, with their diverse objectives, all explored their own ways to use heritage as an essential element in their interpretations, propagandas, branding and marketing. During the process of World Heritage Bid of West Lake, these different players achieved a temporary consensus, with their expectations for their respective objects to be realized through its inscription. However, in the post-designation period, their large differentials in motivation, actions and performances proved to be more important determinants than inscription itself on the sustainability of heritage management, interpretation and its performance in the tourism market (Redbanks and TBR 2009).

As a World Heritage site, West Lake was transformed to comply with the needs of heritage professionals and to conform to the requirements of UNESCO's convention. In general, the AHD has been employed by WLAC to justify its conservation against the rapid social and economic changes through its interpretation of historical, aesthetic and monumental values of the World Heritage Site. Drawing upon UNESCO regulations and its nomination dossier, the Management Committee presented a reading of the site as a space imbued with national and sometimes international heritage values and meanings. Concepts like 'integrity', 'authenticity' and 'Outstanding Universal Value' were introduced to the audience in some spaces, such as West Lake Museum. However, this does not necessarily mean that these message about West Lake as the World Heritage Site are properly communicated to visitors. The official heritage interpretation constructed by WLAC convey certain sense outstanding value of West Lake in terms of its aesthetic appeal and historical significance. However, the universal value was completely filtered, because such value is not compatible with its emphasis on the national significance of the site.

HTC narratives, as the official tourism agency used World Heritage Site status as 'an accreditation scheme for heritage tourism attractions' (Rakic and Chamers 2008:146) by the

local tourism department. The advantages of the World Heritage List tend to be expressed in terms of its overall tourist enhancing effects (Jones and Munday 2001; Rodwell 2002).

In HTC's narrative, West Lake, together with other tangible and intangible cultural heritage resources, has been used as an essential element in the international marketing campaigns. The case study of West Lake Landscape presented by the tourist-targeted performance and promo movies suggests that contemporary heritage production cannot simply be explained as arising from a generalized psychological need for social embeddedness and tradition as a result of the alienating effects of modernity (Hewson 1987); rather, heritage production takes place as an indispensable element of economic production in societies with large reserves of cultural capital inhering within its traditional cultures. Tourism has been a driver of the valuation of West Lake by the local government.

The different and even conflicting practices of interpretation of this World Heritage Site by the two committees reflect the conflict between two sets of discourses about the heritage values. In the discourse of modernisation, the traditional legacy is still largely perceived as something that is ontologically disconnected from the modern (Hamilakis & Duke 2008). Indeed, heritage conservation frameworks often continue to be oriented around the idea of globalisation as a convergence between the bipolarised 'modern' and 'traditional', 'global' and 'local'. It is a language which tends to present the local as a place with pristine nature and authentic culture, which is endangered by the modernising and universalising (homogenising) forces of the global. The analysis offered here shows the negative result of this concept of binary opposition and disconnection.

Realizing the necessity for reconciling the conflicts between the polarised binaries of the local/global, traditional/modern, cultural/economic, West Lake has also been used as an essential element by the government during G20 to create a harmonious narratives of city Hangzhou. The narrative aims to demonstrate through the case of West Lake and Hangzhou that the mutual constitution of the traditional heritage and modern development could

contribute to the ordering of today's global heritage conservation and economic development. In departing from the conventional position that sees these two as chronologically ordered, the example of West Lake demonstrates why they need to be read as synchronous. It also highlights how the privileging of certain forms of expertise and cultural knowledge in the conservation sector today intimately ties cultural heritage into a variety of wider political economic processes. The realisation, then, is that which is inherited from the past is no longer in the past, but is instead thoroughly constituted and reconstituted in, and by, the political economy of the modern. Cultural/heritage tourism has thus been employed, at both national and regional levels, as an effective vehicle for reconciling some of the differences through its contribution to the economic development, its utilization of heritage as tourism resources, and its role in meeting some socialist objectives. Through such a narrative, the World Heritage was also used by national authorities as a useful tool to present a positive national identity and to present its image as a peaceful and harmonious society to the international community.

The analysis of official narratives of these discursive players suggests that heritage interpretation has been dominated by three domestic forces in political, economic and cultural areas. Tensions between these interest groups are inherent in heritage industries. Conflicts about dissonant interpretations can hardly be avoided; since heritage holds different values for different people and in addition these values change over time, so does the knowledge and interpretation of the past. Despite government's intention to 'balance' conservation with development aspirations, it is still a difficult task of trying to reach agreement on what is desirable through an integrated interpretation strategy of West Lake.

The discussion also demonstrates that UNESCO's cultural policy has a very limited influence on the official interpretation of West Lake as a World Heritage Site. It shows that UNESCO is only an IGO and it is the State Parties that ultimately determine identification, nomination and conservation plan implementation. As Askew (2010:36) notes, 'UNESCO appears as just

one of the actors authorizing and shaping representations of the past, and a minor one at that.’ It is correct that the politics of conservation in China is largely dominated by internal political, economic and social consideration. The Chinese state’s effort from the mid-1980s to restore and protect monuments and sites as part of a deliberate state-forming strategy—creating a community-bonding sense of ‘Chinese-ness’ by promoting a particular authorised version of China’s national history through a diversity of landscapes and monuments. It also helped in the packaging of China’s cultural identity for tourism promotion. Chinese government uses heritage and the World Heritage system for its own nationalistic, political purposes, and heritage management as a social movement was mainly promoted by a combination of nationalistic, commercial and professional forces.

UNESCO has long recognised the problem of the implementation of heritage management, especially heritage interpretation, which has strayed away from its original object to support cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace. World Heritage status, in the twenty first century, however, has been appropriated by strong nationalist discourse, which uses cultural distinctions of national identity building which some times also lead to conflicts between state members. A recent proposal suggested to address the issue and to refocus the World Heritage system is to develop new strategies for interpreting sites in cross-culturally sensitive ways that help lead to a keener perception of heritage being shared by people across political and other divides. It aims to give priority in the scheduling of inscription to those nominations whose interpretation which moves ways from promotion of the national significance to the promotion of dialogue and peace.

Chapter 6 Unofficial narratives of West Lake Cultural Landscape

6.1 Introduction

In chapter five, I discussed how official agencies of heritage conservation and tourism marketing produced the grand narratives of West Lake for political, economic and purposes. In this chapter, I will address the second research question about the official I will explore, alongside the specific grand narratives created by heritage agency and tourism agency, if there also exist some alternative voices which are produced by less dominant groups of stakeholders, such as local communities and tourists. I intend to find out what heritage values are constructed and communicated by these groups of stakeholder and also the relationship between the official and non-official narratives. That is to explore if the narratives of local communities and tourists are corresponding, challenging or negotiating with the dominant discourse (Smith 2006:4).

The discussion in this chapter consists of two analysis sections, one on narratives of local communities and the other on narratives of tourists. The section of local communities focuses on the analysis of a range of divergent perceptions and accounts of the landscape produced by two groups of local communities—local residents and immigrant small accommodation business (SAB) owners. It will also discuss why some voices are heard while others are marginalised.

The section of tourists focuses on the narratives of West Lake produced and communicated by domestic and international tourists. I will make a comparative analysis of their narratives which will lead to a better understanding of the factors influencing their meaning making of the site.

6.2 Local communities' narratives

The study in this section will focus on the narratives of West Lake created and communicated by a variety of stakeholders at a local level. In order to avoid the simplification in the understanding of relevant groups, the plural form 'local communities' instead of the singular form 'local community' is used to refer to local groups of actors with divergent interests and relations with the site. Apart from the local residents including villagers and non-agricultural residents who are traditionally identified as local community members because of their long-term geographical connection with the site, immigrant small business owners are also perceived as newly joined community members because of their business interest closely connected with the site. This kind of classification of local communities intends to overcome the tendency of simplifying the local community as an entity with a collective identity without 'inter-group differences and divisions' (Waterson 2013). In addition, it also aims to reveal the nature of community as a process of (re)creation rather than as groups of people with static connection with the site. Therefore, the analysis on local communities narratives will not only focuses on the divergent accounts of the same heritage site by a variety of groups of stakeholders, but also illustrate the process of community construction which is always in flux and change, especially under the influence of urbanisation and heritage conservation movement.

In order to understand how the landscape is represented via local people's narratives and what the values of West Lake are communicated at a local level, this section will focus on the analysis of narratives created by three groups: local villagers, small entrepreneurs and non-profit volunteering groups. Accordingly, this section consists of three parts. Building on the discussions the accounts made by these groups about their understanding of this landscape, the discussion on the relationship between the local voices and the official interpretation, the status of the values communicated via these stories in the hegemonic system of heritage narratives of West Lake Landscape, to explain why some stories are better heard and their

values are better circumscribed while others are marginalised and neglected. It aims to make some contributions to a better understanding of local communities role in heritage narratives at both academic and pragmatic levels.

6.2.1 Local villagers' narratives

Drawing upon a combination of interviews with villagers and community observation, the study on local villager's narratives of West Lake identified a number alternative stories about this World Heritage Site. The subjects of these narratives can be classified into the following four themes: a rural landscape of farming and tea cultivation, a landscape in transformation, local intangible heritage and the gentrification of residential area.

1) A rural landscape of farming and tea cultivation

I started with the examination of local villager's perception of values of West Lake as a World Heritage, only to find out that local villagers preferred to understand their living environment from a local perspective. Villagers had very vague idea about what World Heritage was. When asked about their attitude towards the World Heritage Designation of West Lake, local villager usually answered 'I know West Lake is a World Heritage Site now and we live in this site, but I don't know what exactly it means.' (LV 5,6,9). A villager said: 'I don't know much about World Heritage. It is something too professional for us to understand. Maybe the young people in the village know something about it.' (LV12) These answers tell that local villagers perceived World Heritage as some new knowledge which should be learned and thus were not related to the local farmer's daily life. They also held similar attitude towards the knowledge about aesthetic and historical values of West Lake which the official interpretation aimed to communicate to the public. Different from the official interpretation which focuses on scenic sites around the lake, local villager's narrative of the landscape has much to do

with their villages and tea terraces on the surrounding hills. When I turned to ask them about their perceptions of their residential areas and tea terraces, these villagers became more confident: ‘Our tea village had a history over a hundred years of tea cultivation and production. Most of us are the descendants of migrant tea farmers from other areas around Hangzhou to the current settlement during the middle of 19th century and the early year of 20th century.’(LV 02) Villagers were very proud of their tea plantations and West Lake Dragon Well Tea produced there. The name of the tea, West Lake Dragon Well, not only indicates the place of origin but also the quality of the tea. Villagers emphasized that only tea growing in the five areas in and around the West Lake Landscape—Shifeng Hill, Longjing Hill, Hupao, Yunqi, and Meijiawu--could be used to produce West Lake Dragon Well Tea (figure). As a result, despite the geographical separation caused by hills between these villages, villagers in these tea growing areas have developed a sense of collective identity as a community. The villagers either in villages close to the bank of West Lake or in those away from it all identified themselves as farmers of West Lake Dragon Well Tea. Their narratives focus more on tea terraces on hills and only mentioned West Lake when it is related to their talk about the conventional industry of tea cultivation.



Figure 6.1 Tea villages in West Lake Scenic Area; resource: google map

Through communication with interviewees in Maojiabu Village, Jinshangang Village, and Longjing Village, I learned that local villager's sense of relationship with the landscape has little to do with the lake but instead was connected to tea plantations on hills. In their narratives about West Lake, a more practical function of West Lake as a water resource rather than a site of aesthetic appeals was emphasized.

The excellent quality of our Drag Well Tea should be attributed to the fairly mild and humid microclimate in the local area (on the western side of the lake). With water vapour and tender breeze across the lake, it is a quite favorable climate for the growth of tea

trees on the slopes of hills around the lake. (LV7)

Local villager's narrative placed tea terraces on hill instead of the scenic places around the lake at the center in the spatial space of West Lake Landscape, while the official narrative, in the nomination dossier of West Lake, degraded the value of hills around West Lake as a physical 'carrier's and background in this heritage site. This alternative narrative of the landscape, formed and communicated at the very local level among villagers, communicated a very distinctive understanding of landscape which challenged the official interpretation of centre-and-periphery relationship in spatial dimension of West Lake.

2) A landscape in transformation

Local villager's narratives about their memories of their living place also reveals their different understanding of the temporal dimension of West Lake. For local people, 'memory' appears to be more personal and warmer than an objective term like history or heritage. While official narratives define West Lake as a landscape of universal and outstanding value which was frozen in the past, the local communities tend to understand the place as a landscape in ever transformation which is related to their experience of working for the lake dredging and garden building of in 1950s. A villager in Jinshagang Village recalled in details about her experience in her childhood and in her youth:

My grandparents lived near the original site of Viewing Fish at Flower Pond at the time, thus I was quite familiar with the place. At the time, there were only two farm houses, all fields and a few small ponds. After I got married, I moved to live in the present village which is quite close to Lotus in Breeze at Crooked Courtyard, the site of which was also occupied by fields and ponds at the time. In 1950s, the local authorities recruited local villagers to participate in the construction of these two gardens together with military soldiers. (LV2)

Villager's accounts about West Lake in their memories is a living landscape which is in ever transformation in different ages. Such narratives proposed a very different view from that of heritage experts at ICOMOS, who denied the possibility of interpreting West Lake as an evolving landscape, for the reason that its 'key aspects was consolidated in the Imperial Dynastie's and its culture only related to the 'classical literary and artistic culture' of ancient China (ICOMOS, <https://whc.unesco.org/document/152404>). It also deconstructed mystery of West Lake as a testimony of the ideals of classical Chinese landscape and the official narrative with emphasis on the conservation of physical 'authenticity' of the landscape.

3) Dragon Well Tea cultivation and production

Local villager's narrative also attached a great importance to the local practice of tea cultivation, tea harvest and tea production, because these collective activities played an important role in forming and confirming the local identities of villagers.

Tea harvest is a big event for all the villagers in these tea villagers. Even those villagers who have already moved to live in the urban area would also come back for tea picking and production during that period.

Only during tea harvest time during the whole year that my family will come back for tea harvest,' an interviewee said, 'many villagers already moved away to live in the urban area, just like my family. But we will be back for tea harvest each year. It is also a good time for us to have some gatherings with former neighbours. (LV3)

Traditional practice of by-hand tea production is are also mentioned as an important local skill learned, passed on and inherited among local villagers.

After the tea picking, we will be very busy with tea production. All these steps should

be completed by hand. It is very time-consuming and tiring. But we insist on doing it by hand which not only guarantees the quality, but honours our tea's reputation. This conventional tea processing technique has been listed as National Intangible Cultural Heritage.(LV5)

The inheritance of local skills as an intangible heritage resource is an important approach to maintaining local identities. These practices are very essential for identifying the outstanding sides of each society on their local levels. Local knowledge and skills of tea cultivation and processing can spark out the shared intangible meaning, values, and memories among the local communities. It is such intangible sides of 'heritage' rather than the essential elements listed in the nomination dossier that has formed a good base for strong unity between different groups of local communities in the West Lake Landscape.

Many interviewees also mentioned Competition of Tea processing skills Dragon Well Tea as an important activity for local villagers to strengthen their collective identity and enhance their sense of pride.

This Competition for Tea Processing Skills is an essential part of our Tea Festival which is held to celebrate the first harvest of spring tea and to announce the beginning of tea selling of the year. All of the competitors were selected among the most skillful tea farmers in each village and recommended as representatives for their own communities. It is a great opportunity for us tea farmers to show the traditional tea processing skills to a broader audience. The winner of the competition can get the title as 'Tea King'. It's a great honour, and also a good advertisement for his tea.



Figure 6.2 Competition for Tea Processing Skills in 2016; By author

4) Gentrified villages in tourism urbanisation

Although local villagers have said that they were not affected by the designation of West Lake, it is not the case. It is just because they did not realize the connection between the changes they have experienced and heritage conservation. In this part, I will move on to the analysis of local villager's narratives about the changes they have experienced in the process of heritagisation and tourism gentrification of their residential area.

From the communication with local villagers, I learned that, a project of urbanisation of these villages under the name of heritage conservation was carried out between 2003 and 2008. For the purpose of upgrading the local environment so as to integrate these villages into the whole scenic site of West Lake, all of the old farm houses in these villages were rebuilt and infrastructure were improved. Some historical sites and monuments were also renovated in these villages. As a result, the layout of these villages has been significantly changed—fields were replaced by new sites and village were closely integrated as a part of scenic sites into

the whole landscape of West Lake. As a compensation for the loss of fields to the villagers, local authorities supported the development of leisure industry especially the business of tea houses, guesthouses and restaurants in these villages (Figure 6.3). Many local people, without much experience in running their own businesses, rented their own living places to investor of guesthouses. The villagers live on rents of their living places moved to live in the urban area of Hangzhou and only returned occasionally for their tea plantations. This means that the modern leisure industry has replaced the traditional agriculture as the main resources of income for a large number of villagers, and the relationship between the locals and the land has been greatly changed.



Figure 6.3 Gentrified villages; By author

In those interviews with local people, while most of the respondents expressed their happiness with the new environment and an extra income from house-renting, they also admitted a sense of separation and loss of ownership after the renovation project.

Local communities narratives reflected resident's anxiety about the ownership of the land.

Different from WLAC's focus on the aesthetic values of the landscape, the local communities emphasis lays on the economic values of the land by growing tea plants and crops. From their perspective, WLAC Committee has deprived part of their ownership of the land in the name of heritage conservation. When talking about the influence of that project on their life, a respondent from Lingyin Community said that:

We feel that we have been separated from those local sites ever since they became officially sanctioned. Villagers rarely go to Lingyin temple now, because it charges an entrance fee even to local people. It is a place for tourists rather than for us local residents. The administrative committee has even set a restriction on incense stick burning (a religious practice for Buddhist worship) in order to protect its buildings from fire. It has largely affected the business of local incense market. Many villagers used to live on selling incense products to Buddhist pilgrims, but they have turned to do other business now. As you see, I have also rented part of my shop to a non-local tea seller in order to keep it running.

The respondents from the same community also identified that changes when they recall their experience of playing around in the Feilei Peak in their childhood. While official narratives introduce the Feilei Peak as an important site to view Buddhist stone statues (more than 340 numbers) in its caves as 'a kind of rare grotto art in the Southern area of China', local villagers mentioned it as a place for fun and leisure. As villagers recall,

‘

We often went to play around in those caves of Feilai Peak in our childhood. Apart from those stone statues, there was also a set of stone furniture in one cave, with a table, stools and a bed, all naturally formed. We local people believed that it was the place where Monk Jigong took his rest. Even when we grew up, we would also take that place as a site for enjoying a cool and leisure time in summer. But now we are prohibited from entering that cave any more now, because it was closed by WLAC for the safety of tourists.

Apart from the sense of separation from their familiar living environment, some respondents also expressed their concern about the change of land ownership. The local villagers lived on farming and tea planting, but do not own their land freehold. The land used to be owned and managed collectively by their own villages, from which they lease their part of land for planting. But after the conservation project, the ownership of their land was claimed by the local government for the purpose of better heritage management. It means that villagers have to lease them from WLAC, who manages the whole area for the local authorities who own the actual ownership. The economic implications of loss of land and thus, loss of, or curtailing of, livelihoods are of great concern to local villagers. As more than one villager expressed it, the comprehensive conservation project—as an essential part for world heritage listing—meant ‘locking up the land for another group’.

The conflicts between local villagers and WLAC over the land ownership can be attributed to their different perceptions of the values of this landscape. WLAC, with its focus on the outstanding aesthetic and historical values of the landscape, defined the value of hills around West Lake as physical ‘carrier’s of this heritage site. This kind of definition placed emphasis on the aesthetic value of the lake and degraded the surrounding land and hills as a mere physical background. For local villagers, however, the landscape is a living space from where they also obtain living resources. In the hierarchy value system of World Heritage, aesthetic and historical values are so dominant that other values are more or less marginalised. As a result, local villagers are always on disadvantageous position in the conflicts over land ownership.

6.2.2 Immigrant entrepreneurs’ narratives

While the majority of local villagers prefer staying at the back stage in tourism industry and thus lack the opportunity to communicate their local values to outsiders, new immigrant business runners seeking business opportunities fluxed into this villages to run their business

of tourism service and started to play an active role in the interpretation of this landscape. In this section, I examine small entrepreneur's discursive construction and communication of values of West Lake via their business activities of running small accommodation businesses (SABs) in this World Heritage Site. With the development of leisure tourism in West Lake and the growth of independent tourists, demand for alternative ways of accommodation and innovative souvenirs has increased rapidly ever since 1990s. Over 1,000 business runners have moved into villages of West Lake, especially, especially in the Lingyin Community and Siyanjing Community, running business of supplementary accommodation, in the forms of youth hostels, guest houses and inns. These new immigrants of SAB owners play an active role in appropriating the local cultural and natural resources of West Lake via the activities of marketing and service provision.

Conversation with some of these SAB owners reveals that running the business of small accommodation in a tourism site like West Lakes is more than a way of earning income, but an alternative way for the middle-class to escape office life. Not a few interviewees recalled that they were initially attracted by aesthetic appeals of rural surroundings and low-pace of rural life in the villages here when they visited West Lake as tourists, and thus decided to lead a new way of life by running small business here. Despite their diverse demographic backgrounds, these new immigrants are intrinsically middle class in terms of socio-economic status, level of educational, cultural aesthetics and identity positions. Most of them have received proper education, acquired some professional skills through middle-class experiences of work and developed middle-class cultural preference ted social, economic and cultural capitals. All these contribute to enabling them to operate a small scale tourism business for tourists who are in the same class. Compared with local villagers, in some ways, these small entrepreneurs are more cultural-sensitive with the local resources which are unique and worth building on, so as to provide distinctive cultural/tourism products. In order to obtain more knowledge about the local, some entrepreneurs immerse themselves directly in the physical and social fabrics of these villages in all forms and aspects — (Including both

the tangible ones such as monuments, sites and landscapes, and also the intangible ones such as tea cultivation skills, local food and traditional crafts). Their rich experience of being tourists themselves also enabled the SAB owners to understand what tourists anticipate and give them ideas for their own products.

In order to be more competitive in the industry of accommodation, some accommodation services provide their guests with additional services in the forms of private guided tours and outdoor sports. They organize several theme activities, such as local food tours, hill hiking and tea culture tours, making it easy for tourists to interact with the local culture and thus experience West Lake and Hangzhou in alternative ways.

Two examples of these themed activities are selected to articulate how small entrepreneurs appropriate local resources into alternative tourism services, signature services with their own human, cultural and social capitals. The first example is a service of local food tour offered by the first guesthouse owner in West Lake Area, a local urban resident in Hangzhou. With his personal interest in local food and over decades of living experience in the traditional residential area in Hangzhou, this guesthouse owner has a good knowledge about local food. Meanwhile, he has also accumulated rich experience as a tourist from his previous work experience as an interpreter, accompanying foreign investors for business travels around China. Swiftly sensing the value of local food as a great appeal to a wide range of potential consumers and thus a valuable resource in experience economy, this guesthouse owner transformed his knowledge about local food into an innovative tourism product, a hand-drawn food map which highlights local restaurants with distinctive food, popular among the local, but less known among tourists (figure 6.2).

The food mapping itself is a participatory exercise that engages this guesthouse owner as a local community member in interpreting the on-going local cultural practice. This guesthouse owner explained his motive to draw this map:

I'm a foodie and like both cooking and eating. I'm always fond of looking for distinctive local food at small restaurants less known to the non-locals and recommending them to my guests and friends. A taste of local food and an exploration of local restaurants, markets and kitchens, in my opinion, are the best ways to experience the local life and understand the local culture. (SO 1)

This food map could also be regarded as a narrative of local food culture which channels tourists' exploration of their destination in a deeper way. The food map plays the role as a medium for communicating the local knowledge of taste, health and environment (Yeoman 2012). The food tour under the guide of this food map invites conversation between the tourists and local community.

Another example is off-the-beaten-track hiking tour on the hills around West Lake, guided by an owner of a youth hostel. The owner has rich experience in out-door sports. After moving to live and run his business in Siyanjing Village in West Lake Area, he actively immersed himself in the physical environment by exploring the sites and landscapes around and finding off-the-beaten track trails for hill hiking.

When guests come to stay at my hostel, I would not suggest them visit the crowded Ten Poetically Named Sites around West Lake. I usually recommend some less known trails on the hills for hiking to them. Along these trails they can enjoy a good view of natural and rural landscape which can bring a great sense of calm and relaxation. I would also guide them to find spring water, make tea with the water and drink tea at a pavilion with good natural views around, just enjoy the leisure life as local people often do. My guests were really fond of such activities and found them more interesting and impressive than the conventional practice of visiting famous scenic spots, because they can have a more intimate contact with the local life and a deeper experience with the local culture. (SO 2)

Such private tour guides, as part of tourist experience, have a strong influence on tourists' understanding of destination. The narratives of the guide present another dimension of West Lake to them, which is wide, rural and local. Apart from guiding off-the-beaten-track hikes on hills, this youth hostel owner also sell local products such as Dragon Well Tea and dried osmanthus flowers as souvenirs to his guests. Sometimes, when guests showed interest in these products, the owner would also share the stories about his experience of learning these skills from local villagers.

At first, I supposed it was very easy to make dried osmanthus flowers for sale. But soon, I found out that it was not as easy as I'd imagined. They got mould soon. I turned to my landlady for help, and she taught me the local skills and techniques, like cultivation and processing skills of Dragon Well Tea and drying techniques of osmanthus flowers. (SO 2)

Through interactions with both local people and incoming tourists, this SAB owner served as a cultural broker (Kastenholz and Sparrer 2009), helping tourists interact with the local community and its culture. However, in order to attract young backpackers, he was also highly-motivated to introduce some non-local practices, such as rock-climbing and rope-and-harness tree climbing to his guests. Such practices easily transform a specific local environment into a general place for middle-class consumption and thus blur the culture distinctions between local, regional and global.

In the digital age, A good access to the media means the ability to get their voice heard and voices represented by the media (Wanning Sun, Jenny Chio – 2012, Mapping Media in China: Region, Province, Locality). Most SAB owners are savvy with supplied more than one marketing approach. Apart from the conventional collaboration with main-stream tourism websites such as Ctrip, Qunar and Lvmama, they also promoted their service and products by posting stories of guest's participation in their theme activities via social media for the

purpose of increasing word-of-mouth referrals which will bring return guests.

To sum up, compared with local villagers, these immigrant business owners, with their better social, cultural and human capitals, are in a more advantageous position in the meaning-making of West Lake and communicating their narratives of this World Heritage Site to their customers via their services and products. Immigrant entrepreneurs of small tourism business in West Lake played an ambiguous role in interpreting West Lake at a local level to tourists and a broader audience. In some ways, they served as a cultural broker between the villagers and the outsiders who are interested in the local life and traditions. Yet, to some degree, this group of stakeholders also acted as agents of commodification and gentrification. Their narratives created for the experience economy presented rural landscape as a gentrified space for middle-class leisure activities. Their business operation speeded up the gentrification of both the physical and social fabrics of the villages in West Lake by introducing new cultural practices of middle-class life and appropriating local resources into cultural production for tourism consumption.

6.2.3 Heritage volunteers' narratives

As it was mentioned in the first section, the links between local community (villagers and non-agricultural residents) and the landscape were becoming increasingly broken in the process of gentrification. Meanwhile the development of tourism industry has further excluded local people from business activities. Owing to their weak tradition in entrepreneurship, local people left business space of tourism services to immigrant entrepreneurs and thus withdrew from the front stage where they may contact and tell their stories to tourists. However, it does not mean that local people just behave passively and cynically in the meaning-making process of West Lake. They took volunteering as a measure to reconnect them to the place and participate in heritage making process at a local level.

These volunteering activities in West Lake were carried out in the context that participatory policy has been advocated and applied by the local authorities to encourage more social groups and individuals to participate in heritage activities such as volunteering, lectures, exhibitions and events. However, many studies noticed that participatory approach, although long promoted as a means for engaging local communities in heritage activities, did not necessarily lead to an effective result of supporting the local volunteers to make a self-representation of their own cultural heritage. The effect of volunteering on the empowerment of locals has been questioned by scholars in a range of disciplines (Musick and Wilson 2008; Rochester et al 2010). Drawing on the excerpts from volunteer's narratives on their volunteering activities, I explore if volunteering practices can be employed as a means for the local people to empower themselves in telling tell their stories of the heritage site from a local perspective and thus help form a sense of shared history and community for the local people in the present.

The discussion focuses on the narratives collected from observation and interviews with some volunteers in two representative volunteering activities taking place in West Lake. One is called Shantaishan Community Patrol (SCP), a community-based volunteering group of local villagers for guarding the safety in neighbourhood (active neighborhood patrols), and the other, called West Lake Patrol on Hills (West LakePH), is a volunteering group of non-agricultural local residents responsible for guarding the natural environment on hills around West Lake. The repeatedly told stories can be classified into three kinds which correspondingly represent volunteer's understanding of the landscape and their relationship with the landscape of in three stages.

The first kind of story frequently mentioned by volunteer is about the motivations of organization of and participation in volunteering. These stories show that initial aims of these group activities were not necessarily related to any heritage issues but are motivated by personal reasons such as sense of security and need for leisure. In the case of SCP, as the

leader of this volunteering group introduced, the initial idea to organize this community-based patrol group was a response to the concern about security issue in their community:

Our group was originally organized to undertake patrols around the community because of villager's concerns about security in our residential area. There was an accidental intrusion of a tourist into a village house ten years ago. As you know, traditionally, we kept our door open during the day and had no worry about security because all the people living here were local villagers and were familiar with each other. However, with the development of accommodation business in this area, a growing number of tourists came to our residential area. One day, a young girl in our village was badly scared by a stranger walked into her house when she was having a nap on deck chair in living room. The stranger explained that he was looking for a home stay around and took the young girl's home as that home-stay by mistake. After that, local villagers found it necessary to organize patrols around the area to keep the security of our living place. Our volunteers patrol around the residential area twice each day and we have been doing this for over ten years. (LV5)

The narrative about the motivation for the security issue in neighbourhood reveals local people's initial sense of the conflicts between local people's wellbeing in terms of security issue and the expansion of tourism activities into their residential area. However, their stories also tell us that local villagers' response to such intrusion is not totally anti-tourism or negative. They managed to combine the local interest with official heritage management via their volunteering activities:

We not only help report and deter suspicious criminal activities, but also observe and report suspicious behaviors and practices against the site management principle. For instance, we once noticed a local restaurant was pouring wastes water into a stream connected with West Lake during our patrol. We immediately reported it to the

community office which in turn informed WLAC. We often meet tourists who lost their way around and show them the right directions to their destinations. We would also stop those tourists from doing uncivilized behaviors such picking flowers planted by WLAC around our community. We are very proud of being able to contribute some effort (as local people) to the protection of this (heritage) site. (LV 6)

Such accounts of volunteering experience indicate that local people respond quite positively to the physical and social changes of their residential area (the transformation of their living space from a traditional, rural and closed area into a constituent part of West Lake Scenic Area) and performed actively in transforming their role from local villagers traditionally separated from the tourism space to hosts of West Lake with responsibility to protect the site so as to present its aesthetic values to tourists. In this sense, participation in volunteering is very important for local villagers to develop a sense of belonging to the community and further a sense of engagement in the protection of West Lake.

Apart from the social effect of volunteering on reconnecting local communities with the heritage site, however, it is also noticed that local villagers were only involved in heritage management at a very basic level through the activities of protecting the natural environment but still excluded from the narrative activities owing to their lack of cultural and human capitals. Although the volunteering activities did engage those local villagers who had been excluded from heritage up until then to participate in it; yet, instead of including long-silenced pasts, this kind of volunteering practice achieved a kind of unmarked assimilation to the traditional authorised heritage discourse, namely, to a ‘notion of heritage that privileges the cultural symbols of a particular social group ... to which other groups are strongly encouraged to gravitate’ (Waterton 2010 Waterton, E. 2010. *Politics, Policy and the Discourses of Heritage in Britain*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. [Crossref], [Google Scholar] 2).

More obvious effects of assimilation can be observed from the narratives of another volunteering group under discussion, WLHP. The participants in WLHP are non-agricultural local residents who came to settle down in this area because of their work or marriage—they are either former employees or spouses of employees in companies, institutions or organizations in the area of West Lake. Comparatively they have higher level of education than those of SCP. Most of the group members have received basic education at elementary and secondary school, eighteen per cent are educated to degree level or higher. Living in a neighbourhood in the buffer zone of West Lake World Heritage Site, they initially gathered for the purpose of hill hiking for their personal health and social networking:

Although I have lived in this area for over 60 years, I did not know much about this area, especially those hills. The institution I worked for was quite far away in the east of the city. It was not until I retired that I got much leisure time and thus chose hill hiking as an exercise for both health and fun. I started to do hiking on hills in 1990 and gradually my neighbours joined me. We do hill hiking twice a week as body exercises and social activities. Up to now we have hiked all around the hills in this area. (LV15)

Compared with SCP which is composed of local villagers, the participants in WLHP have better with less social, cultural and human capitals which enable them collaborate more confidently and effectively with professionals. Because of their close relationship with WLAC and good knowledge of ropes of the hill and the patrol job hill routes, this hill hiking group was invited to join the official organization of West Lake Volunteering (WLV) and became WLHP in 1991. They were assigned to assist conservation of natural environment of West Lake by undertaking the patrol job on hills around the West Lake so as to report fire risks and suspicious activities (against West Lake conversation regulations) observed during their hiking on hills.

Thanks to their better educational background, volunteers of WLHP also have higher

awareness of heritage values of natural and cultural resources in the landscape. As its leader told,

Whenever we find a new path, we will record creeks, hills, ancient trees, inscribed stones, tombs, pavilions along our route. Drawing on these records, we wrote articles over 200 thousand words about these local natural and cultural elements and compiled them into books under the themes such as Tombs in West Lake Landscape, ...’

However, these books remain unpublished and thus stories about the hill landscape are still not available to broader audience. The inclusion into the official organization of WLV did not necessarily provide these volunteers a better platform to communicate their knowledge of local landscape to a broader audience. Although these two groups were initiated by different motivations at the early stage, they were gradually transformed into volunteering groups of the similar pattern—offering assistant services to heritage conservation and tourism industry and presenting West Lake as a highly civilized place with caring and civilized local people. Instead of performing as narrators of their own culture, these local volunteering groups gradually became local agents of heritagisation of their own living environment and interpreters of grand narratives.

6.3 Tourists’ narratives

The previous section considered what narratives local communities have made about West Lake Landscape and how they created these narratives through their long-term interactions with the land in the form of agricultural, business and volunteering activities in this site. In this section, the story of West Lake is examined through the lens of consumers—incoming tourists in this World Heritage Site. The study on tourists’ narratives in this section is to complement the discussion of the other three groups of stakeholders (those working to manage the site and tourism to it)’ role in the construction of a World Heritage Site and its

values. Drawing upon their on-line reviews about their experience in this World Heritage Site via tourism activities, this section is to explore what narratives of West Lake is presented and how tourists develop their narratives of West Lake through their short encounters with the place.

Firstly, I will outline dominant and popular themes in tourists' narratives of West Lake, by applying a reductive analysis on the big data of tourists' reviews about their understandings of the site. It will be followed by a further discussion on how these narratives have been created. As it has been examined in Chapter two, existing literature shows that, tourists' role as both consumers and co-authors of heritage interpretation has been increasingly recognised. In order to understand the process of tourists' creation of their own narratives of West Lake, I borrow the concept of performance which defines tourists' encounter with tourist attractions 'as a mutually negotiated relationship between consumers and producers' (Salazar 2012: 872). Thus their narratives could be understood as a cultural product constructed through negotiation of both sides.

Another issue under discussion is about the consensus and divergence in the narratives of international and domestic tourists. Although the distinctions between foreign and domestic tourism has long been recognized in the scholarly literature (Smith and Wanhill 1986), the importance of the distinction has not yet been fully appreciated; nor have the nuances and complications received sufficient theoretical attention. A comparative analysis on narratives of international and domestic tourists intends to show that whilst exploring the same physical space of West Lake, international tourists and domestic tourists may be experiencing and valuing this World Heritage Site in divergent ways. It moves on to discuss the factors affecting tourists' understanding of the World Heritage Site, including tourists' pre-tour imagination, accessibility to official narratives and their own identities.

6.3.1 Tourists' narratives and social media

Before the digital era, tourists could only share their travel stories through dialogues with friends, family and acquaintance. They could also put these stories down in their travel diaries and travel albums, keeping them as personal and family memories. In the whole process of their travel, from the 'prospective' stage before tours, to 'active' stage on site and 'reflective' stage, official interpretations played the dominant role in shaping the whole process. The influence of tourists' narratives was limited within a small scope. The wide use of digital technology, however, enables easy access to virtual conversation in cyberspace and thus provides an opportunity for tourists to share their stories with anonymous fellow travelers. Tourists' reviews posted on social media, such as crowd-sourced review sites like TripAdvisor, became engaged in the recycling process of pre-tour, on-tour and post-tour stages of tourism. Post-tour narratives of one tourist will be used by other travelers as their pre-tour knowledge of their destinations. As a result, the traditional power relationship between speakers and listeners has been challenged.

The new form of communication via social media is increasing rapidly among young tourists. In tourists' reviews, very few tourists mentioned the information on official websites of either tourism operators or heritage management department. A closer look into these reviews shows more specific influence of on-line travel posts on tourists' preference of the site and the way to experience it. Many tourists talked about their preparation for travel itineraries according to the popular posts of West Lake travel on Microblogs and Wechat. The following is a representative one:

'Before this travel, I read many travel posts online and accordingly made a well-planned itinerary for my trip. I made a selection among the Top Ten Scenic Places, because (according to travel posts) some of them are not worth visiting. In order to visit those selected sites, I set a plan to travel counter-clock wise around the lake, starting from the

Broken Bridge, walking along Su Causeway, in the middle of which I can have a view of Three Pools Mirroring the Moon and then Leifeng Pagoda in Sunset Glow and Evening Bell Ringing at Nanping Hill.’ (DT 578)

This tourists’ post about his pre-tour plan was very popular on Mafengwo, which was read by 4080 users. It provided not only tips for itineraries, but also detailed information about the highlights of these recommended sites (figure). It contained both summary of other tourists’ posts and his own visit experience. After its was posted on Mafengwo, its contents were frequently quoted in many tourists’ reviews. As a result, these popular travel posts build up a web of stories, which has not only largely shaped the independent tourists’ selection of sites to visit, but also their on-tour experience at the sites.



Figure 6.4 Tourists’ post on Mafengwo; Screenprint by author

The popularity of these posts indicate the rising influence of tourists’ social media posts on potential tourists’ choice for sites and ways to experience these sites. Tourists, especially the

younger generation, have gained their pre-tour narratives mainly from those travel posts and tourist reviews circulated online. Tourists' narratives on social media are shedding ever influential impact on shaping the images of tourist destinations.

6.3.2 World Heritage: an unpopular subject in tourists' narratives

Drawing on the reviews posted by tourists on two top travel review websites--domestic tourists' reviews on Mafengwo and international tourists' reviews on Trip Advisor, this section begins with a summary and categorization of the stories most frequently narrated in tourist reviews about West Lake, the ways in which it has been experienced, understood and interpreted by tourists. Through the reductive analysis of the data collected from reviews of both domestic and international tourists, I noticed a sharp contrast between the very low percentage of remarks about West Lake as a World Heritage of outstanding universal value and the dominance of accounts about West Lake as a site for leisure and pleasure ((Paradise on Earth). Apart from the dominant theme focusing on the aesthetic appeal and leisure function of West Lake, there also exist other popular subjects in tourists' accounts about West Lake: a site of romantic love, a site of monumental significance, a site for religious pilgrimage and a site with rural views (tea terraces and tea villages).

In general, tourists have a low awareness of the World Heritage status of West Lake. Only 2.51 per cent of international tourists' reviews (11 among 437) and 1.23 per cent of national tourists' reviews (13 among 1056) mentioned its World Heritage Status. The analysis on the small number of these reviews referring to it as a World Heritage Site indicates that even those tourists with the awareness of its World Heritage Status had only a very vague idea of what World Heritage status means. Domestic tourists' reviews often quoted official introductions to the World Heritage Status of West Lake in the following way: 'West Lake is a freshwater lake of a great aesthetic appeal in China. It was enlisted as the National Scenic

Area as early as in 1983. It was also rated as AAAAAA Tourism and Scenic Area. ... It was enlisted as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2011.’ These lines are cut-and-pastes of the information in entry of West Lake on Wikipedia and the frequent quotation of these lines by tourists in their reviews suggest that they perceive World Heritage List as a rating system, similar to but at an international and thus a higher level than the national rating categories such as ‘National Scenic Area’ and ‘Tourist attractions or scenic areas rated as AAAAA (5A)’. For some tourists, World Heritage status was also understood as a kind of award in an international contest with other heritage sites in the world and thus their reviews focus on the outstanding values of West Lake especially in terms of its aesthetic appeal. None of them mentioned the universal significance of West Lake’s in terms of its impact on the design of gardens in China and East Asia.

International tourists, however, prefer to understand the outstanding value of West Lake from the perspective of its historical significance. Most international tourists, despite their positive remarks on the beautiful scenery of West Lake, did not perceive its aesthetic appeal as a value outstanding enough to justify the designation of this site in the World Heritage List. In stead, they tried to justify its value as a site of great historical significance. However, since most international tourists had little knowledge about West Lake before their visit, their understandings and narratives of West Lake’ value as a World Heritage Site drew heavily on the interpretation of their guides:

Our guide told us the lake deserves the reputation as a world heritage site mainly due to its history. We were convinced of this at the sight of the three stone pagodas known as Three Pools Mirroring the Moon. Definitely amazing.’ (IT 52)

Some visitors with special interest in Chinese or local history structured the historical knowledge they learnt from pre-tour and on-tour narratives into their own interpretations of the site. But the same as domestic tourists’ understanding, outstanding rather than universal

value of West Lake was emphasised in their reviews. Such emphasis on the distinctiveness of aesthetic and historical values of West Lake and the absence of universal values in tourists' reviews indicate that the outstanding universal values of West Lake were not well communicated to tourists.

In order to understand why the story of West Lake as a World Heritage is not popular while others are dominant in tourists' narratives of this site, I will move on to explore how those popular narratives were constructed by tourists, which can help with identifying the proper ways to get tourist engaged in the shaping of this landscape as a World Heritage site through their narratives in the future. how tourists get engaged with the landscape and develop their narratives of this site

6.3.3 A scenic area for leisure and aesthetic appreciation

The analysis in this part focuses on tourists' narratives of West Lake as a scenic area for leisure and aesthetic appreciation. I will examine how tourists got engaged with West Lake through a variety of activities in their spatial exploration in this landscape, how they made representation in their reviews of West Lake' aesthetic values especial in the form of spatial features, and the factors affecting the communication of World Heritage values in the process of their spatial exploration. It is followed by a discussion on how such narratives were constructed under the combining influence of official structuring of the space, tourists' motivations and their own identities.

Most tourists present West Lake in their reviews as a park for leisure in which they can perform leisure activities in a beautiful environment and also represented such images of this site in their reviews to other tourists with potential interest for visit. Data analysis indicates that for most tourists in West Lake, either domestic or international, aesthetic appreciation is

the main focus when they encounter the site and tangible attributes in its space. The words, such as 'beautiful', 'amazing' and 'picturesque', rank top among the most frequently occurring words in the data of tourists' reviews (figure). Travel in West Lake means seeking scenically interesting and beautiful parts of the site. Most tourists mentioned their experience of visiting this 'beautiful and calm lake' in a leisure way, by hiking and cycling along the lake bank and cruising on the lake. They also posted a large number of photos of representative scenic sites, especially those most renowned ones together with their reviews on the websites. These reviews and photos presented West Lake as an aesthetified space for leisure.

In order to make a direct presentation of tourists' physical ²-exploration of this landscape, I marks the most popular sites on a google map of West Lake, with blue circles for domestic tourists and red circle for international tourists, as well as the frequency of these site's appearance in their reviews.



Figure 6.5 The spatial exploration of international and domestic tourists; by author

The above figure reveals that most sites visited by tourists are located in the lake zone including vast water area of the lake, together with an array of monuments, gardens, sites of significance dotted about on the bank around it, along the causeways across it and on the isles on it. Most of these attributes were also enlisted as the essential heritage attributes conveying the significance of West Lake as a World Heritage Site. The overlaps between the scenic attributes and heritage attributes reflect the common practice in the heritage sector that some ‘privileged’ objects and structures are selected ‘to construct a portfolio of heritage tourist attractions’ (Watson 2010:2) and tourists are encouraged to use their visual sense to understand their values (Hooper-Greenhill 1995, 2000; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998).

	Domestic tourists	International tourists
Space	around the lake, on the lake	

	On hills, away from the lake	
Key attributes	Ten Poetically Named Places	pagodas, pavilions arch-bridges lake surrounded by hills decorative plants (willows, peach blossoms and lotus) museums
	Three Love Bridges	
	Sites of historical or monumental significance: Yue Fei's Temple and Tomb, Leifeng Pagoda, Lingyin Temple	
Performance	Walking, cycling, cruising, photographing, aesthetic appreciation; photographing	
	Hill hiking, poem quotation, cosplay	
themes	A beautiful park for leisure	
	A site for cultural pilgrimage: praised by well-known poets A site for romantic love	A beautiful man-made park, not natural enough, not spectacular

Table 6.1 Key themes identified in tourists' review; by author

The essential role of aesthetic appreciation in heritage tourism has also been stressed by many researchers in tourism studies, especially Urry in his study on 'tourist gaze' (Urry 1990). Motivated by aesthetic appreciation of the lake zone, tourists performed sight-seeing and photographing at scenic sites around the lake to get engaged with West Lake. They give high remarks to the aesthetic appeals of architectural attributes such as pagodas, pavilions, and arch-bridges, together with natural attributes including lake water, hills and decorative plants in this zone.

The dominance of tourists' narratives of West Lake with emphasis on its aesthetic value among both domestic and international tourists reflects the powerful influence of the heritage tourism industry which acts as a mechanism that engages 'audiences ...to similarly construct and frame heritage in that specific way' (Watson 2010:7). However, such narratives also cut the landscape from social relationship and cultural fabric in which it has evolved, and distanced it from audience and users with the intention to get a deeper engagement with it. In the next part, I will probe into domestic tourists' construction of some spaces through their deeper engagement in the form of on-tour performance and post-tour narratives. I will discuss the impact of pre-tour imagination on some domestic tourists' encounter with sites and their understandings of the values of these sites, which will contribute to a further understanding of the nature of heritage narratives as products of social construction and negotiations.

6.3.4 West Lake: a site of symbolic significance

Apart from tourists consuming West Lake as a leisure destination with scenic lake views, there also exist some other tourists visited West Lake because of their personal interest in specific sites. Their narratives about their experience at these sites reveal different facets of West Lake and communicate different values of this landscape. In this part, based on the analysis of two popular subjects in tourists' narratives: a site for romantic love and a testimony of Jiangnan culture, I will probe into how tourists incorporated their pre-tour imagination and their on-site experience into their own narratives of West Lake.

Different from tourists motivated by the purpose of leisure, the tourists under discussion in this part took 'destination-oriented approach' when they selected the destination for travel (Giovine 2009:156). That is to say, these tourists, before departure, already had some pre-tour imagination of the site and had desire to experience the site in specific ways. In this sense, they had developed a sense of personal connection to the place which promoted them to experience West Lake in specific ways.

As some tourism scholars have argued, a particular pre-tour narrative is already formulated in one's mind when some ones make an intentional choice for a destination and such imagination will affect his understanding of that site when he actually encounter it (Bruner 2004, 2005; Giovine 2009). Pre-tour imagination formed some narratives which shaped these tourists' way to encounter the sites of special appeal.

A telling case is tourists' narratives about The Three Love Bridges of West Lake. The three love bridges refer to Broken Bridge, Long Bridge and Xiling Bridge, which have high popularity among tourists, not because of their architectural or historical values, but because

of love legends related to these sites—the Legend of White Snake, Butterfly Lovers and the Legend of Su Xiaoxiao. Although these love legends are fictional, they exerted great impact on tourists' way to experience and perform at the related sites. Many tourists, especially couples and lovers, experienced West Lake as a romantic place of lovers. Non-participant observation at these sites captured moments when tourists used these spaces as stages to perform their understanding of these stories. Occasionally, some tourists did cosplay of the Legend of White Snake at Broken Bridge, dressing up as Lady White to meet her Mr. Right (Xu Xian) ; Some couples chose Long Bridge as the place to take their wedding pictures, because it was an important setting in the story of Butterfly Lovers. At the northern end of Xiling Bridge, a number of tourists would stop at the Tomb of Su Xiaoxiao and shared the love legend of Su Xiaoxiao with other tourists. Although these bridges were either renovated or rebuilt in the modern age, tourists were not bothered with the issue of their material authenticity. What they were interested in was to perform their understandings of the symbolic meanings of these sites and get themselves connected with the sites through their performance. Many tourists described their encounters with Broken Bridge like this:

The first moment I arrived at Broken Bridge, I seemed to hear the theme song of the New Legend of White Lady and could help recalling the scene of the first encounter between Lady White and Xu Xian on Broken Bridge. It is so romantic and beautiful, just as it was in the TV. (DT 342)

The feelings described in the review were not 'unmediated nature', but something 'symbolically structured' (Burner 2005:3). The well-known story of White Snake was generated in a local social and cultural context but has achieved national and even cross-cultural influence because it was repeatedly told in folklores, operas, music, TV serials and novels. These representations, ever since their production, have a 'life of their own' separate from that which they represent. Thus, they become independent items which can be further interpreted, adapted and circulated in a wider context beyond the physical space of the

heritage site (Grosz 2001). In the case of Broken Bridge, a TV serials called New Legend of White Lady has exerted a widespread impact among audience ever since 1990s. The image of the female protagonist Lady White starred by Yazhi Zhao and the romantic setting of Broken Bridge in rain for the first encounter of two lovers were repeatedly mentioned by tourists as their original motives for the West Lake visit.

The stories related to the original site generated the something beyond the material existence of physical attributes which Grosz termed as ‘excess’ of the heritage site (2001: xv). Such excess can blur the boundaries between the physical space and itself and create the possible interactions between the tourists and the site.

Another popular account about West Lake among domestic tourists is the story of West Lake as a testimony of traditional Jiangnan culture. The data analysis on domestic tourists’ reviews tells that, different from international tourists setting focus on physical elements such as historical monuments, temples and pagodas, symbolic meanings of the sites and attributes in the spaces have been frequently mentioned as factors which have enhanced their visiting experience in this landscape. Just as one of the tourists wrote in her review that

‘West Lake in my mind is far beyond the physical existence of scenic views and has already been taken as an embodiment of a cultural inheritance. It serves as an image, an image of Jiangnan Culture, in the form of misty rain, willows on banks, allies with flowers. This image has been repeatedly represented in (water and ink) paintings, poems, songs, music, and a number of tragic but romantic stories. Thus, West Lake is always associated with these very subtle, refined, elaborate elements in a Jiangnan culture.’ (DT 962)

Here the physical surrounds of West Lake are ‘complicit in a dialogue of belonging that runs between individuals and a much larger, imagined collectivity’. West Lake visit is taken as a

pilgrimage of traditional Jiangnan Culture, an elite culture of Han ethnic group reaching its prime in 13th century, when Hangzhou was the capital city of Southern Song Dynasty.

The tourists' celebration of collective memories in the form of performing symbolic acts at these symbolic places and posting their narratives in reviews on social media created spaces within which specific identities are expressed and reconfirmed (Staiff, Bushell and Watson 2013), to 'express identity, claim status and convey cultural and personal values (Askin 2009:372) The values of the site has been reinforced by locating it in a particular place of performance. Thus, domestic tourists' deeper engagement with this heritage site through creating and recreating symbolic values of West Lake correspond with Bagnall's (2003) idea that visiting heritage sites is a physical experience of performance and reminiscing.

Pre-tour narratives of West Lake constructed in a broader social and cultural context beyond the heritage sector itself have obvious impact on tourists' preference of sites and experience at sites. For Chinese tourists, the authenticity of the physical remains of these sites carries significantly less weight than the intangible values of them. The examples of the most popular sites such as Broken Bridge illustrate that Chinese tourists were not concerned about the material authenticity of these sites, and their visits were quite different from Westerners' experience of visiting a cultural heritage as an exploration of historical relics. With such strong pre-tour narratives in their mind, tourists' visits to the site are beyond mass tourism for leisure and views. Domestic tourists tend to interpret their experience in West Lake either as a stroll in 'Paradise on Earth' and 'A Utopia with Picturesque Views and Poetical Ambience' or as a romantic visit at love shrines. It suggests that they practiced at these sites a form of 'reminiscence' (Bagnall 2003:90). It is explicitly through this emotional engagement that visitors made the sites they were viewing and the relevant histories more meaningful to their lives and experiences.

6.3.4 Cross-cultural communication of World Heritage

In this section, I will finally focus on the divergence between domestic and international tourists in their narration of West Lake stories, examine the factors affecting the communication of values of West Lake to international tourists and discuss the possibility of achieving the cross-cultural communication.

The divergence between these two groups can be identified in three aspects: their attitude towards official narratives, their different understandings of the same area and their preference for different sites. While domestic tourists tend to be engaged with West Lake in the way of collaborating with the existing meta-narratives and communicating the value of West Lake as a place to celebrate collective memory, international tourists are prone to question and even challenge the narratives of these normalized values of West Lake in their reviews.

Despite their similar performance of aesthetic appreciation in the same area, domestic and international tourists understand the aesthetic value of West Lake at different levels. Many domestic tourists perceived the scenic view of West Lake, represented by the Ten Poetically Named Places, as ‘the Best under Heaven’ because they understand the value of the site in a more symbolic way beyond its material existence. International tourists, despite their positive remarks on the beautiful scene of this site, tend to regard it as a fairly good public park with a natural environment and some artificial attributes in a typical Chinese style. Some international tourists expressed their confusion at the large number of domestic tourists in the landscape. Not a small number of international tourists questioned the official interpretation of West Lake as a ‘paradise on earth’:

‘I know West Lake has a lot of hype as ‘heaven on earth’ however don’t expect to be blown away by some spectacular views. It’s the best thing to do in Hangzhou so if you

are in town you should go. If your (want) more into a more natural setting try Thousand Island Lake or just get into the Chinese country side to get a better sense of what China has to offer.’(IT 309)

These international tourists were not satisfied with the scenic view of the site and degraded West Lake as a local scenic site, because it is not as ‘spectacular’ and ‘natural’ as he had expected. Such perception is not of minority among international visitors. Many international tourists felt uncomfortable with and confused at the huge crowds of Chinese tourists in this site. ‘It’s easy to get to (we walked) but impossible to get out. The number of domestic Chinese tourists is amazing but other than that there isn’t much to do.’(IT 215) These reviews are not rare cases but representative of a common view among international tourists: West Lake is beautiful, but just as beautiful as a public park in many places in the world; neither outstanding or universal. Such narratives communicated by international tourists challenged the long-existing narrative of West Lake as an iconic testimony of classic Chinese aesthetics.

The following analysis will focus on the causes leading to such divergence in their narratives. The difference between domestic and international tourists’ interpretations of West Lake can be attributed to their pre-tour knowledge and the accessibility to on-tour interpretation.

As it is recognized by researchers on tourism from an anthropological view, tourists begin each trip with some preconceptions about the destination: a pre-tour narrative, which channel how tourist experience and understand destinations (Bruner 2005).

The analysis in the previous part argues that, for domestic tourists, pre-tour narratives of West Lake have been so ‘firmly established and encompassing that they are difficult to escape, as they seem to envelop the entire society’ (Bruner 2005: 14). Therefore, their post-tour narratives tend to reaffirm and strengthen the meta-narratives of this site. The following reviews are representative examples:

If there is a paradise on earth, I think it must be Hangzhou West Lake. It is the destination I chose for my first travel, because I always feel there is something of special attraction to me. Take a cruise on the lake to enjoy its serenity and amazing view. It is widely acknowledged that if you want to fall in love, have a walk along the Su Causeway; if there is a place worth hundreds of repeated visits, it is Hangzhou West Lake; if there is only one resort for people to visit, it is Hangzhou West Lake. Its picturesque view has inspired numerous poets. Its landscape is the cradle for romantic love. It is like a noble man, gentle and cultivated. It is like a fair lady, beautiful and elegant. Broken Bridge, Leifeng Pagoda and Su Causeway, all of these sites arouse my appeal to beauty.’ (DT493)

The resonating interpretations of West Lake as a paradise on earth, a vision of old China with poems, ink paintings and tea drinking have thus not only enforced the existing imagery of West Lake among potential tourists, but also denied the possibility of communicating alternative stories of West Lake, for instance, as a World Heritage Site, to domestic tourists.

Comparatively, for international tourists, the pre-tour imagination of West Lake is more vague and pliant, and hence more open to tourists’ modification and re-interpretation (Bruner 2005). Compared with most popular sites like Beijing, Xi’an, Shanghai, Chengdu and Yangshuo, Hangzhou is still of low exposure to most international tourists. The low awareness of Hangzhou in pre-tour imagination among international tourists, especially Westerners, can be easily identified in their reviews. Compared with domestic tourists, very few international tourists use words such as ‘imagination’ or ‘expectation’s in their reviews.

The low accessibility to knowledge about Hangzhou and West Lake among international tourists was mentioned by local tourist guides. When asked if international tourists have any personal preference to some sites, most of guides answered ‘No’. ‘Few of them have any specific idea about the sites in West Lake Scenic Area’ (G1). ‘They would ask me to make

choice for them' (G2). 'Usually they follow my guide, asking me to recommend sites for visit and plan our itinerary.' (G3) One of the guides further explained: 'tourists do not have a preference to particular sites to visit. They usually want to have a view of the lake, some historical sites like temples and pagodas. In order to avoid a huge number of tourists around during their visit, our itinerary includes lake cruise, Lingyin Temple visit, Liuhe Pagoda and tea villages. (G4)

For international tourists, English-speaking local guides are the primary storytellers, supplemented by the standard guidebooks and pamphlets. Drawing upon these resource of on-tour narratives, international tourist connect their pre-tour expectations with on-site experience. All of the international guides are licensed and thus qualified to communicate the value of West Lake to foreign visitors. Guides shared with me their experience in cross-cultural communication in interviews:

Sometimes it is too complicated to explain Chinese culture and history to international tourists, especially Westerners. I often try to identify similitudes and use comparative approaches to cope with such problems. For example, when I tell the story of Butterfly Lovers, I mentioned it as an Oriental Romeo and Juliet. As a love story with universal meaning, it is not difficult for international tourists to understand. In addition, I also make a brief explanation for the background of the story.

Guide's emphasis on cross-cultural communication skills shows that even those with a strong motive to offer qualified interpretations laid much emphasis on the skills of cross-cultural communication of history, local legends and anecdotes.

When asked if and how they communicate the value of West Lake as a World Heritage Site, most of the guides admitted that they did not have much knowledge about World Heritage or the Outstanding Universal Values of West Lake. One of the guide, Guide B, explained:

Maybe once or twice in a year, we were asked to attend lectures about World Heritage Interpretation of West Lake. But it is not a requirement. The knowledge about West Lake's value as a World Heritage is not the priority in the evaluation system of our work performance. I would mention the World Heritage status of West Lake to my guests and make a general introduction about its designation, but would not explain into details. Although I have some personal interest in it, I lack the motivation to gain more knowledge about it when I am so busy with my work. (G4)

The communication of World Heritage values of West Lake was not perceived as the priority in their service as tourist guides. The trainings and examinations for these guide lay more emphasis on their language competence than on the contents of their stories.

Nor have they been required to update the knowledge of World Heritage ever since the designation of West Lake on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The analysis show that a range of reasons have led to the absence of interpretations about West Lake' world heritage values in tourists' post-tour narratives. The first reason rests with the lack of communication and cooperation between bureaucratic departments of heritage administration and tourism administration. The study suggests that although tourist guides play an essential role in the cross-cultural communication of this World Heritage Site to international tourists, no specific training of tourism interpretation of its OUV has been required. It has largely affected the communication of the outstanding values of this site to its international audience.

Another important reason which should not be neglected is the deficiency in the cultural translation of West Lake Landscape. The official interpretation of West Lake offered on-site by WLAC of West Lake is not accessible to international tourists because its multi-lingual interpretations are only literally translations of the Chinese version. Simply translating signs and brochures into another language that matches the profile of the visitors barely touches

the surface of what is at the heart of cross-cultural communication of heritage values of West Lake. In order to make the information accessible to targeted audience, a cultural translation is required so as to translate the cultural information from one cultural context to another. One of the critical elements of translating across cultural difference involves understanding what happens when the original language is communicated to the language of the target audience. This process invariably requires that the translation is a process of bridging the gap between tourists' background knowledge and the experience at their visit destination.

6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the non-official narratives created and communicated by local communities and tourists as users and consumers of West Lake Cultural Landscape. The cases of non-official narratives under discussion include tea villagers' account about local way of tea production, the changes of landscape from a rural one to an aesthetified site and their experience in a gentrified neighbourhood. It has also analysed the narratives of immigrant SAB owners and local volunteers and thus present multiple voices in the same group of stakeholders. The findings suggest that these actual users and consumers have constructed a number of alternative narratives about West Lake through their practice of labour, tourism and leisure activities. Some of these narratives attached great importance to the aesthetic, historical and monumental values of the physical attributes in West Lake Cultural Landscape. These narratives collaborate with the official narratives and strengthen the grand narratives of West Lake as a national cultural icon. Meanwhile, some other focuses on the values of West Lake at a more local level, interpreting it as a living landscape in interaction with the locals. In chapter 5, I have demonstrated that the official narratives of West Lake are the dominant voices which appropriate West Lake into a heritage site of inherent aesthetic, historical and monumental values. This chapter revealed that non-official narratives of West Lake also take an active role in the production, negotiation of the meaning

of this World Heritage Site. In the next chapter, I will consider narratives that I have introduced in both Chapter 5 and in this chapter in order to give an overall picture of how West Lake are represented and communicated via multi-vocal narratives of its stakeholders and also how the discussion on official and non-official narratives of West Lake could give a bigger picture about what are the motivations and the influences of communicating values of World Heritage in China.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to understand how a World Heritage Site is communicated and the narratives that are employed. It was motivated by the realization of the necessity for understanding the issue of heritage communication from a new perspective, because the traditional practice of heritage interpretation can no longer cope with the growing complexity in this field.

This issue has not received enough attention by policy makers, heritage experts and scholars in China. In the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China, the word ‘interpretation’ appears 18 times. Although it was listed as one of the four objectives of the Conservation Master Plan, only vague principles have been set regarding its implementation – i) Presentation and dissemination of the site’s values to promote public awareness of its importance; ii) To enhance content and methods of interpretation to maximize the interpretive impact and; iii) Improvement of the social benefits derived from the site, thereby striving to increase economic benefits. No guidelines have been set to guarantee the implementation of interpretation. No public participation has been mentioned in direct connection with heritage interpretation. These principles suggest that heritage interpretation is perceived as a measure to educate the public to win their support and understanding while the public are expected to play a passive role as receivers in the interpretation of World Heritage.

Thus, a lot of questions concerning heritage interpretation remain under-researched at World Heritage Sites in China. Drawing upon the new perspective of heritage as a dynamic process of construction, this study focuses on heritage narratives, as an essential practice of constructing and communicating heritage values. The research has focused on examining

West Lake, a World Heritage Site in China, has been understood and communicated through the narratives by a number of stakeholders and how these multi-vocal narratives reflect and shape these stakeholder's understandings of the values of this place. In order to present the whole picture of the interpretations of this World Heritage Site, the study focused on story construction by both official agencies including the Administrative Committee of West Lake and Hangzhou Tourism Committee and non-official groups including local communities and tourists. It analysed the influence of the relevant dominant discourses—UNESCO's heritage discourse, discourse of modernization and the discourse of nationalism - on these stakeholder's selection, creation and dissemination of their preferred values of this landscape through these stories. In addition, it has also analysed non-official narratives created and communicated by other stakeholders, including local communities and tourists and examined how alternative narratives co-exist and sometimes conflicts with the authorised narratives.

To achieve the research objectives, I have traced existing research on the evolution of World Heritage policies and their influence on heritage narratives. I have reviewed the development of heritage conservation policies in China and their impact on the narratives of World Heritage Sites in China. To draw a conclusion to my research, I set the discussions and findings in a broader context and have summarized my major findings as below.

7.2 Major findings

7.2.1 Disconnection between heritage listing and heritage interpretation

This study demonstrates that there exist gaps and dilemmas in the official heritage interpretations of a World Heritage Site and the reasons for such gaps and dilemma are partly attributed to the disconnection between the heritage experts dominant in the World Heritage listing process and the local heritage agents in charge of its daily management.

Although it has been widely acknowledged that the UNESCO and its affiliated agencies have

an authorized power and dominant influence on shaping official interpretations of a World Heritage Site, this study finds that such an influence on the production of heritage interpretations is largely limited to the stage of World Heritage Listing. Once a site is designated, it is the local heritage authorities who are responsible for the daily management of the World Heritage Site. In the case of West Lake, the daily management relies entirely on the West Lake Administrative Committee while its designation was dominated by Tongbin Chen, a heritage professional at China Architecture Design & Research Group (CAG) in Beijing and only a few local heritage professionals at WLAC were engaged in the World Heritage Listing process. As has been mentioned in Chapter 5, there exist gaps between the understandings of West Lake's significance at national and local levels and the Euro-centric criteria for World Heritage Designation. Chen's interpretation of West Lake's OUV in its nomination dossier managed to fit into the discourse accepted by Western experts by selectively editing out some Chinese values. This kind of interpretation became authorised in the process of West Lake's World Heritage nomination, achieved its summit of influence at the moment of West Lake's designation and its authorised status remain unchallenged in the post-designation period. As a result, despite the lack of direct connection between UNESCO and the local heritage committee, its AHD still has basically shaped a new set of official interpretations of West Lake through the formulation of its nomination dossier for World Heritage designation.

This new set of official interpretations of West Lake has been employed as a measure to create and reshape the place into a World Heritage Site. The essential material elements identified as possessing OUV by heritage experts at the national level and confirmed by heritage experts at an international level in the listing process, became the focus for its official interpretations by local heritage agencies, such as West Lake Museum and West Lake World Heritage Monitoring Centre. As chapter 5 has revealed, West Lake museum was originally set up as a place for presenting an official interpretation to international heritage experts from ICOMOS as target audience. Later, in the post-designation period, only a few updates have been made

in the exhibition because it was not encouraged by its superior department, the West Lake Administrative Committee. The exhibition and display curators at West Lake Museum admitted that the nomination dossier of West Lake has not only basically shaped their presentation and interpretation of West Lake, but also limited the possibility of further updates of their exhibitions, because their interpretations are not allowed to challenge the authorised version in the nomination dossier. According to the requirement of the superior department, the work of museum was to contextualize the collected objects into the story-lines about the evolution and construction of the six essential elements of this lake landscape. In order to present West Lake as a cultural heritage, the presentation and interpretation are supposed to stress on the authenticity of these elements and narratives about regarding changes in the modern era should be avoided. Just as Giovine (2009) claims, museums utilize pre-existing objects, with their own life histories and disparate social understandings and contextualize them in a novel way—a way wherein they could be used as tangible illustrations of a unifying narrative claim. Through such a process of museumification, West Lake was re-contextualized and created as a new public space. The site became a product of tangible interactions as they are intangible narrative understandings.

The data collected from interpretation-panels at the officially-sanctioned sites in the landscape also showed that their contents put much more emphasis on the aesthetic and historical values of the physical sites rather than other intangible and associated values. Interviews with the officers at West Lake World Heritage Monitoring and Management Centre also revealed that they gave a great priority to the conservation of physical structures and monuments and accordingly the interpretations of these sites and places.

Similarly to the formation of narratives at a museum, the sites of West Lake are also structured and presented in a selective way to induce the visitor into a particular way of seeing. As a result, the official interpretations of local agencies, under the influence of UNESCO's AHD, have constructed a museumified narrative, with material existence at its core, re-

contextualising West Lake in a globally defined heritage-scape by following a procedure akin to that of museumification. Its emphasis on aesthetic or historical values has dis-embedded these elements from the locales and reinserted into a new context of heritage-scape (Giovine 2009). Its official interpretation, as part of the conservation, is utilized as a constitutive measure to re-construct the physical site itself, transforming West Lake from a local living landscape into a cultural heritage site. In this sense, UNESCO's material-centred heritage discourse imbues West Lake with the tangible place through a museological process and its influences has been sustained through the official narratives of this World Heritage Site.

However, the rigid interpretation of West Lake's OUV developed in the WH-Bidding stage has been questioned and challenged by local heritage professionals and museum curators in charge of daily management of its interpretation to the public. The interviews with these people show that they are starting to explore better approaches to communicating the values of West Lake to a broader audience. As a result, there occur a growing gap between the heritage interpretations produced in the WH Listing period and the heritage interpretations circulated in the post-designation period.

The paradox in the practice of official interpretations of a World Heritage Site like West Lake can be understood as a result of such a gap between the heritage listing dominated by UNESCO's World Heritage agenda and heritage management operated by local heritage agencies. On the one hand, the story of West Lake as a World Heritage Site has been shaped by the World Heritage Listing under a direct impact of UNESCO's authoritative heritage discourse. On the other hand, however, the concept of OUV as a Western concept imported from outside is not well accepted and interpreted by local heritage professionals and thus fails to be communicated to targeted audience.

The disconnection between the World Heritage Listing and its interpretation via daily management at a local level reveals that UNESCO, as an intergovernmental organization, has

a fairly limited power. The World Heritage Convention is designed to empower nation-states to voluntarily 'offer up' a property for designation and the influence of UNESCO on World Heritage Site management derives from the political cooperation and participation of States-parties. Therefore, although UNESCO's World Heritage programme has successfully form a 'heritage-scape' in the form of its World Heritage List, its ambition to 'cultivate a global community' (Giovine 2009:187) can hardly realize, because its 'peace-inducing narrative' has not been properly communication through World Heritage management. Nation-state is slightly motivated to participate in this 'lengthy and costly enterprise' (Giovine 2009:441).

7.2.2 Universal value versus national significance

Apart from the indirect connection between UNESCO and the administration system of World Heritage sites in China, this research finds out that another reason for the gaps in the official interpretations of West Lake rests with the conflict between UNESCO's discourse of a common world heritage and Chinese government's political purpose for demonstrating its distinctive national identity via World Heritage designation and interpretation in both domestic and international settings. My research demonstrates that this political purpose for achieving a sense of pride for national heritage with international cultural recognition is one of the major motivations to Chinese government's participation in the competition of World Heritage Designation and the official heritage interpretations of World Heritage Sites in Chinese has been produced and promoted for achieving this purpose.

As suggested by the analysis in chapter 5, the official interpretation of West Lake has laid more emphasis on the national significance than the universal value of this World Heritage Site. In the official interpretations of West Lake, the words such as 'national', 'nation' and 'Chinese' are frequently used while words like 'transnational' 'trans-cultural' and 'universal' are rarely employed. Despite its rhetoric claim to communicate West Lake as a World Heritage Site to the world, the official interpretation produced by the agencies of local

authorities was targeted at local residents and domestic tourists, to increase their knowledge about West Lake as a cultural reservoir of Chinese traditional culture, boast their sense of pride about the international recognition of this cultural heritage of national significance, and strengthening their sense of belong to an unified national identity through this process. fourteen historical monuments and sites have been selected and interpreted as representative remains of key elements of Chinese culture, including Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Hermitage culture and Tea culture. Among all of the stories narrated at these sites, little transnational significance has been emphasised. While the on-site interpretation panels were marked with UNESCO's World Heritage Site logo, the contents of these panel made a strong assertion for West Lake's role as a reservoir of typical Chinese culture and affiliated cultural practices, doctrines and beliefs. The core value of West Lake has been summarized as a 'time-honoured' 'spiritual home' of Chinese intellectuals and literati, which conveys more national values rather than a testimony of trans-national cultural communication and dialogue. The symbolic meaning of West Lake was connected to all its political, social and economic impetus within a national scope, and the whole landscape, together with a large number of historical monuments and sites (not only those listed as essential elements of its OUV), was used to shape it into a reservoir of cultural codes, a monument for the regeneration of Chinese national culture. On-site interpretation has been employed as a useful measure to communicate the national significance of these sites in forming Chinese cultural identity.

In this sense, UNESCO's discourse of building a universal heritage landscape for world peace has shed little influence on the official interpretations of West Lake. The most noticeable limit is the neglect of UNESCO's endeavour to communicate World Heritage values for cross-cultural communication and global peace making in the official interpretations. According to the final decision on enlisting West Lake as a World Heritage Site, this landscape's OUV is proved by evidence meeting criteria ii, iii and vi. Criterion ii, with its emphasis on the cross-cultural communication of West Lake in history, states that West Lake 'exhibit[s] 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' (UNESCO). But the OUV of West Lake in this aspect has been hardly mentioned in any form by the local agencies in their official interpretations at sites, guidebooks or at museums. While certainly part of the reason should be attributed to the disconnection between UNESCO and the local heritage agencies, this study also suggests that UNESCO's meta-narrative claim of 'unity in diversity' is not well accepted at a local level. The international narratives focusing on the universal significance tend to emphasise the cultural interaction and unification, which may intentionally ignore the distinctions and uniqueness of a culture, especially a non-European/non-Western one. The official interpretation of West Lake, despite its claim for communicating the significance of World Heritage Site to an international audience, turned out to be a heritage narrative of West Lake, with too much emphasis on its national influence and significance rather than the international impacts and its OUV. National significance, rather than international influence of this landscape has been repeatedly emphasized in the official interpretations of this site, which mainly reinforces pre-existing conceptions of the place in Chinese own cosmology. It shows that official narratives on West Lake have not been effectively contextualized in UNESCO's meta-narrative of universalism. In fact, West Lake is only one of the cases among World Heritage Sites in China.

These designated sites are appropriated by the grand national narrative into some testimonies of China's glories past and the continuity of its history which thus also contribute to the achievements in present-day China. While the revival of Confucianism was promoted as a national policy to strengthen the national identity in the previous Hu Jintao era, the office of present Xi Jinping employ 'China Dream' to construct and communicate a grand narrative of China renaissance in political, economic and cultural spheres. Heritage, especially World Heritage, has been interpreted as the testimony of entire cultural tradition and plays an important role in this grand narrative. In the official narratives of West Lake's construction and renovation, the whole landscape has been presented and communicated as both an evidence of China's great achievement in the imperial era and a proof of its revival

in the modern age. Before Xi Jinping became the president of China, he was the Secretary of CPC Zhejiang Committee. Thus, President Xi's political impact on West Lake has been frequently mentioned. At a number of sites and different occasions, President Xi's supporting words for heritage conservation at these sites have been quoted and presented as evidence of official sanction.

In this sense, West Lake, together with other World Heritage Sites in China, are heritage that represents the present achievement of the country. This dominant official narrative of World Heritage in China holds that the enlistment, management and interpretation of a World Heritage Site are evidence of a China's revival for the international communities to appreciate and respect. To have a site inscribed and later presented to domestic and international audience is to arouse local people's sense of pride for their own heritage. It is 'first and foremost something for the Chinese to be proud of' (Lai 2016:315). However, the emphasis on the cultural priority in the grand national narrative of World Heritage has reinforced a sense of cultural superiority over other cultures either within its own territory or in other neighbouring countries among Chinese' people, especially Han ethnic group. In spite of UNESCO's enormous impact on the World Heritage designation, the World Heritage Programme has not yet realize its original intension of communicating its global narrative to cultivate a universal view on cultural diversity for world peace. UNESCO's narrative of universal values in 'diversity in unity' and the idea of cross-cultural communication has been filtered in World Heritage Site management at national and local levels.

7.2.3 Narratives for heritage conservation and tourism marketing

The research has also found out that narratives created for heritage conservation and tourism promotion are in both conflicts and promises with each other. The interaction between these two types of narratives reflects the complicated relationship between their producers, WLAC and HTC. The former is more concerned with the care and maintenance of the site entrusted to its care, rather than to any actual or possible use of this site. Thus, the interpretation has

been taken as a necessary but less important work while marketing, promoting and communication of West Lake to tourists are viewed as extra function which is Tourism Committee's responsibility. The latter, with political and financial support from Hangzhou Municipal authorities, has obviously taken a more active role in promoting West Lake and Hangzhou to a broader audience at an international level.

The practice of heritage promotion of World Heritage Site shows that, apart from the political purpose for strengthening national identity, there is also a strong economic reason in the heritage industry in China. In the narratives of tourism marketing, World Heritage status has been simplified as an international brand to attract international tourists while World Heritage Sites have been aestheticized as leisure places for tourism consumption. From the perspective of officers at HTC, World Heritage designation was mainly spurred by economic interest in tourism industry and World Heritage status means a tourism brand which can be used to attract people who would otherwise would not come. Thus, it is not difficult to understand why HTC's interpretation of West Lake for the purpose to tourism promotion is with over-emphasis on World Heritage Sites as tourism products to be accessed and consumed by tourists. As a result, its interpretations, presenting West Lake as a theme park for leisure and recreation, tend to commercialise heritage values by transforming either tangible or intangible resources into tourism products and experiences.

In order to create a familiar and safe environment for tourists, the tourism industry has not only standardized a place's infrastructure to meet the general needs and accessibilities of the broadest possible group of potential travellers, but it has also created a narrative for introducing the place with generalized and universalized characteristics that allow it to be easily and organically represented in accordance with the emotional needs and expectations of potential travellers. The discussion on tourists' pre-tour expectations in chapter 6 tells us that aside from those who for very specific purposes wanted to visit a Chinese cultural landscape, it seems that the average tourist of these travels had the desire, for their voluntary

and temporary leisure activity, to visit a Chinese site that was well-known, easy to get by in, and safe—both physically and within their imagination. Indeed, most foreign visitors have received little exposure to Chinese history, culture, and religion, so they would expect to see something both with exotic oriental features and still within their familiar knowledge zone. Their imagined narratives associated with the form of travel all contribute to the formation of the expectations for their visit in West Lake and Hangzhou. Their pre-tour narratives play a significant role in tourists' experience for they lay the very contextual foundation for how a person approaches and views the site. When one's experience does not live up to expectations, dissatisfaction with an experience will occur. The aim of the promotional narratives of the tourism industry is to help build pre-tour expectations and meanwhile avoid this kind of expectation gap. As a result, West Lake, together with its cultural resources, has been transformed into a series of visual semiotic codes as representations of Chinese iconic cultures, such as Zen Buddhist culture, Tea culture and Silk culture, which can be understood and consumed by modern tourists. Compared with the material-centered interpretations by heritage agencies, the interpretations of the Tourism Committee are more consumer-oriented. However, its interpretation, with its tendency to amuse tourists, has commodified and generalised the values of this World Heritage Site.

The research has also noticed, besides the diversity of perceptions and motives, there also exist overlap and common interests in the narratives about West Lake by these two administrative units. Both units are active in producing and circulating the significance of West Lake as a national heritage representing the essence of Chinese iconic cultures, such as Zen Buddhist culture, Tea culture and Silk culture.

7.2.4 Unheard voices of local community

The World Heritage programme is a top-down official campaign in China. As noted by the research in the section about local communities' narratives of West Lake, local participation

in heritage interpretation and communication was observably weak, even when their labor and life are closely connected with the site. Interviews show that despite the high awareness of World Heritage Site status among the locals, they have only a little knowledge about the OUV of World Heritage Site and have alternative understandings of the significance of the place which are quite different from the official ones. However local communities have been disempowered in the governance of West Lake and thus their alternative interpretations have been marginalized and unheard in the interpretation system of this World Heritage Site.

This research also reveals that there exists mismatch between heritage professionals' desire to pass on the untouched and frozen values of heritage values to the next generation and local people's aspiration to achieve modern living standards through employing and transforming local cultural and environmental resources into economic income. West Lake Cultural Landscape is not a rare case among World Heritage Sites in China and in the World, where such discrepancy between heritage conservation and local economic development has been sensed and communicated by local residents privately or openly in either mild or fierce ways.

The official narrative of WLAC focuses on the communication of historical and aesthetic values of the site. In the interviews, many heritage professionals mentioned the term 'spirit of West Lake'. According to their understanding, the spirit of West Lake is an essence of traditional elite Chinese culture. For the heritage professionals, West Lake appears as a very fragile site, threatened by the rapid urbanization, the assault of tourism and growing neo-liberal consumerism and indeed of being urgently preserved from annihilation. They all use very nostalgic tropes to describe the site was the spirit of local culture and now is losing much of its character in modern society ever since the 2010s. In their words, West Lake represents a romantic tradition and a modernist pursuit for the 'genuine thing'. For instance, in the brochures of West Lake edited by its Administrative Committee in 2014, one can find pictures of picturesque views at iconic Ten Poetically Named Places, historical monuments, gardens and towers, but without any human beings or modern signs. The idealized West Lake is

indeed a place of the days bygone.

While for heritage expert and cultural elites, West Lake is a site to be protected against rapid modernization, most locals do not share the same view. Many locals let their houses located in the site to incoming investors and business owners. And they happily moved to live in the urban area with modern infrastructure. More than 60 guesthouses for tourists have opened up, while 50 restaurants blossom in local villages. Around half of the local residents have rented their houses to guesthouse owners and moved to live in the urban area of Hangzhou. Although the local infrastructure and environment have been significantly improved in the heritage conservation projects, local people still found their areas are less developed than other suburban areas in Hangzhou. The development discourse has more powerful influence than the heritage conservation discourse among the local communities. Local people take the unique environment of this landscape as a good resource for them to gain economic profits and thus achieve a better living quality. Thus, they tend to embark in short term profit oriented strategies. The conflicts between the interpretations of heritage professional and the non-official narratives of local communities show that the current materiality-focused practice of heritage conservation has intensified conflictive relationship between conservation practice and development aspirations. In addition, predominant economic discourse around heritage initiating a local development project has also influenced local people's understanding of the values of their living place and cause local people's physical disconnection with their villages.

In addition, the research has also found out that even those local people staying in the local villages have emotional disassociation from their living landscape, partly because of the selective nature of the community engagement in heritage management at a local level. Although local people are encouraged to participate in some volunteering activities for their own villages or at scenic sites, they are still marginalized in heritage interpretation system. The setting up of professional bodies reflects the professionalization of interpretation. This is a good thing as it increases expectation of the highest standards and the development of

new and more effective techniques. However, there is a danger with all professionalization that it can lead to a division between providers and consumers, those who have the approved skills and those who do not, those who are 'interpreters and those who are not, those who are accepted by the professional gate-keepers and through some rite de passage become a member of the in-group, and those who remain at the margin. The dominant heritage interpretations have framed the heritage values in a narrow and rigid scale and excluded local knowledge. Local people are thus regarded as less qualified than professional interpreters in telling stories about the place. This hierarchy in the heritage interpretation system has largely discouraged local people's willingness and confidence in this practice and therefore has also challenged the maintenance of sociocultural continuities at a local level.

In order to cope with the problem, new approaches should be applied to help overcome the narrow focus on the materiality of heritage and privilege social sustainability as a precondition for preserving the spirit of a place and its cultural significance. The new approaches should take community engagement as central in heritage interpretations to the achievement of social sustainability. Without denying the physical importance of the past, an integrated interpretation approach should prioritise the intangible socio-economic components, encompassing environmental quality, economic development and social inclusion and the degree to which they are embedded in the transformation of the built environment (Wheeler and Beatley 2009).

7.2.5 Gaps between the production and the consumption

This study also demonstrates that there exists discrepancy between the producers and consumers of heritage interpretation. The discussion on tourists' narratives in chapter six reveals that visitors' understanding of visited sites frequently bears no relationship to the tourism operators' marketing of the places. Tourists' narratives show reflect some influence of the official interpretations, but are mainly shaped by their pre-tour knowledge and their

on-tour experience. Their circulations rely on social media and are taken as the new pre-tour narratives by potential tourists. Tourists at a World Heritage Site, as the consumers of this tourism product, are quite likely to be purchasing a different product from that which is being promoted generally because official promotion provided only a fraction, the least credible fraction, of the information used by the customers to construct place-identities.

The study has also found out that tourists' narratives show that pre-tour expectations of the site have an important influence on their experience and understanding of the place. International tourists and domestic tourists have quite different understandings of a same site. But such differences suggest something in common; tourists are looking for something familiar in an unfamiliar or even exotic context. For domestic tourists, the existing interpretation with emphasis on national values of the sites in West Lake can well fit into their pre-tour imagination and expectations for a traditional Chinese landscape praised in poems and depicted in Chinese ink paintings and fulfill their nostalgic feeling of a past. However, international tourists' narratives show that such official narratives with emphasis on the distinctiveness of West Lake values in Chinese culture are not well echoed by international tourists, because their imagination of a pre-industrial Chinese past is full of stereotypes and iconic elements in a different guise of their own heritage in an exotic context rather than a Chinese heritage with cultural inaccessibility. Comparatively, the narratives for tourism marketing are more suitable for international tourists because they tend to present West Lake by reducing it to a set of characteristics easily recognized by foreigners with little knowledge of Chinese culture. But such narratives that generalise the features of this landscape can hardly communicate its OUV as a World Heritage Site. As a result, neither domestic nor international tourists have gained the basic knowledge of the OUV of West Lake as a World Heritage Site.

7.3 Contributions to knowledge

Drawing upon an in-depth case study on West Lake Cultural Landscape, this study on narratives of World Heritage in China has both theoretical and practical implications. With its critical thinking on the issue of heritage interpretation from the perspective of narrative, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of heritage communication beyond technical problems of communication strategies and approaches. Addressing the issue from the perspective of narrative, this research deconstructed the authorized status of official heritage interpretation and argues that communicated by official interpretation is not the only narrative but just one of narratives of a World Heritage Site. This new theoretical thinking about the nature of heritage interpretation open the possible exploration into some more practical issues related to heritage communication in the future.

The study has revealed the plurality in heritage narratives, through which different stakeholder create and communicate World Heritage values ranging from the trans-national ones such as Outstanding Universal Value, national significance and some other alternative ones at regional and local levels, or even disruptive ones.

This research also adds to the knowledge about the involvement of multi-stakeholders in heritage communication. As an extension of earlier studies with focus on heritage narratives by one group of stakeholders, this research holds discussions on the involvement of multi stakeholders in the narration of World Heritage Sites and the relationship between the multi-vocal narratives of these different groups of stakeholders. While official agencies created their narratives to channel public audience's attention to some particular values of a World Heritage Site and also exclude others, other non-official stakeholders also use heritage narrative as a measure to participate in the meaning making of World Heritage in alternative ways. Although the study showed that each stakeholder group is concerned with only a part of the total construction, it, nevertheless, brought together these contributions together,

preparing the ground for the summary and synthesis necessary if a new strategy for World Heritage Interpretation is to emerge.

This research is one of only a few studies that have examined heritage narratives in a Chinese context and particularly the World Heritage context. With its particular focus on the case of West Lake Cultural Landscape, the research has addressed the issues related to how to interpret a large and complicated space which is more complex than a building, a monument or an archaeological site. In terms of the Chinese context, the work is shaped by several attributes that reflect ‘top-down’ power relationships in heritage management, the trends of urbanization and modernization and national identity building. All these related factors make the issue of heritage narratives more complicated and thus worthy of further exploration and comparative analysis with other cases with a different cultural and political backgrounds.

7.4 Conclusion

This research, with its focus on the multi-vocal narratives of World Heritage in China has raised more questions than solutions. At the very end of this research I want to return to the gap existing between the principles and practice of communication at World Heritage Sites in China and indeed in all World Heritage general. The research has revealed that although a World Heritage Site may have been designated for its Outstanding Universal Value, this is not necessarily communicated in its accompanying narratives. Explanations as to why Sites have OUV and what this means, are generally lacking.

Arguably, it is as if the process of designating a World Heritage Site has not taken place. At the same time, what does surface are a multitude of ‘other’ narratives, not fixated on OUV and which reflect, in a more inclusive way, a rich variety of interests representing the ever-evolving meanings of a site. Importantly, these alternative narratives highlight values far

beyond the idea of OUV. These are values which reflect a site's engagement with tourism and tourists, the changes that take place within the local communities within and affected by a site, the ways in which all people and interest groups identify with the Site. They are also the values that remind us that sites have a 'life' before World Heritage designation. So while UNESCO may seek to capture OUV and seek to display this in an official storyline, it cannot mask the multiple and dynamic narratives that have shaped a site and continue to do so.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Participant information Letter

Researcher's name: Yanwei Han

Department: Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, University of Birmingham

Tel: [REDACTED] (China); [REDACTED] (UK)

Email: yxh376@bham.ac.uk

I would like to invite you to participate in my research study. Before you decide whether to take part, I would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear.

The purpose of the study.

The aim of this study is to understand the ways in which local community are participating in heritage interpretation of West Lake Landscape. It involves interviews with local communities in both property site and the buffer zone of West Lake Landscape. I will talk with community members about their living experience in these areas and their understanding of the values of West Lake Landscape.

As a participant in this study, you have been selected among local community members of West Lake Landscape in the property area and the buffer zone. You would be interviewed by me for about 30 minutes, and the interview would be recorded and transcribed.

Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research

If you are willing to participate in this project, you will be asked to sign the consent form. You have the right to withdraw from the participation before or after my interview (within three month). You also have the right to requesting that I remove the information collected from my interview with you from the evaluation of my research findings.

Possible benefits and risks to participants:

It is hoped that this project will contribute to better understanding of the production and interaction of diverse heritage narratives of West Lake Landscape created by various social powers in China. Your participation in this project will provide an opportunity for you and your community to have your voice heard both at home and abroad, and potentially enhance the international understanding of heritage values of

West Lake Landscape by opening up more communication among the local administrative department, local communities, and international organizations and institutes.

I do not foresee the possibility of involving you in any risk of harm through your participation in my research. However, you have the right to withdraw from my research after my interview (within three months) if you feel uneasy or uncomfortable at my questions during my interview.

You also have the right to keep your identity concealed when I write up my research. However, you should be aware that this approach can not guarantee a complete anonymity for it is sometimes still possible for others to deduce the identity of an interviewee.

Research findings

The result of my findings will be communicated with my supervisors (Professor Robinson, University of Birmingham and Dr Woodham, King's College London). I will then report on my research in academic form, eg. in my PhD dissertation, and later in conference papers and academic articles.

Storage of data

If you agree, your interview, will be recorded and transcribed by the researcher and the recordings and transcriptions will be saved in the researcher's computer. The only people who will have direct access to the interview data, following its transcription, will be myself and the supervisors of my research.

Feedback of results

If you want to have a copy of your interview transcript or get access to the result of this research, you would be welcome to contact me either by phone or email.

Thank you very much for your support and contribution to this research project!

Yanwei Han

Appendix 2

Consent form

COPYRIGHT ASSIGNMENT & CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW

RECORDINGS

Heritage narratives in China: on the case of West Lake Landscape, Hangzhou

In participating in this research, I am giving consent for the material from the interview to be used in the following ways:

- **Possible use in publications, including in print or on the internet**
- **Possible public lectures or talks.**

I understand that I will be asked questions about my understanding and interpretation of heritage values of West Lake Landscape. I understand that this information will be recorded. I understand that my participation in the study is completely voluntary and with no payment. I also understand that I can withdraw my consent during or after the interview (within three months).

The information I provide will be available only to the researcher and the supervisors involved in the project and be used only for the research and associated activities.

I have had the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form read to me.

- 1. Do you give your consent to participate in the study? YES/NO**
- 2. Do you mind your name to be disclosed in the research publications? YES/NO**
- 3. If YES do you agree to have your name replaced by an assigned name in your interview transcript, even though this may not guarantee complete anonymity?**

YES/NO

Participant's signature _____

Date _____

Email _____

Please retain your copy of the letter of information for future reference.

Date:

Sincerely,

Yanwei Han

Appendix 3

The timetable of interviews

Appendix 3 Timetable of Interviews				
No.			Interview subject	Date
1			the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	22.11.2015
2			the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	30.11.2015
3			the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	12.12.2015
4			the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	26.12.2015
5			the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	02.01.2016

6	█ █	█ █ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	06.01.2016
7	█	█ █ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	16.01.2016
8	█ █	█ █ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	28.02.2016
9	█	█ █ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	11.03.2016
10	█ █	█	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	14.03.2016
11	█ █	█ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of local community	16.03.2016
12	█ █	█ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of an entrepreneur	21.03.2016
	█ █	█ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of a local entrepreneur	22.03.2016

		Lishe		
	██████ ██████	██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of an entrepreneur	22.03.2016
13	██████ █	██████████ ██████████ ██████████	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of an entrepreneur	23.04.2016
14	█████ ██████	██████████ ██████████ ██████████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of tourism conductor	26.04.2016
15	█████ ██████	██████████ ██████████ ██████████	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of tourism conductor	27.04.2016
16	██████ █████	██████████ █ ██████████ ██████████	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of tourism conductor	06.01.2016
17	██████████	██████████	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of tourism conductor	25.04.2016
18	██████████ █████	██████████	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of tourism conductor	23.03.2016

19	█ █	█ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of site manager	26.03.2016
20	█ █	█ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of site manager	27.03.2016
21	█	█ █ █ █ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager	03.04.2016
22	█ █	█ █ █ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager	15.04.2016
23	█ █	█ █ █ █ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager	12.04.2016
24	█ █	█ █ █ █	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager	0.04.2016

25	<p>█</p> <p>█</p>	<p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p>	<p>the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager</p>	<p>06.04.2016</p>
26	<p>█</p> <p>█</p>	<p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p>	<p>the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager</p>	<p>16.04.2016</p>
27	<p>█</p> <p>█</p>	<p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p>	<p>the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager</p>	<p>24.04.2016</p>
28	<p>█</p> <p>█</p>	<p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p>	<p>the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager</p>	<p>28.04.2016</p>

29	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage manager	06.05.2016
30	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of heritage expert	15.05.2016
31	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of UNESCO organisation	22.05.2016
32	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	the understanding and interpretation of West Lake landscape from the perspective of UNESCO office	30.05.2016

Appendix 4

A Example of Transcript of Interview

1. Are you a native Hangzhouness, living together with your family for generations? Is there any relationship between your former job and the current business of B&B in the West Lake Landscape?

Yes, I was born and brought up in Hangzhou. Now I am living in the West Lake District, not far away from West Lake. Before I started to run this B&B, I had worked in a foreign-funded company over 20 years. It is by chance that I quitted my job and opened this B&B in 2007. I really enjoy the current role as an owner of B&B, because it offers a way for me to lead the life in a way I prefer and also a platform to share my values and view of the world with friends and guests living in this B&B.

2. When did you start to run this B&B?

I started to run the business on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I rented the house in the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and refurbished it.

3. Why did you choose the house in the site of [REDACTED] in the West Lake Landscape?

I chose this place for several reasons. The first reason is that it is close to West Lake Scenic Area. The second reason is that there were already some youth hostels in this area, which targeted at backpackers which consumptive power.

It was not easy to find a house suitable for B&B at the time. It took me quite a period of time to find such a place to meet my requirements. At first, my friends and I drove along the roads in the scenic area. And then we turned to bicycling around. And finally we found this house. It is not a place to be easily identified. But it is on the top of the hill with a quite surrounding and a good view of the site, clouds crowning the hills in distance and

4. What's the difference between the targeted guests of your B&B and those of youth hostels around?

My B&B [REDACTED] to the hospitality industry in Hangzhou. I was inspired by an American-owned homestay in Yangshuo (a small town near Guilin, along Lijiang River, Guangxi Province, China). The owner of the homestay used to be the secretary of President Colinton, who fell in love of the place when he came with the president's visit in China. After the end of the presidency of Colinton, the secretary went to Yangshuo and opened a homestay there. The room I lived in at the time was very clean and comfortable, without entertaining

facilities such as TV. Such a living place brought me a sense of leisure and a peaceful mind. It is a totally different experience from living in a business hotel, which left me a deep impression and initiated my plan to run my own B&B in Hangzhou. I found it is an ideal live I want to lead. My friends and I sat in the backyard of the place and had a casual talk. We all agreed that it was a pity [REDACTED] in Hangzhou, despite its advantageous natural and cultural resources. Therefore, we wanted to seize the opportunity to run this business by ourselves, not (merely) for the purpose of earning money, but mainly for leading such a desirable life. Originally we just rented the house mainly as a self-living place for friends and ourselves, and rent the vacant rooms to guests. According to our original plan, an annual profit of 50 thousand RMB (about 5000 pounds) can make two ends meet. According to our understanding, B&B is a place for owners to share with guests and friends with similar tastes and view of life. That is the original motivation for us to open this B&B.

5. Why do you name this B&B [REDACTED] ?

Because it is located in the area of Longjing Tea plantations, which is renowned in the world, at least in East Asian areas. And [REDACTED] is a transliterated word by of [REDACTED] [REDACTED], owing to the refurbishment style of the B&B houses.

6. What kind of marketing or advertisement did you launch to attract customers?

7. I noticed that you call yourself [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] can you explain what does that nick name refer to?

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] means guide for eating, drinking and travelling. I am a gastronome/glutton/gourmand and know quite well of catering places of various kinds in Hangzhou. When guests come to live in my place, I will introduce those places to them, because, as you know, tourists nowadays are no longer satisfied with tips and information in travelogues online. They would prefer advice from a local about the food with local flavour. I am also willing to share such information with guests, which in my opinion is also a valuable part of the city.

8. As you have mentioned, this B&B serves as a platform/medium for you to present and share with more people? Could you please talk into details about what do you want to present and share, and in what kind of ways?

I share various things with guests. For instance, I like gardening and have planted a lot of flowers in the yard of this B&B, as you may have noticed. I also share my knowledge

of Hangzhou cuisine with the guests. I have drawn a map of Hangzhou cuisine for guests. Apart from the eight representative kinds of Chinese cuisines, Hangzhou cuisine is the ninth popular cuisine with strong local flavour. I often recommend guest to some small noodle I would also recommend the Hangzhou Cuisine Museum to guests. As you know, this museum is located on the top of a hill, and therefore cannot be noticed by tourists without the recommendation of local people. But it is a fantastic place to visitors to learn the knowledge as well as have a taste of Hangzhou cuisine in the restaurants attached to the museum.

We also share the information about tourist routes(different routes of travel in a scenic area) with guests. What prospective tourists can find online about the tourist routes in West Lake are very limited such as one-day travel or two-day travel in West Lake Scenic Area. I recommended seven tourist routes in my travelogues through Wechat. These seven routes are different from those main-stream ones in the most crowded scenic spots. Beishan, Jiuxi, Yunqi, and Historic Fragments. Fayun Village, library,

9. Could you please make a brief introduction to each route you recommend to the guests? I will mention some as examples and you can read into details on Wechat. Most tourists would go to Linying Temple because of its fame, but local Hangzhounese prefer to go to the Three Tianzhu Temples with a similar long history and with serener surroundings. I told stories about those historic or cultural sites which still remain unknown to most of the tourists or even local people in my article. These sites are located along the route leading to the Three Tianzhu Temples, including the Hangzhou Buddhism Library (a branch of Hangzhou Library), the Three Life Stone, Fayun Ancient Village and the three Tianzhu temples (Upper, Middle and Down). I also recommend the route along the Beishan(North Hills) Road. Most tourists would linger around the well-known Duanqian Bridge, at the entrance of the Beishan Road, but tend to neglect the beauty of sites along the road. There are many stories about the historic buildings along the road. The scene of yellow leaves of sycamore trees along the road in autumn is also very impressive. Jiuxi is another site I would like to introduce to my guests. But I suggest the tourist route from Yangmei Ling (Red Babyberry Mountain) to Jiuxi rather than the traditional one from the Jiuxi Bus Stop. Serene West Area of Lake is about the Maojia Bu(dock) site and Yuhu Bay. The route connecting these sites is of high serenity and scenic beauty, which still remain unknown to tourists). The Route of Historical Fragments is about the route connecting the Hupao (Tiger Spring) Park, the Museum of Hangzhou Cuisine, the Bagua(the Eight Diagrams) Field and Southern Song Imperial Kiln Museum. In these sites, you can find the traces of the long history of Hangzhou, and therefore I named the route Historical Fragments. Yunxi Zhujing is also a route I've

recommended. All these routes are not widely known and not crowded. I have another two routes to recommend, but still need time to write. One is about Hefang Street. Most people go there for shopping or looking for historic buildings. But what I want to recommend is about the civil life of local Hangzhounese.

I have also recommended six routes for hiking on the rolling hills around the West Lake. I want to tell other people that you should not view West Lake just by walking around the lake. This Landscape is more than a mere lake. The hills around the lake is also an essential element forming the landscape. There are also picturesque scenes on the hills. Hiking tours are very popular as an activity good for health. Many hiking clubs are working out the hiking routes on hills around West Lake. Most of the hills are 200-300 metres high, very suitable for citizens to climb in leisure time for relaxation. The view of West Lake from the hill is quite different from the view from the bank. I really want to introduce these hiking routes to my guests and friends. I'm very familiar with the hiking routes on these hills because I have travelled along all of them. And I want to share the information of these routes with more people through my travelogues. Sometimes I organise picnics for my guest on the hills. We offer a pack of food, including roasted chicken (of local flavor), eggs boiled with tea leaves, drinks and bread, and a travel guide of hiking. We hope that guest will slow down their steps and spend more time to experience the travel around the hills and lake of Hangzhou.

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