

Conflict and Resistance in Tourism in Rural China

by

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September 2017

Thesis Presented to the Higher Degree Committee

of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I, Wang Ligu, hereby declare that the content of this thesis is original and true, and has not been submitted at any other university or educational institution for the award of degree or diploma. All information derived from other published/unpublished sources has been cited and acknowledged appropriately.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Yukio Yotsumoto for his patient guidance. I have been lucky to have him as my supervisor, who is kind, conscientious, and responsible. He read my manuscript carefully and provided me with thoughtful comments and suggestions. I would also like to thank all the staff and faculty at APU who helped me in the past four years. Fieldwork of my research was partly financed by the APU PhD Research Support Subsidy Program.

I would like to thank all the villagers who participated in my research and helped me in the process of data collection. My research would not have been possible without these people. I also extend my gratitude to Dr. Xiaoming Zhang of Sun Yat-sen University for sharing his material with me.

I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends at APU, Kate, Edison, Xiaoi, Hang, Toy, Gi, Seomi, and Jojo for their friendship and I really enjoyed the time with them. Special acknowledgement is made to Kate for her constructive academic discussions with me.

I am sincerely grateful to my friends in China, Shunan Yang and Aiqing Zhang for their help before I came to Japan. I also extend my gratitude to my friend, Ryan. Although we have never met face to face, he has helped me a lot with English over the past three years.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. My wife has been supporting me over the years. She is always ready to help me search through Chinese literature. She is a good listener and constantly encouraged me when I struggled with my study and life in Japan. I also wish to thank my parents and my sister for their support and love. This thesis is dedicated to them.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the nature of conflict and the logic of peasant resistance over tourism in rural China. To understand conflict in tourism, three questions concerning “what, who, and why” were investigated. What issues cause conflict? Who are the parties to the conflict? Why does conflict happen? The logic of peasant resistance was investigated through two questions: what strategies do local peasants choose in resisting tourism, and what is the logic behind their choice? To answer these questions, a case-oriented qualitative comparative method was adopted in this study. Four tourist villages with different features were selected.

The findings illustrate that local government is the most important conflicting party with local peasants. Major issues include land expropriation, house demolition, house building, tourism management rights, ticket revenue distribution, vending rights, village elections, and entry restrictions. Among these, conflicts over house-building, ticket revenue distribution, and vending rights are particularly common and severe.

From the perspective of the peasants, infringement of their basic rights and interests, their economic motivation, and unfair treatment are the three main causes for conflict. Besides contractual thinking, comparative thinking among peasants plays an important role in the process of conflict. These two ways of thinking result in contractual deprivation, relative deprivation, and opportunity deprivation, all of which serve to trigger peasants’ anger and contribute to conflict.

A new classification was adopted to analyze peasant resistance which was divided into public-power resistance and self-help resistance. Petitioning is a common resistance form used by peasants though it often does not work, followed by traffic blockades in which women and old people sometimes stand at the forefront of conflict.

Lawsuits are rarely adopted due to a number of reasons, such as limited legal knowledge and a perceived lack of judicial independence in the courts. The emergence of peasant activists/leaders makes collective resistance happen relatively frequently but it does not mean that their resistance is illegal necessarily. Based on comparisons, this study also found that ethnicity is not strongly connected with the conflicts in an ethnic minority village. Finally, models were built based on the findings. All these activities contribute to peasant resistance theory. In practice, the results of the study discussed in this dissertation may urge higher authorities to issue constructive policies. Also, it may enlighten the UNESCO and be promoted as a way for that organization to perfect its property evaluation criteria.

Keywords: Conflict, resistance, peasants, tourism, thinking, deprivation, ethnicity, China

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study aimed to explore the nature of conflict and the logic of peasant resistance over tourism in rural China¹. This first chapter briefly describes the research background related to the impact of tourism on local communities. Then, the research objectives of this study are set out in section 1.3, where five research questions involving “what”, “who”, “why”, and “how” are presented, followed by the justification for this study. The research methods employed to fulfill the research objectives and answer the research questions of this study are discussed in section 1.5. The chapter ends with the structure of this dissertation.

1.2 Research Background

Tourism is regarded as the biggest industry in the world in the 21st century. This industry plays an important role in promoting economic development and creating jobs, and is even viewed as a pillar industry in national or regional economies. In addition to the positive economic impact on local people, tourism is credited for its favorable impacts on society, culture, and environment. Specifically, it can improve infrastructure (Bramwell, 2003), promote the appreciation and preservation of culture (Besculides, Lee, & McCormick, 2002), and optimize environmental appearance and extend

¹ “Peasant” in this dissertation refers to rural residents, which is a legal category of Chinese people. In Chinese, it is called “nongmin”.

environmental awareness (Wall & Mathieson, 2006, p. 162).

Besides these positive effects, tourism can also generate negative consequences in local communities, including economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts. There is a large body of literature on this topic. For instance, it can cause local price rises (Látková & Vogt, 2012), increased crime (Fujii & Mak, 1980; I. Kelly, 1993), traffic congestion (Saenz-de-Miera & Rosselló, 2012), parking problems (Lindberg & Johnson, 1997a), an increase in prostitution (Hesse & Tutenges, 2011), the degradation of traditional culture (Barker, Putra, & Wiranatha, 2006), and environmental pollution (Campbell et al., 2016).

Though many studies relating to tourism's negative effects have been conducted, as Leung, Li, Fong, Law, and Lo show in their study (2014), there is hardly any literature focusing on the conflict and resistance triggered by tourism development between local people and other parties: in particular, physical and serious conflict involving a large number of people. J. J. Yang, Ryan, and Zhang (2013, pp. 83-84) argue that social conflict has received attention from a variety of disciplines but conflict in tourism destinations has not been systematically investigated by tourism scholars. Though some scholars mention conflict when investigating tourism's impacts, it is not their research focus (e.g., X. M. Zhang, 2006). Furthermore, rural unrest is a sensitive topic in China and fieldwork is full of complications (O'Brien & Li, 2006), which leads to less research on this topic. This is a significant research gap and this study tries to explore it.

1.3 Research Objectives

The chief principle in developing tourism should be to use it to benefit local people and enhance the preservation and conservation of tourism resources. Conflict, particularly

between local peasants and other parties, can destroy a harmonious tourism environment and affect tourism's sustainable development. Therefore, it is necessary to understand this situation by undertaking relevant research. This study therefore sought to investigate the nature of conflict and the logic of peasant resistance toward tourism development in rural China. More specifically, the research objectives were:

- To identify the major issues leading to conflict and clarify possible connections among them;
- To identify the conflicting parties and the roles they play in conflict;
- To investigate the causes of conflict;
- To identify peasants' strategies in resistance;
- To explore the causes behind the choice of resistance strategies;

To achieve the above research objectives, five research questions were proposed:

- (1) What issues cause conflict and are there any commonalities/connections among them?
- (2) Who are the major parties in the conflicts and what roles do they play?
- (3) Why does conflict happen?
- (4) What strategies do local peasants choose to defend their rights and interests?
- (5) How do they choose these resistance strategies?

1.4 Justification for the Study

1.4.1 Practical necessity and importance of this study

There have been constant media reports on conflict concerning local peasants in scenic spots (areas) of China over the past years, and some of these conflicts were full of

violence.

In 2000, a series of conflicts happened in Hongcun Village and Xidi Village, two world cultural heritage sites in Anhui Province. The conflict was between local villagers and other parties, such as local government and tourism companies. Tourists were blocked and expelled by local villagers; old houses were left to deteriorate without maintenance; and fights between local peasants and tourism companies often happened (Zhai, 2002). To defend their rights and interests, local villagers lodged complaints with higher authorities and filed a claim against local government in the courts (X. M. Zhang, 2006). In 2008, Fujian *Tulou* was inscribed on the list of world cultural heritage. Since then, there have been conflicts according to Qu (2011) and X. L. Chen (2011). For example, the telephone lines of a tourism company were destroyed; local people were beaten; the village entrance or *tulou* was blocked, and tourists were stopped from visiting by local people; and a security booth was burned. Similarly, hundreds of local villagers living in Mount Emei Scenic Area, a mixed cultural and natural heritage site, blocked traffic to the mountain and did not allow tourists to enter in 2014 (S. L. Zhang, 2014).

Conflict between local people and other parties not only happened at world heritage sites but also occurred in ordinary tourist villages. To express their dissatisfaction with local government and a tourism company, villagers in Baishuiyang scenic spot protested by begging along the street in 2009 (X. W. Zhou & Lu, 2009). In Likeng Village, Wangkou Village, and Jiangwan Village of Jiangxi Province, physical conflict broke out and entrances were blocked (H. L. Wang, 2011; P. G. Wang & Qin, 2011). In 2015, a riot broke out in Zhaoxing Village of Guizhou Province, an ethnic minority village. After a series of conflicts, some people said with sadness that their life would be better without tourism (X. L. Chen, 2011).

From the above events, we find that: firstly, conflict happens both at world heritage

sites and in ordinary tourist villages; secondly, this phenomenon has lasted for almost twenty years; thirdly, conflict is not limited in one area but appears in many provinces of China, involving both ethnic majority and ethnic minority areas; fourthly, some of them are serious and full of violence, such as damage to facilities and people; and lastly, it may repeat at the same site.

As of 2017, 51 properties in Mainland China were inscribed on the list of world heritage by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Most of these have been developed into famous scenic spots (areas), among which some sites are inhabited by villagers, such as Fujian *Tulou*, Hongcun, and Mount Wuyi. Furthermore, there are thousands of tourist villages in China. Tourism is often regarded as an important tool for alleviating poverty. For China's policymakers this is the case and a series of government documents has been issued to promote its development in rural areas, such as the *Notice on the Action Program of Rural Pro-poor Tourism Project* (No.: Lüfa [2016] 121)² issued jointly by ten ministerial departments and two banks. Local people's attitudes toward tourism are an important element if a community wants to achieve sustainable tourism development (Diedrich & García-Buades, 2009; Látková & Vogt, 2012; Lepp, 2007). The prevalence and continuousness of conflict will affect the achievement of poverty reduction and may also cause damage to important heritage. Therefore, it is necessary to give much attention to this phenomenon. The findings of this study shed light on this complicated phenomenon, help to reduce conflict, and enhance sound tourism development in practice. In addition, the findings of this study may give some enlightenment to the UNESCO in terms of its property evaluation criteria.

² The full text of this notice is available on the website of http://www.cnta.gov.cn/zwgk/tzggnew/201609/t20160929_785056.shtml

1.4.2 Theoretical contributions

This study contributes to tourism research by constructing a clear framework for understanding the conflict process and peasant resistance in tourism development in rural China, filling the gap relating to the lack of understanding of the conflict phenomenon. In addition, this study contributes to other areas of study, such as sociology and political science. As mentioned in the background section, rural unrest has been a sensitive topic in China, and relevant research in this field is still small. Based on the context of rural China, O'Brien and Li (2006) proposed the theory of rightful resistance, which helps to advance the understanding of peasant resistance in rural China, but several issues remain. The findings of this study contribute to the theory of peasant resistance.

1.5 Research Methodology

An approach using case-oriented qualitative comparative research was adopted in this study.

From the conflict events reported by the media, we know its prevalence in China. To have a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon, four tourist villages were selected, including one main and three supplemental cases. The selection rationale included four criteria: both world heritage and non-world heritage sites should be included; they should be located in different provinces; both ethnic minority and non-ethnic minority villages should be covered; and conflict happened at these sites.

Both primary data and secondary data were collected in this study. In terms of primary data collection, two approaches were used: unstructured interviews and participant observation. Unstructured interview is a category of qualitative research methods

(DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006), and is used as the main method of data collection in this study. Klenke (2016) notes that this approach is appropriate to probe more complicated issues and sensitive information. Two rounds of field study were conducted, and a total of 61 people were formally interviewed. Participant observation is also a fundamental and important method for qualitative studies (Bryman, 2008), and can enhance the interpretation of collected data (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002). In this study, casual interview and observation were used. Secondary data was mainly collected through official websites of government, newspapers, magazines, TV programs, and uploaded Internet videos. Based on collected data, the main case and the supplemental cases were analyzed, then a comparison and synthesis of the analyses was conducted.

1.6 The Structure of this Study

This dissertation is composed of seven chapters (Figure 1.1). Chapter two and three are literature review discussions, which present relevant concepts, theories, and background information. Chapter two explores tourism impacts on local communities. Chapter three provides theoretical knowledge of conflict and peasant resistance. Chapter four discusses the research methodology of this study, including research methods, research scope, data collection, and data analysis. Chapters five and six analyze the main case and the three supplemental cases from the aspects of conflict issues, conflicting parties, causes of conflict, resistance strategies, and the logic of conflict strategy choice. In addition, comparisons among the four cases are given in chapter six. Chapter seven concludes this dissertation with a summary of the findings, recommendations, research contributions, research limitations, and future research directions.

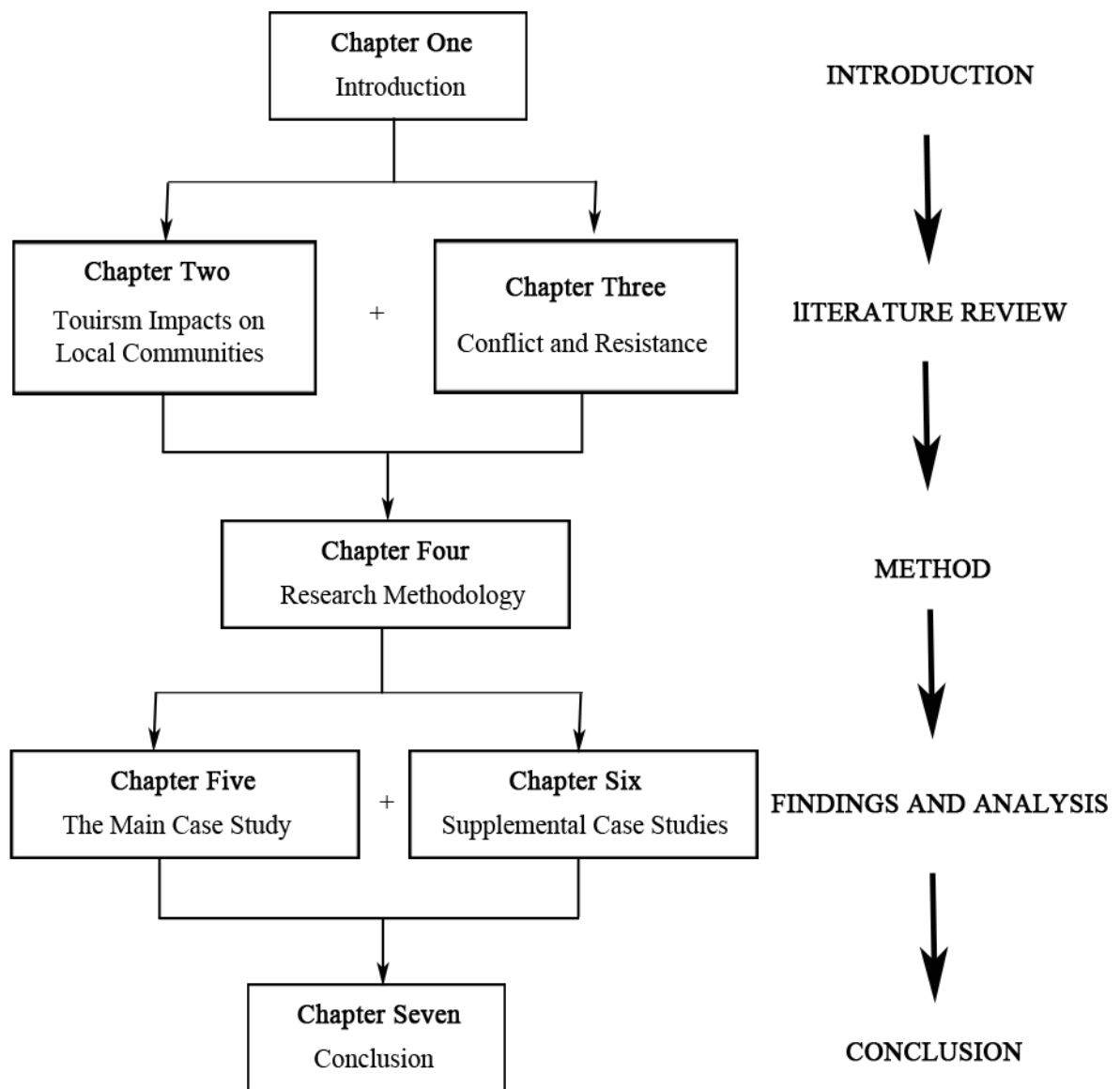


Figure 1.1 Flow chart of this dissertation

Source: the author.

1.7 Summary

This chapter gave a brief introduction to this study. The research background was presented first which described the impacts of tourism on conflict situations briefly. Then, research objectives and research questions were proposed to guide the research direction, followed by the justification for this study from both practical and theoretical

standpoints. The research methodology adopted in this study was then discussed briefly. Finally, the structure of this dissertation and the main contents of each chapter were introduced. Following this structure, chapter two provides a review of the literature on tourism impacts on local communities.

CHAPTER 2

TOURISM IMPACTS ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES

2.1 Introduction

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world in the twenty-first century. Its influence on local communities is broad and huge. It brings both positive (e.g., the creation of jobs) and negative effects (e.g., increases in living cost, prostitution and crime) to destination communities. Conflict between local people and other parties is an important composition of tourism impact. This phenomenon has often been mentioned under the domain of tourism impact by scholars. Therefore, it is necessary to review the relevant literature to have a good understanding of this research topic. Meanwhile, there are many media reports on conflict in tourism in China. A review of these reports is also necessary because it can help to create a basic understanding of conflict in China. This chapter therefore includes two sections: the first is a general overview of tourism impact on local people, reviewed from three aspects; economic impact, socio-cultural impact, and environmental impact. The second section is specific to the context of China and describes tourism conflict in rural China briefly.

2.2 Economic Impact

2.2.1 Revenue and employment opportunities

Tourism is widely regarded as an important economic base which can not only increase income and create jobs for local people but also increase government tax

revenue. Therefore, many countries and regions view tourism as a pillar industry, such as Italy (“Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” 2016), Small Island Developing States (Pratt, 2015), and Hongkong (“The Four Pillar,” 2003). In the year of 2016, tourism contributed 10.2% of GDP and created one out of ten jobs in the world (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017).

Both inward investment and tourist expenditure at tourist destinations can contribute to the local economy, a fact which has been positively perceived by local people (Lindberg & Johnson, 1997a; Dyer, Aberdeen, & Schuler, 2003; J. C. Liu, Sheldon, & Var, 1987; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Picard, 1995, pp. 50-51; Pizam, 1978). Studies show that people who are economically dependent on tourism have more positive perception toward tourism and are more likely to support tourism (Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997; C. K. Lee & Back, 2003). Positive economic impact is even the largest influential factor (Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma, & Carter, 2007).

Although tourism can benefit local people through increasing income and creating job opportunities, these benefits may be distributed disproportionately between local people and outside businessmen, especially in ethnic tourism areas. Wood (1997, p. 16) notes that geographically isolated ethnic groups are usually in a subordinate position and ethnic tourism is often dominated by ethnic majorities. van den Berghe (1992, pp. 236-237) states that the actors of ethnic tourism is divided into three categories: tourists, middlemen, and touriees, in which the ethnic majorities usually play a role of middlemen, and occupy the top of the “food chains” while the ethnic minorities are tourees and often do the low-wage jobs.

2.2.2 Cost of living

Although tourism creates jobs for local people and increases their income, it generates negative consequences, such as the rise of living cost which has been perceived obviously by many communities (Clark, 1988; Látková & Vogt, 2012; Pizam, 1978; L. Yang & Wall, 2009, p. 565). According to Mathieson and Wall (1982, p. 88), compared with residents, rich tourists can afford high prices to buy products, which makes retailers willing to increase their prices. Meanwhile, the heightened visitor flow to tourist destinations intensifies competition among potential businessmen and pushes up the land value and the rent of commercial stores. The increasing cost will be passed on to consumers, including tourists and residents.

2.3 Socio-cultural Impact

Pizam (1978, p. 8) notes that the early studies on tourism impacts were mainly limited to economic analysis but its social and cultural effects have received more attention recently. The social and cultural effects of tourism on local communities are broad, including changes in value systems, individual behavior, family relationships, collective life styles, safety levels, moral conduct, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies, and community organization (Fox, 1977, as cited in Mathieson & Wall, 1982, p. 133).

2.3.1 Prostitution and sex tourism

Prostitution has been called the oldest profession. Many studies show that there exists a linkage between tourism and the sex trade (Hesse & Tutenges, 2011; Kibicho, 2005). This has been observed in Europe (Hesse & Tutenges, 2011), America

(Williams-Thomas, 2014), Asia (Dombrowski, 2015; W. Lee, 1991), and Africa (Atuhaire, 2015; Kibicho, 2005). In the sex trade, tourism operators may be directly involved; for example, a US tourism company advertised sex tours on its website openly; organized sex tours to the Philippines, Thailand, and Cambodia; and claimed that sex tourists could select sex companions (“Apple Oriental Tours,” n.d.).

A more serious impact from sex tourism is child prostitution, which is defined as “sexual exploitation of children by people who travel from one location to another and there engage in sexual acts with minors” (ECPAT International, 2008, p.14). Child-sex exploiters or tourists may use the facilities provided by tour businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, and transportation companies, and some businesses may be directly involved in it. The Internet provides an information channel and makes the process easier. For example, sex tourism is advertised openly on some websites, and includes accounts from experienced child sex tourists (Bacon, 2007). Much research evidence shows that these children are more likely to exhibit a series of negative physical, psychological, behavioral, and interpersonal problems compared with non-victims (Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 2013, p.121). Meanwhile, they are at high risk of infectious diseases, such as HIV and sexually transmitted disease (Willis & Levy, 2002). The flourishing of sex tourism also stimulates sex trafficking. According to the US Department of Justice, about 900,000 children were engaged in sex trafficking in the world in 2003; often in developing countries with unstable economies, such as Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia (Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 2013, p. 118).

2.3.2 Crime

A study conducted in Cape Cod, in the USA, shows that crime is perceived by local people as the most negative tourism impact (Pizam, 1978). Similarly, according to a survey in 1986, local people in Cairns, a popular tourist destination in Australia,

ranked crime as the third negative impact of tourism after the rise of living costs and the loss of area's character (Clark, 1988). Residents in Bethany, USA, perceived an increase in crime during tourist seasons (Rothman, 1978). Although there is difficulty in measuring the extent of crime in tourist destinations, many tourist destinations experience high rates of crime (Mawby, 2007).

Although specific crime types caused by tourism may vary in different tourist destinations, there have been empirical studies which show a positive relationship between crime and tourism. After investigating indicators of tourism and crime, McPheters and Stronger (1974) found that economic crimes (robbery, larceny, and burglary) have a similar season to tourism in Miami and conclude that crime, to some extent, is a byproduct of tourism. Based on annual time series data (1961-1975) and cross-sectional data for 1975, Fujii and Mak (1980) found that an increase in the proportion of tourists results in a greater increase in rape in Hawaii. Comparing tourist and non-tourist destinations in New South Wales, Australia, Walmsley, Boskovic, and Pigram (1983) concluded that crime peaks in the tourist season in tourist areas (as cited in Barclay, Mawby, & Jones, 2014). Similar findings are observed from Mexico (Jud, 1975), Australia (I. Kelly, 1993), and Italy (Biagi, Brandano, & Detotto, 2012). Due to the increase of offenses by foreigners in Jeju Island of Korea, over 10,000 Korean people signed an online petition in a day calling for the government to withdraw its visa-free policy (Jung, 2016). The citizen who first proposed the petition said that the safety of local people should be given top priority compared with economic benefits (Choi, 2016).

2.3.3 Overcrowding and less privacy

A lot of tourists flow into tourist destinations, which may cause overcrowding and lower local people's quality of life (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Ap &

Crompton, 1998; Bramwell, 2003; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997a). The arrival of a large number of tourists narrows local space and may infringe upon local privacy. Local people are often stared at and photographed by tourists against their will, causing locals' resentment (van den Berghe, 1992, pp. 235, 246). Some tourists even intrude into local people's houses and take pictures without permission (Altman, 1989, p. 472), which is often complained. The sudden entry without permission may cause a fair amount of consternation among local people (Hitchcock & Brandenburgh, 1990). Many media reports feature this issue, such as Y. K. Cui and Piao (2015) and Tan (2016).

2.3.4 Traffic Congestion and parking problems

Traffic congestion is a problem facing many tourist destinations, which affects local people's life (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Ap & Crompton, 1998; Bramwell, 2003; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Gu & Ryan, 2008; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997a; O'Grandy, 1990; Palmer-Tous, Riera-Font, & Rosselló-Nadal, 2007; Saenz-de-Miera & Rosselló, 2012). The influx of tour cars and buses also increases the difficulty in parking, especially during peak seasons (Lindberg & Johnson, 1997a), which intensifies the negative relationship between hosts and guests. For example, in the famous tourist spot of Bukchon Village in Seoul, a local parking lot is often occupied by tour buses, causing local dissatisfaction (Y. K. Cui & Piao, 2015).

2.3.5 Infrastructure and other public resources

To attract tourists and promote tourism development, many destinations with rich tourism resources invest heavily in public infrastructure, such as transportation, accommodation, retail networks, financial service, sewage, telecommunications, and leisure (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Bramwell, 2003; Picard, 1995, p. 49; Puppim de

Oliveira, 2003). These infrastructures not only serve tourists but also provide convenience for local people: tourist roads can be used for transportation of residents, airports and trains make the travel of local people fast and convenient, sewage pipes in rural areas make local environment clean, and bank branches or ATMs in remote areas provide much convenience. Itacare, a small tourist town in Brazil, is an example (Puppim de Oliveira, 2003): there were few bus routes in the past and local transportation was often interrupted by heavy rains. The construction of a new road increased locals' access to a larger town for shopping and medical emergencies.

Tourism can also produce negative impacts on local people concerning the use of infrastructure. In some areas, the infrastructure was designed mainly for local people, which might bring much pressure to residents when a large number of tourists flood into these areas. Due to the lack of investment, some regions, especially in developing countries, cannot afford to improve or construct costly infrastructures. As a result, residents must compete with tourists for public facilities. For example, the increase in tourists in a resort of Malta put pressure on its old sewerage system and caused sewage leaks occasionally (Bramwell, 2003).

Tourism can also trigger competition for other public resources between local people and other stakeholders. According to a research report, tourism development causes water crisis in many tourist destinations, such as Zanzibar in Tanzania, Goa and Kerala in India, and Bali in Indonesia, which affects local people's normal life and health seriously and even triggers conflict (Tourism Concern, 2012). For example, with the increase of hotels in Zanzibar, the groundwater is becoming saline in some areas due to over-extraction by tourism industries, and several villages are facing increasing water scarcity. Many people have only intermittent supply of public water, private water tanks, or backwaters while tourists and hotels in these destinations enjoy high quality water supplies. To protest and compete with hoteliers over water, water

pipelines are sometimes cut by local people.

2.3.6 Cultural change

Culture is a wide-range term, which is defined by Samovar and Porter (2003, p. 8) as “the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, social hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relationships, concepts of the universe and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving”. Culture is an important element of tourism (Ashworth, 1993; Steinecke, 2010; L. Yang, 2011). Toops (1992) even views tourism as “a marketing of culture” (p. 20). Culture, dynamic rather than static, can be learned and spread (McDaniel & Samovar, 2015, pp.10-11). In tourism, cultural change happens in the process of contact between tourists and local people. In other words, tourism is a means of acculturation. When two cultures come into contact, each becomes the other to some extent through a process of borrowing (Nunez, 1977, p. 20) but the stronger one usually influences the weaker one more (Petit-Skinner, 1977, p. 85). To adapt to tourism and satisfy the needs of tourists, host societies often succumb to tourists’ values, and become more like the culture of tourists (Mathieson & Wall, 1982, p. 161).

Many studies claim that the long contact with tourists may induce a negative change in local culture, including tangible and intangible culture. In modern days, many traditional arts and crafts are not made by hand any longer and they are often mass produced by machines in factories and many of them are sold at airports or hotels, which are called pseudo-traditional arts or airport arts (Bascom, 1976, p. 308; Mathieson & Wall, 1982, p. 168). To satisfy the needs of tourists for cheapness and convenience, the size, materials, and workmanship of many souvenirs are changing (Bascom, 1976; Simons, 2000, p.424). When talking about African art, Bascom (1976,

p. 306) notes that “great pieces of African art are no longer produced and recent pieces are of no artistic value”. Due to mass production, homogenization of souvenir with low quality is becoming serious in many tourist destinations, such as China. These products are separating from their culture and losing their spiritual meanings.

The intangible culture, such as traditional rituals, ceremonies, and dances which were performed in fixed dates in the past, is becoming daily stage-performance to suit tourists. For example, it is common to see daily performance of different ethnic minorities in Yunnan Ethnic Folk Villages, an ethnic theme park in China. To fulfill the needs of tourists, a tourist version of traditional performances is created with the pressure of economic forces (Barker, Putra, & Wiranatha, 2006, p. 218). For example, they are shortened and packaged to cater to attention span of foreign audiences (Picard, 1997, p. 191). In addition to serving tourists, tourism has political purposes. For example, Taman Mini, an ethnic theme park in Indonesia, is like “a political text of nationalist self-representation” (Errington, 1998, p. 201) and its purpose is to “consolidate the cohesion and the unity of the nation” (Freeman, 1984, p. 231, as cited in Adams, 1998, pp.84-85). To meet political requirements, culture, regarded as healthy and progressive, is picked out and shown to tourists in Yunnan Ethnic Folk Villages for example (L. Yang, 2011): traditional architecture and happy dancing are usually considered positive elements of ethnic identity and are encouraged in public display while some religious rituals and indigenous activities may be excluded. To enhance nationhood and downplay ethnicity, “each provincial museum staff selects those elements of the province’s culture that are worthy of exhibition within the centrally planned guidelines” (Taylor, 1994, p. 73). The incomplete display and modification of culture may dilute and lose its authenticity, uniqueness, and meaning (Barker, Putra, & Wiranatha, 2006; Cornet, 2015; MacCannell, 1976; Oakes, 1992; L. Yang & Wall, 2009) and the messages it once carried have become a matter of curiosity (Mathieson & Wall, 1982, p. 169). L. Yang and Wall (2009) note that

entrepreneurs are key players in selecting cultural elements and determining ways of cultural expression. In staged performances, employees do not feel proud of performing fake culture to entertain tourists, merely regard it as a job, and take off their “ethnic” clothes as soon as their work is over (L. Yang, 2011).

2.3.7 Cultural renaissance and protection

Tourism can however contribute to the preservation and renaissance of traditional culture, including local crafts and arts, customs, festivals, and historical sites, which has been observed through the revival of Djabugay culture in Queensland, Australia (Dyer, Aberdeen, & Schuler, 2003); Bushman culture in Botswana (Hitchcock & Brandenburgh, 1990); Toraja culture in Sulawesi, Indonesia (Crystal, 1989); Sherpa culture in Nepal (Fisher, 1990); and Theravada Buddhism culture in Xishuangbanna, China (L. Yang, Wall, & Smith, 2008, p. 758). Tourism can also enhance cultural pride and identity among local people through presenting their culture to outsiders (Adam, 2006, p. 15; Besculides, Lee, & McCormick, 2002; Cole, 2007, p. 956; Dyer, Aberdeen, & Schuler, 2003). Meanwhile, museums are built in many tourist areas, such as Longli Castle Eco-museum in Guizhou, China, and relevant curriculum about traditional culture is taught in training centers or schools (Hitchcock & Brandenburgh, 1990), which are good for cultural conservation and inheritance.

Besides cultural renaissance, the favor of some culture by tourists may lead to a significant rise in the status of some ethnic groups, such as Indians in Mexico and Sherpas in Nepal. The influx of tourists attracted by Indian culture makes the ethnic majority group change their previous view of Indians as primitive, backward, ignorant, and superstitious, and all the hotels and restaurants operated by the ethnic majority are decorated with Indian themes (van den Berghe, 1992, pp. 245-246). Likewise, Tamangs, another Himalayan mountain group in Nepal, have begun to adopt

important aspects of the local Sherpa culture given its popularity among tourists, and Sherpa dress is even worn by Royal Nepal Airlines flight attendants (Fisher, 1990).

2.4 Environmental Impact

The history of tourism shows that the natural environment has contributed to the birth and process of tourism, such as amenable climates and unique landscape features (Wall & Mathieson, 2006). On the other direction, tourism also impacts on environment, ranging from water to wildlife. Here, I focus on tourism's environmental impact on host communities, which is often observed in the literature of residents' attitudes toward or perception of tourism.

2.4.1 Litter

On the one hand, tourism may create a cleaner living environment in some places (Ryan, Zhang, & Deng, 2011), but on the other hand, much human waste produced with the influx of tourists is becoming a serious problem confronting many scenic areas. Due to tourists' irresponsible behavior, litter is recognized as a major form of pollution in many tourist destinations and is becoming a worldwide problem, especially in beaches and natural tourism areas (Brown, Ham, & Hughes, 2010; Santos et al., 2005), which not only causes visual contamination but also risks human health (Campbell et al., 2016; Williams et al., 2016). Litter is a commonly perceived issue (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Gilbert & Clark, 1997; Látková & Vogt, 2012; McGehee & Andereck, 2004; Rothman, 1978, p. 9) and is even viewed as one of the most negative impacts by residents (Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Pizam, 1978).

2.4.2 Noise

Noise is another negative consequence with the increase of tourists (Gu & Ryan, 2008; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997b; Pizam, 1978). With continuous economic development, more and more people are travelling abroad. However, some of them do not act in good manners and often talk loudly in restaurants, hotels, shops, or on the street, which is often complained by residents (Tan, 2016).

2.4.3 Water pollution

Tourism is a significant contributor to water pollution. In many tourist destinations, human waste and sewage from tourism industries are poured into lakes, rivers, or onto beaches directly without any treatment. Goa and Zanzibar are two examples (Tourism Concern, 2012). In Goa, India, untreated sewage is poured into local rivers, groundwater, and wells; in Zanzibar, many hotels dispose of their sewage into soak pits. As a result, the pollution in the two areas intensified the local water crisis and even caused conflict. Meanwhile, water pollution may cause disease transmission among local people through direct contact with or eating contaminated fish from the water.

2.5 Conflict as Tourism Impact in Rural China

2.5.1 Conflict over Economic benefits

J. J. Yang, Ryan, and Zhang (2013, p. 85) note that economic benefit is a main subject causing conflict in tourism. Ticket revenues are an important form of economic benefit. Conflict arising from ticket revenue distribution happens continuously. In

many rural areas, tourist attractions are local villagers' private properties, such as *tulou* in Hongkeng, Fujian Province and *ganlan* style buildings in Zhaoxing, Guizhou Province. Local government or tourism companies use local people's properties to earn money but do not share the benefits with them. To defend their rights to ticket revenue distribution, local people use many tactics to resist, such as traffic blockades. Many media report this issue (e.g., Qu, 2011; H. L. Wang, 2011; S. L. Zhang, 2014).

In addition, conflict regarding job opportunities, such as vending rights, is often reported by the media. One reason is that government staff does not allow local people to vend in their tourist villages. For example, an old woman's goods were confiscated while vending, and then a physical conflict happened between local villagers and government staff in Yongding, Fujian Province (Qu, 2011). To express their discontent, local people closed their gates and refused to allow tourists to enter. In Mount Emei, a world heritage site, local government adopted a new management mode and did not consider local people's interests, which made many people lose jobs. As a result, hundreds of local villagers blocked the entrance in protest (S. L. Zhang, 2014). Similar conflict also happened at other sites, such as Baishuiyang, Fujian Province (X. W. Zhou & Lu, 2009).

2.5.2 Conflict over Socio-cultural aspect

Local traditional buildings are important tourist attractions, among which some are even listed as world heritage. Compared with modern brick and concrete buildings, traditional residences in rural areas have some disadvantages, such as non-durability (L. Yang, Wall, & Smith, 2008, p. 762). For example, the timber of a traditional wooden house is damaged easily by worm and needs maintenance every ten years (Z. Wang, 2008). Traditional residences cannot meet the requirements of modern life, so, many people especially young people, intend to abandon their traditional houses and

live in modern buildings. To “maintain the purity” (Cornet, 2015, p. 36) and not to “destroy the scenery” (Oakes, 2006, p. 187), local government and tourism companies usually formulate strict regulations to ban or restrict the construction of new buildings in tourist villages, particularly at world heritage sites. There is thus a dilemma between heritage conservation and the pursuit of modern life.

In addition, local villagers complain that they are not receiving the same treatment as tourism companies. For example, a tourism company in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province used concrete and other modern materials to build souvenir stores while local people were not allowed to use them (L. Yang & Wall, 2009, p. 565). All these intensify the strained relationship between local people and other parties. Daiyuan residents destroyed street lights and refused to receive a gift distributed to them during their traditional new year by the tourism company in protest (Zuo, 2012, p. 104). In Zhaoxing, Guizhou Province, the villagers sent a petition letter to Beijing to show their discontent with a local tourism company’s oversized building (Cornet, 2015).

2.6 Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature on tourism impacts on local communities in two sections: a general review of tourism impacts and a specific description of conflict in tourism development in rural China. The first section was written from three aspects: economic impact, socio-cultural impact, and environmental impact. Although a voluminous body of literature involves the impact of tourism, little refers to conflict. Even if it appears in some writings, it is not given much attention except as a general statement. Second, in terms of conflict in rural China, there have been media reports but there are few academic articles. The specific conflict events involve the

distribution of ticket revenues, vending rights, heritage protection, and the pursuit of modern life. Before the investigation into conflict in tourism development in rural China, theories on conflict and resistance are reviewed in chapter three.

CHAPTER 3 CONFLICT AND RESISTANCE

3.1 Introduction

Conflict and resistance are the two most important keywords of this study which run through the whole research process. This chapter presents an overview of literature on conflict and resistance, including concept, theory, and context. The main body consists of three sections: Section 3.2 introduces the concept of conflict and three major theoretical orientations of conflict, i.e., Marxian, Parsonian, and Coser's conflict theories; Section 3.3 involves institutional issues of conflict in rural China. To have a good understanding of major conflicts in rural China, laws concerning land, regulations on China's evaluation and promotion system for officials, and policies on China's ethnic minorities are introduced in this section; and Section 3.4 discusses relevant theories of peasant resistance, including everyday forms of peasant resistance and rightful resistance.

3.2 Conflict

3.2.1 Definitions of conflict

Conflict is an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence (Olorunfemi & Lukpata, 2014), which "cannot be excluded from social life" (Weber, 1949, p. 26) and is a "general feature of human activity" (Nicholson, 1992, p. 11). Conflict is an important issue of social science and has a long research history.

The existence of a contestable claim is the precondition of conflict. The target of a claim may be as abstract as interest or as specific as scarce resources, power, or status. Francis (2006) defines conflict as “the pursuit of incompatible interest and goals by different groups” (p. 20). Interest has two dimensions: tangible one, such as water and territory, and intangible one, such as status and power (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 16). Incompatibility or contradiction is another important feature of conflict; it exists when claims of both parties are incompatible and occurs when there is no choice satisfying both parties’ aspirations (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 16). Conflict is a process of interaction among different parties. Instead of limiting it to the groups mentioned by Francis, Kriesberg (2003) states that conflict “arises when two or more persons or groups manifest the belief that they have incompatible objectives” (p. 2). He explains that “persons or groups” mean individuals or organizations that represent larger collectives. Due to incompatibility in claims between different parties, competition becomes a basic and necessary component of conflict (Pondy, 1967). From the perspective of interaction and competition, scholars (Goodhand & Hulum, 1999) assert that conflict is a struggle over claims to status, power, and scarce resources in which the aims of the conflicting parties are to assert their claims over those of others. The inconsistency around claims can lead to sentiments of hostility, a hostile attitude and predisposition toward conflict (Merton, 1948).

Conflict behavior is an escalation of a disagreement originating from inconsistent claims between conflicting parties for a settlement in their favor through damaging action such as a war or a strike (Nicholson, 1992, p. 13). In terms of the relationship among the three components of conflict (contradiction, attitude, and behavior), Galtung (1996, pp. 71-72) proposed a conflict triangle model in which contradiction and attitude are the latent side of conflict and behavior is its manifest side. Ramsbotham, Miall, and Woodhouse (2011, pp. 10-11) explain the model in detail: contradiction is a starting point and means the underlying conflict situation; attitude is

one party's perception of the other one, covering three elements: feeling, belief, and desire; behavior involves coercion or cooperation and violent behavior is featured by threats and destructive attacks. Concerning the relation between attitude and conflict, Coser (1956/2001) argues that attitude does not necessarily cause conflict. He defines conflict as "a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals" (p. 8). Power is the base of struggle, and can have an effect on a conflict situation (Northrup, 1989). Rummel (1976) argues that conflict is a clash of powers and its process is a balancing of vectors of powers, and of capabilities to produce effects. He further explains that conflict is not equilibrium of powers but a process of finding the balance through "the pushing and pulling, the giving and taking" (p. 238).

In some conditions, no obvious claim is shown in a conflict, such as non-realistic conflict classified by Coser or venting-anger conflict described by J. R. Yu (2008). From the perspective of conflict aim, Coser identifies two types of conflict, realistic conflict and non-realistic conflict. The former "arise(s) from frustrations of specific demands within a relationship and from estimates of gains of the participants, and that are directed at the presumed frustrating object" (p. 49). It is a means toward the end of higher status, more power, or greater economic returns. The latter is "not occasioned by the rival ends of the antagonists, but by the need for tension release of one or both of them" (p. 49).

Conflict is not a static but dynamic process and can evolve and change with time (Pondy, 1967). Azar (1986) indicates that it is not sufficient to understand conflict as discrete action because such recognition will lose much of the contextual information of a particular conflict. According to its evolution sequence, Pondy identifies five stages of conflict which are latent conflict, perceived conflict, felt conflict, manifest conflict, and conflict aftermath. He notes that conflict does not have to experience all

these five stages and some potential conflict may be resolved at some stage before evolving to violence. To help to analyze the dynamics of conflict, Northrup (1989, pp. 58-61) elaborates the nature of conflict which is composed of five characteristics:

- (1) Conflict evolves over time. Conflict should not be regarded as static, but rather as processes which change over time. This change may be unique to each conflict situation, or may take place following some fixed sequence;
- (2) There are multiple levels to every conflict. In this principle, conflict is considered a psychosocial process. Firstly, it is the interaction between individuals' intrapersonal processes and social processes. Secondly, these processes are further affected by greater context of conflict involving culture, history, and politics;
- (3) There are multiple factors at any level and any time. Each conflict may refer to several issues of concern and conflicting parties may have different foci;
- (4) Most factors at all levels have both a subjective component and an objective component. Both of these play an important role in most conflicts but the relative importance of each component may vary; and
- (5) The distribution of power between or among parties has a significant impact on the course and conduct of a conflict. The outcomes may be quite different when conflicting parties are equal in contrast to when there is a clear disparity in power.

3.2.2 Conflict theory

Rahim (2011, p. 2) notes that most contributions to the theory of social conflict originate from philosophy and sociology so a brief review of the major sociological

perspectives on the concept of conflict would be helpful to the study.

3.2.2.1 Marx's idea of conflict

Karl Marx (1818-1884) was a philosopher, economist, and sociologist, who explored the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in capitalist societies. His theory is viewed as one of the most powerful explanations of social conflict ever constructed (Rummel, 1976). The classification of class in Marxism is based on the ownership of property. The bourgeoisie owns the means of production such as buildings and machinery of factories while the proletariat makes a living by selling their labor in these factories. The aim of the former is to pursue the maximum profit through exploiting the latter's surplus value. Different classes have their own class interests and the antagonism between classes due to different class interests is irreconcilable. The same interest makes it possible for people within the same class to act similarly. As the disparity between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat widens and the condition of the latter deteriorates severely, the class struggle will be transformed into a revolution and existing social structure will collapse. Marx called upon the proletariat to overthrow the capitalist system. At the end of the Communist Manifesto (Marx & Engels, 1962), it says:

They (communists) openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite! (p. 65)

3.2.2.2 Parsons' idea of conflict

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) was an American sociologist who is best known for the

structural functionalism theory. Based on the assumption that “society is innately stable, integrated, and functional” (Rahim, 2011, p. 5), conflict is primarily viewed as abnormal, disruptive, and dysfunctional by Parsons. The maintenance of social structures has been a persistent theme in almost all of his writings, and concern on social change is marginal even though it is occasionally present in his work (Coser, 1956/2001). Conflict was viewed as a “disease” (Coser, 1956/2001, p. 20) by Parsons and “medical analogy” (Coser, 1956/2001, p. 22) is often used to describe this phenomenon (e.g., Parsons, 1945; Parsons, 1949a; Parsons, 1949b). Based on a mechanistic understanding of human beings, in *Leviathan*, Hobbes (2010, p. 78) argues that each person has a right to everything and “every man is Enemy to every man” in a state of nature which would lead to “the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short”. To resolve the problem of order, Parsons thought that it would be possible through a normative function of social structure. As Sipka (as cited in Rahim, 2011, p.6) notes, Parson’s theory “is through and through an equilibrium model and the dynamics of conflict are relegated to the level of ‘deviation.’ All this stems, perhaps, from Parsons’ extraordinary, Hobbesian preoccupation with the natural tendency of men to hostility, and the difficulty of controlling them adequately”. Structural functionalism played an important role in analyzing society after the Second World War until the 1960s, but today it is given little attention (Rahim, 2011, pp. 5-6). One of the major criticisms is that his theory is inherently conservative to maintain status quo and is unable to analyze social change and conflict (Coser, 1956/2001; Gouldner, 1970; Rahim, 2011, p. 6).

3.2.2.3 Coser’s idea of conflict

Different from Parsons’ view on conflict, Lewis A. Coser (1913-2003) explored functions of conflict and was one of the earliest scholars studying this topic. *The functions of social Conflict* is one of his most important works, which was firstly

published in 1956 and is one of the best-selling sociological works of the twentieth century (Nepstad, 2005). In the book, he critiques Parsons' structural functionalism, the dominant sociological perspective in analyzing society at the time, and investigates productive aspects of conflict based on Simmel's works. For example, Coser notes that "Far from being necessarily dysfunctional, a certain degree of conflict is an essential element in group formation and the persistence of group life" (p. 31).

His work produced a deep influence for the future research. Since then, more scholars have begun to pay attention to its constructive part. Pedersen and Jandt (1996, p.4) note that conflict can strengthen group relationships. Outhwaite (2006) argues that conflict may contribute to "the maintenance, development, change and overall stability of social entities" (p. 106). Conflict also has positive functions on the change in institution. According to Pruitt and Kim (2004), conflict is the seedbed of social change and when people realize that their situation is unjust or they do not accept the current policies, they will resist and try to reverse the old order, otherwise old policies will prevail. In Coser's (1957) words, conflict can prevent "the ossification of the social system by exerting pressure for innovation and creativity" (p. 197). As a stimulus, he (1956/2001) notes that conflict helps to establish "new rules, norms, and institutions, thus serving as an agent of socialization for both contending parties" (p. 128) and it also helps to create and modify current norms and make "the readjustment of relationships to changed conditions possible" (p. 128).

Marx emphasizes conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in capitalist societies and calls upon the former to start a revolution. Parsons only focuses on the negative aspect of conflict and views it disruptive and abnormal while Coser points out its positive functions. Today, a popular view of conflict is that it is a natural part of social life and it could be both functional and dysfunctional (Jehn, 1997; J. Kelly &

Kelly, 1998; Pedersen & Jandt, 1996; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999). In this study, attention is given to both positive and negative consequences of conflict.

3.3 Institutional Issues of Conflict in Rural China

Hull (1943), James (1890), and Titchener (1910) note that context is an important psychological construct, stimulating, sustaining, and supporting behavior (as cited in Pedersen & Jandt, 1996, p. 10). This study focuses on conflict behavior in tourism in rural areas, which cannot be explored by divorcing from the social context of rural China, including common conflicts in rural China and China's evaluation and promotion system for officials. Pedersen and Jandt (p. 10) argue that social contextual dimension in studies on human behaviors has been given less attention and marginalized, which is to the disadvantage of conflict thinking. Kramer and Messick (1995) also suggest the importance of social context in conflict research.

A social contextualist perspective encompasses a set of core ideas about negotiation processes and outcomes. Among the most central of these ideas is the assumption that in order to understand bargaining phenomena, one needs to take into account the impact of the social and organizational environments within which such phenomena are not occasionally, but inevitably, embedded. (p. viii)

3.3.1 Major conflicts in rural China

Fang (2013) notes that peasants' burden of tax, rural land confiscation, and urban relocation are three top reasons for people's resistance after the reform and opening-up policy in 1978. In the 1990s, heavy taxes but low income added peasants' burden, so resistance against taxes occurred in many areas (J. R. Yu, 2010a). In 2000,

the central government started tax reform (Takeuchi, 2014a) and the agricultural tax was abolished completely in 2006 (Kennedy, 2007). This policy reduced peasants' burden significantly (X. Y. Wang, 2010) and the number of petitions concerned with this declined greatly (G. Z. Yan et al., 2011). Meanwhile, land issues, including land expropriation and house demolition, have gradually become the most prominent problems in rural areas. J. R. Yu (2005a) states that land problems have taken precedence over heavy taxes as the central issue of peasant resistance. He explains that illegal and compulsory acquisition and low compensation rates are the main factors contributing to land conflict. According to the National Bureau of Letters and Visits, land acquisition, urban demolition, environmental protection, reorganization and bankruptcy of enterprises, and disagreement over court judgments are five main fields of complaints in China (Y. J. Li & Wei, 2007). In resistance to land expropriation and house demolition, some extreme incidents occurred in the past years, such as self-immolation in Hubei in 2011 (G. Z. Yan, et al., 2011) and Hunan in 2011 (X. G. Ji, 2011). In addition, the other common conflicts in rural areas include villagers' committee elections, cadre corruption, and village finances (G. Z. Yan, et al., 2011). In general, land conflict, due to land expropriation and house demolition, is a very serious problem confronting contemporary rural China.

Land expropriation and house demolition are executed under the land laws. A primary law on land in rural China is the *Land Administration Law of the People's Republic of China (Land Administration Law)*³. Its newest version was adopted and came into force on August 28, 2004. This law stipulates the ownership of land, the procedure of land expropriation, and compensation standards. Another law, the *Property Law of the*

³ The full text of this law is available on the website of http://www.gov.cn/banshi/2005-05/26/content_989.htm

*People's Republic of China (Property Law)*⁴, involves relevant stipulations on houses attached on the land. For example, it clarifies the ownership of peasants' house. It was adopted on March 16, 2007 and came into force on October 1, 2007.

3.3.1.1 Dualistic urban-rural land system

Since the reform and opening-up in 1978, China's economy has been developing very fast with an average growth rate of 9.7% (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2015), which promotes a rapid increase in the level of urbanization. The urbanization rate, calculated by urban population, rose to 54.77% in 2014 from 17.92% in 1978 (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2015). Fast economic growth and increasing urbanization mean that more land is needed for housing and industrial activities. H. Z. Zhang and Hao (2008) note that there are two alternative solutions: one is increasing the degree of intensiveness of current urban land usage and the other one is land acquisition from rural areas, and China is taking the second method. The dualistic urban-rural land system is implemented in China, in which rural land belongs to peasants' collectives rather than individual peasants (The ownership of land will be introduced in detail in section 3.3.1.2). Comparing with peasants, local government is in a monopolistic position in the process of land acquisition. Peasants have little bargaining power in front of powerful government. According to Article 47 of the *Land Administration Law*, the highest compensation standard for land cannot exceed 30 times the average output value (not including the compensation for green crops attached on expropriated land) of the previous three years before land acquisition. The stipulation concerning rural land compensation is based on "maintaining people's original living level" instead of market principle. After acquisition, the type of

⁴ The full text of this law is available on the website of http://www.gov.cn/flfg/2007-03/19/content_554452.htm

expropriated land is transformed from collective land to state land (from rural land for farm use to urban land for construction use) and peasants will lose all their rights on the land, such as the benefits brought through appreciation of land value in the process of transformation. In contrast, local government leases expropriated land with a much higher price (land rent). In addition, local government can attain a couple of types of land tax revenue, such as house property tax and land value increment tax. Compared with land rent, the compensation for peasants is very small (Qian & Qu, 2004; Y. Xiao, Qu, Qian, & Xu, 2008). The huge gap between land compensation for peasants and benefits for local government stimulate local government to be keen on land acquisition. Revenue from land rent is an important fiscal revenue source maintaining the normal running of local government (F. K. Meng, 2010; L. Yang & Liu, 2014). Land rent accounts for 35% of fiscal revenue of local government in 2013, 27% in 2012, and 41% in 2011 (Y. K. Chen & Xu, 2014). In addition, land can bring in investment and promote GDP growth (Liang, 2009; Q. Wu, Li, & Yan, 2015). It is widely viewed that the increase of fiscal revenue and GDP, important indicators of economic development, is connected with Party and government officials' evaluation and promotion, which will be discussed in section 3.3.3.

3.3.1.2 Ownership

Article two of the *Land Administration Law* does give a general stipulation on land ownership: socialist public ownership of land is implemented in China, which includes two types of land ownership, state ownership and collective ownership. For rural land, Article eight of the law states that it belongs to peasants' collectives. In other words, an individual can only claim his right as a member of a collective and no specific land belongs to a specific individual. Not only farmland but also house sites

are owned by the collectives, and inhabitants only have usage rights. During a conversation with Zhiwu Chen⁵ organized by the media of *Nanfang zhoumo*, Jianrong Yu⁶ notes that the current land system harms peasants' interests, and has led to a series of conflicts (S. Xiao, 2008). As for the infrastructure on the land, such as local houses, Article 64 of the *Property Law* stipulates that an individual has the ownership of his premises. In a nutshell, individuals can only enjoy the right of land use instead of land ownership. But individuals have the ownership of houses attached to the land.

3.3.1.3 Expropriation

Article two of the *Land Administration Law* stipulates that the state may expropriate or acquire land due to public interest. For example, Article 61 of the law states that if land is used for public interest at the township level, the decision shall be examined and verified by township governments and then be submitted to a higher authority for approval. Article 42 of the *Property Law* does give a similar prescription that to meet the need of public interest, collectively-owned land, premises, and other real properties owned by entities or individuals may be expropriated.

Based on the above articles, two points should be clarified here. Firstly, the decision power of land expropriation is owned by the government rather than peasants. S. Xiao (2008) notes that the decision of land expropriation may not reflect peasants' true thoughts. Secondly, what is public interest? This term is mentioned in both articles and is an important determinant for expropriation. Public interest is a complicated

⁵ Zhiwu Chen is a professor of School of Management at Yale University.

⁶ Jianrong Yu is an expert of social issues of China at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

concept and there has been controversy over whether there is a single public interest (Fainstein & DeFilippis, 2016, p. 11). Dredge (2010, p. 105) notes that the public has diverse public interests that overlap and even contradict each other. For Pal and Maxwell (2004, p. 3), public interest is a slippery concept because it is difficult to discern and identify. Meanwhile, government might be influenced by special interests and not make policies demanded by the public (Huntington, 1993, p. 10). Due to its complexity, further discussion of public interest is needed (Fainstein & DeFilippis, 2016, p. 12). However, this term is not given a detailed and clear explanation in the law. The ambiguity of this stipulation makes it possible for government to infringe peasants' rights and interests in the name of public interest.

3.3.1.4 Compensation

If land and its attachment are expropriated, what is the stipulation on compensation? According to its usage, land is classified into three categories: land for farm use, land for construction use, and unused land. Land for farm use is further divided into sub categories, such as cultivated land, forest land, and grassland. Article 47 of the *Land Administration Law* makes a stipulation on compensation but only targeting cultivated land. Compensation for other types of farm land and land attachment is not prescribed, and local government is authorized to act. Jianrong Yu notes that the current stipulation on compensation is a government-mandated price rather than a market price so it is not a reflection of its real value (S. Xiao, 2008). Low compensation has been an important reason for land conflict (Sun, Zhou, & Liu, 2009; J. R. Yu, 2005a).

3.3.2 Conflict from villagers' committee elections

If villagers care about a villagers' committee election and are willing to participate in it, there must be economic interest which can impact on their economic benefits

significantly (K. D. Zhu, Huang, & Ren, 2000). In a village of Hebei Province, local villagers expressed that no one would like to compete for the post of the villagers' committee head if there was no economic interest (J. R. Yu, 2015). Tong (2004) claims that the number of conflict on villagers' committee elections presents a rising tendency in recent years. In the current political system of China, there are five levels of government: the central government, provincial-level governments, prefectural-level governments, county-level governments, and township-level governments. The latter four levels are called local government. Township governments are in the lowest one and contacts villagers the most. According to the *Organic Law of the Villagers' Committee of the People's Republic of China* (2010 version) (*Organic Law of the Villagers' Committee*), a villagers' committee is a self-governing organization. Specifically, self-governance promised by this law is conceived as democratic election, decision making, self-management, and supervision (O'Brien & Han, 2009). However, in reality, township governments often interfere with village affairs causing unfair elections and even serious conflicts (O'Brien & Han, 2009). In addition, other issues facing village elections include vote-buying (Shi, 2010; Y. J. Wu, 2008), non-transparency, and the penetration of gangs (Shi, 2010). Even if village elections are held fairly without any interference, elected villagers' committee heads have to take into account township governments, village Party branches, and other social forces, such as clans and criminal gangs (O'Brien & Han, 2009; J. H. Wang, 2005). The latter three forces form the local power structure and can impede democratic governance.

According to Article five of the *Organic Law of Villagers' Committees*, township governments only "guide" villagers' committees and villagers' committees need to

“assist” the work of township governments⁷. A villager’s committee is a self-governing organization and does not belong to China’s administrative system. Therefore, a villagers’ committee is not an extension of a township government, and the relationship between the former and the latter is not “subordinate versus superior”. But villagers’ committee heads are often treated as subordinates, and they are often assigned unpopular tasks which cannot be ignored, such as collecting levies or finishing other target-hitting programs (O’Brien & Han, 2009; X. M. Wang, 2008). If they fail to finish these hard tasks, they may be dismissed by local government illegally. According to a survey in Qianjiang (a prefecture in Hubei Province), over 180 villagers’ committee members were dismissed by local government within a three-year term (1999-2002) due to such reasons as failing to finish designated tasks and auditing village accounts (G. M. Huang & He, 2002).

According to Article four of the *Organic Law of Villagers’ Committees*, a village Party branch is a leading core in a village, which leads and supports a villagers’ committee’s exercise of functions and powers. However, the law does not clarify specific responsibilities of the two bodies, which often cause friction and even conflict due to struggling to have a final say on village affairs. According to a media report by *Renmin ribao* (People’s Daily), 57 villagers’ committee members in Qixia Prefecture, Shandong Province, applied to resign because local township Party Committees and governments assigned the role of village Party branches unduly and they actually removed the role of villagers’ committees (S. X. Cui, 2001).

Social forces, such as clans and criminal gangs, also affect the achievement of democracy in rural areas. A clan is “a corporate group demonstrating descent from a

⁷ The full text of the law is available on the website of http://www.gov.cn/flfg/2010-10/28/content_1732986.htm

common ancestor, usually through some corporate property and ceremonial ties, and often residing together” (Duara, 1998, p. 87), which is an important factor affecting village elections (Yuan, 2014). In some places, clan leaders force their members to vote for some people belonging to the same clans and violent conflict even happens between different clans in a village for the post of the villagers’ committee head (J. R. Yu, 2004a). When people gain power through fellow clan members’ support, they may transform into an evil force or a criminal group, which is viewed as another important aspect threatening village elections and grassroots democracy. According to J. R. Yu (2003), criminal gangs seize power through colluding with local township governments, getting support from their clans, intimidating villagers and so on. He notes that some township Party Committees and governments appoint and support evil forces as village Party secretaries and use their “evil” to help to collect levies from villagers.

3.3.3 China’s evaluation and promotion system for officials

To evaluate the performance of Party and government cadres, the *Provisional Regulation on Achievement Evaluation of Party and Government Cadres* was approved by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (the Central Committee of the CPC) and issued in 1998⁸. One important evaluation indicator is work achievements involving a couple of aspects, such as economy, society, and environment. In terms of economic indicators, it includes “the completion of economic work, the speed, efficiency, and reserve strength of economic development, growth of fiscal revenues and the improvement of people’s standards” (G. Guo, 2007, p. 381). In this regulation, it does not give guidance on how to subdivide and quantify

⁸ This full text of this document is available on the website of <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/71380/71382/71480/4853966.html>

the indicators. In practice, economic indicators have been the main evaluation factor, including GDP, its growth rate, and fiscal revenue. In a survey of eighty county leaders in Sichuan province, P. Yan (2004) found that all Party secretaries and county mayors complain that the high growth target set by upper levels puts heavy pressure on them.

In 2013, the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CPC issued a notice on improving the performance and achievement evaluation system of Party and government leaders and cadres, which stipulates that the annual assessment cannot be determined only by GDP and its growth rate. There has been controversy whether GDP should be the main evaluation indicator or not, but in practice it has been given the first place (Y. X. Jiang, 2013). In 2013, the *Decision on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reforms* was adopted by the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the CPC, which requires correcting the deviation of the achievement evaluation system based on economic growth rate alone⁹.

In aspects of selection, promotion, demotion, and appointment of officials, the Central Party of the CPC has promulgated three regulations since 1995. The first version *Provisional Regulations on the Selection, Promotion, and Employment of Party and Government Leading Cadres* was issued in 1995¹⁰. In the inspection section of candidates, it stipulates four dimensions of examination: morality, capability, diligence, and achievements among which the last one is given a special emphasis. However, how to define work achievements and what contents it should contain are

⁹ The full text of this document is available on the website of http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-11/15/c_118164235.htm

¹⁰ The full text of this document is available on the website of <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/71380/71387/71591/4855103.html>

not described in detail. In the 2002 version, “cleaness” is added after the four standards and “work achievements” is emphasized in a similar way to the first version¹¹. In 2014, the third version was issued¹². Compared with the prior versions, it makes a couple of changes and gives a detailed description on work achievements. It puts candidates’ political quality and morality in a prominent position. Work achievements are evaluated through a couple of components, such as sustainable economic development, improvement on people’s livelihood, and cultural construction. In addition, it points out that the assessment of work achievements cannot rely on the economic growth rate alone.

Promotion is one of the biggest concerns of officials (L. A. Zhou, 2007) and is “a strong enough incentive to perform their official duties well” (G. Guo, 2007, p. 382). G. Guo notes that “Chinese cadres do not have many viable career alternatives outside of the political hierarchy, as the job market for them in the private sector hardly exists” (p. 382). He argues that steady revenue, secure job, and power are also main factors that attract them to stay in the government system.

A top-down appointment system is implemented in China which means that higher authorities have a decisive say on the promotion of subordinates (Landry, 2008; Lieberthal, 2011, p. 19; J. N. Wu & Ma, 2009, p. 175). Edin (2003, p. 11) notes that economic development is placed the most important position by the central government, especially in the aspect of tax revenues submitted to the central government. A couple of empirical studies have verified the importance of economic

¹¹ The full text of this document is available on the website of <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/71380/102565/182144/10995045.html>

¹² The full text of this document is available on the website of http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-01/15/c_118985244_11.htm

growth for officials' promotion. At the provincial level, two empirical studies suggest a relationship between economic performance and promotion. Using a dataset between 1979 and 2002, L. A. Zhou, Li, and Chen (2005) found that good economic performances relative to their immediate predecessors have a positive influence on promotion of provincial leaders, and bad economic performances relative to their immediate predecessors largely decide the turnover of provincial leaders. After analyzing the data of the past 50 years (1949-1998) on economic performance and political mobility, Bo (2002) found that provincial leaders with good revenue records are more likely to be promoted. At the county level, G. Guo (2007) found a similar result that Chinese county leaders' promotion is driven by revenue growth.

It is no surprise that under the current evaluation and promotion system, local government has strong motivation to increase fiscal revenue (L. H. Li, 2007). With the speeding-up of urbanization and flourishing real estate markets, leasing expropriated land is not only a quick way to increase fiscal revenue but also a good way to attract business and investment through favorable land policy. In some areas, leasing land even becomes the primary revenue source (S. S. Jiang, Liu, & Li, 2010). A series of conflicts happens in the process of land expropriation due to local government' unlawful acts (T. Z. Zhu, 2013), including land expropriation without approval from higher authority, extending land expropriation area randomly, no hearing, low and unreasonable compensation, withholding compensation, and violence toward peasants.

3.3.4 Ethnic minorities and policies of China

There are fifty-six official ethnic groups in China; the Han Chinese is the biggest one, accounting for 91.51% of the total population in Mainland China, followed by the Zhuang, Hui, Manchu, and Uyghur (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2011). A

typical characteristic of the distribution of ethnic population is mixing together generally but concentrating individually partially. In other words, different ethnic groups live together all over China while some of them concentrate in small areas. Although ethnic minorities are found in each provincial-level area, they mainly inhabit western China. Tibet Autonomous Region (Tibet) and Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Xinjiang) are the only two provincial-level units in which the population of ethnic minorities exceeds the number of Han people. To promote economic and social development of ethnic minority areas, a couple of preferential policies were issued.

Compared with the Han, ethnic minority groups enjoy preferential policies in family planning. Before 2015, one-child policy was widely implemented among Han people in Mainland China. However, this policy has been more flexible for ethnic minorities. Take Xinjiang and Tibet as examples. In Xinjiang, a Han couple could produce a child while an ethnic minority couple could produce two children in urban areas, and a Han couple could produce two children in rural areas while the latter could produce three (“Regulations of Xinjiang,” 2006). Also, there is no strict constraint of family planning for Tibetan people according to the Interim Measures for the Administration of Family Planning of the Tibet Autonomous Region. The population of ethnic minority groups accounts for 8.49% according to the sixth national population census in 2010, an increase of 0.08% from the 2000 census (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2011).

In terms of education, students of ethnic minority groups enjoy preferential policies on admission. Article 71 of the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Regional National Autonomy stipulates that institutions of higher education and secondary vocational schools shall set appropriately lower standards and requirements in the process of admission for students from ethnic minorities and special preference shall be given to students from ethnic minorities with a quite small population. For example,

Hui students enjoy extra ten points and students of Uyghur, Kazakh, Mongol, Kyrgyz, Xibe, Daur, Russian, Tajik, Uzbek, Tibetan, and Tatars in Xinjiang can enjoy as high as extra 50 points on the college entrance examination (the total score is 750 points) (the Admission Committee of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, 2016); and ethnic minority students in Guizhou enjoy a policy of extra ten to twenty points (the Admission Committee of Guizhou Province, 2016). To enjoy this policy, some Han students even change their ethnicity illegally (F. Zhai & Chen, 2008; G. H. Yang & Tang, 2016). To promote education and research level of universities in western China, a partner assistance model was initiated in 2001. A group of top universities from eastern China, such as Peking University and Tsinghua University, sent their faculty to western universities (He, Wang, & Zhang, 2016). Currently, more and more well-known universities have joined them.

To promote the economic development of western China, a series of projects, such as China Western Development, and preferential policies, such as taxes and job attainment, were implemented (Becquelin, 2000, p. 71; J. Wen, 2004; Zang, 2010, p. 346).

The policy of ethnic autonomy is adopted in China although many observers have a different view (Asia Research Centre, 2006; Bovingdon, 2014, p. 434; Tang, Hu, & Jin, 2016). There are five autonomous regions in China, among which Tibet and Xinjiang in particular attract the world's concern due to a couple of issues, such as the position of Dalai Lama, terrorist attacks, and autonomy (Connor, 1984; Starr, 2004, p. 3; B. Zhao, 2012), especially after the incidents in Tibet in March 2008 and Xinjiang in July 2009 (X. G. Wu & Song, 2014, p. 159; Bovingdon, 2014, p. 428).

Studies in the two regions involve many aspects, such as economic inequality (X. G. Wu & Song, 2014; Zang, 2010), culture (B. Zhao, 2012), population migration, and ethnic tensions (Becquelin, 2000; J. X. Li, 1996; Bovingdon, 2014; Shakya, 1999). Based on a mini-census of Xinjiang, X. G. Wu and Song concluded (2014) that the

Uyghur Chinese are more likely to work in government/public institutions compared with local Han Chinese, and a possible explanation is the government's policies favoring the Uyghur. With economic transition from planning economy to market-oriented economy to promote efficiency, the influence of market forces is becoming stronger. Under the environment of fierce competition, Uyghurs are disadvantaged in job attainment compared with Han in enterprises, including the state-owned ones (X. G. Wu & Song, 2014; Zang, 2010). A number of studies show that economic returns are positively connected with education and language proficiency (Bleakley & Chin, 2004; Bovington, 2014, p. 438; Chiswick & Miller, 1995; Chiswick & Miller, 2003; Gao & Smyth, 2011; Hannum & Xie, 1998). Education is regarded as a key factor in the labor market (Zang, 2010, p. 347). Based on census data of 1982 and 1990, Hannum and Xie's (1998) study indicated that an increased educational gap largely contributes to the gap in job attainment between Han and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. Language is seen to be an important form of human capital (Chiswick & Miller, 2003). Gao and Smyth (2011) note that the coefficient between Mandarin proficiency and economic returns is statistically significant based on a survey of internal migrants in China's urban labor market.

3.4 The Theory of Resistance

3.4.1 Definitions of resistance

Mullin (1972) mentions two reactions when analyzing the resistance of slaves to their situation. One is their reaction to abuse or sudden changes in routine which is called token acts but not resistance. The other is their organized, cooperative, and systematic acts against plantations' workings or crops, which is regarded as resistance. In a similar way to Mullin's classification, Genovese (1974) divides resistance into

prepolitical forms of resistance and genuine resistance. He explains that only resistance challenging the power of the regime is real resistance and everyday forms of resistance, such as lying, stealing, arson, and shirking, can only be called prepolitical or apolitical resistance. For Mullin and Genovese, real resistance has to be cooperative, selfless, and revolutionary (Scott, 1985, p. 292). Disagreeing with their argument, Scott notes that it is not appropriate to exclude apolitical actions from the categories of resistance by peasants because these actions would mean that the analysis would miss the soul of peasant politics. A couple of reasons are given. Firstly, bread and butter issues often lie in the core of peasant resistance and are the essence of peasant politics. To ignore peasants' self-interest in resistance is to ignore the basis of peasant politics. Peasant resistance is a struggle over basic survival needs, such as work, food, and property. Therefore, it is utopian and unmoral to require peasant resistance to be selfless. Secondly, if peasant resistance is confined only to organized and systematic actions, much of what is happening in rural areas will be missed, and almost all modern revolutions could not be explained successfully because unorganized petty acts can take place on a large scale, such as the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the dissolution of the armies of Chiang Kai-shek in 1948. Thirdly, consequence is not a reliable element as well. Many acts which are called resistance by most reasonable observers may produce an opposite result. In contrast, an act that would not be called resistance may lead to a significant consequence. Scott (1985, p. 290) therefore claims that class resistance includes:

Any act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are intended either to mitigate or deny claims (for example, rents, taxes, prestige) made on that class by superordinate classes (for example, landlords, large farmers, the state) or to advance its own claims (for example, work, land, charity, respect) vis-à-vis those superordinate classes.

3.4.2 Everyday forms of peasant resistance

Both Adas (1981) and Scott (1985) note that too much attention is given to large scale violent, open, and direct peasant insurrections, such as rebellion and revolution, and there are few works on everyday forms of peasant resistance. They are the first scholars to conduct relevant studies in this field. In Adas' (1981) study on peasant resistance in pre-colonial and colonial Myanmar and Java, he calls such actions avoidance protest, a different form from direct and violent confrontation, in which discontented peasants seek to avoid confrontation with authorities and express their discontent through migration from one patron to another, flight to the refuge of temples, evasion of military conscription, and/or other activities that minimize clashes with the authorities. The detailed and most influential analysis on this type of resistance was completed by Scott after one and half years of fieldwork in a Malaysian village. He found that everyday resistance should be given more attention, and explains it from three aspects. Firstly, compared with everyday forms of peasant resistance, peasant rebellions and revolutions are fewer; secondly, gains through rebellions and revolutions are uncertain though they may achieve something; thirdly, peasants' goals are often at odds with the new regime, even peasants achieve the removal of the old. Based on the above reasons, he suggests that everyday forms of peasant resistance should be placed in a far important position especially for scholars in the field of peasant politics or history that refers to justice to the peasantry.

In contrast to violence and temporariness in most peasant uprisings, everyday forms of peasant resistance are prosaic and not that violent. They include the constant struggle between peasantry and those, such as landowners, who attempt to grab interests and taxes (Scott, 1985, xvi). He also states that peasants try to avoid direct confrontation with powerful people during their struggles, and usually use Brechtian or Schweikian forms of resistance, including pilfering, sabotage, dissimulation,

slander, foot dragging, arson, false compliance, and feigned ignorance. All these forms of resistance have certain features in common: little direct defiance to authorities, little or no planning or coordination, and individual self-help instead of collective movements. They are not monopolized by the peasantry and can also be found in other sectors, such as factory workers, street vendors, and even officials and landlords.

Such kinds of resistance can be implemented beneath the “surface of a public realm of deference, compliance, and loyalty” (Scott, 1989, p. 24). The outward signs of peasant compliance with exploitation, injustice, and impoverishment may be a façade which hides their contrary views and actions that are growing from their discontent and antipathy toward landowners or higher authorities (Kerkvliet, 2009, p. 234). The common use of disguise is perhaps the most striking characteristic of everyday resistance, which mainly has two types. The first one is that the message is very clear but the messenger is anonymous or disguised, and the second one is opposite in which the messenger is clear but the message is ambiguous or has a double meaning (Scott, 1989, pp. 25-26). No matter which type is present, he notes that the aim is the same to reduce the risk of apprehension and leave space for retreat through disavowal.

Kerkvliet (2009, p. 234) notes that everyday forms of resistance are important precursors which can feed into open and confrontational forms of politics, such as peasants’ resistance for taking over vacant land in San Ricardo, Philippines. Scott states that this petty resistance may cause an utter change in policies set by authorities after being multiplied thousandfold. His opinion is similar to Coser’s (1956/2001) view that conflict can promote the creation and establishment of new norms and rules. A series of historical examples in Asia (Adas, 1981), Europe (Cobb, 1970), and America (Robinson, 2005) has verified its potential impact. An important point differing everyday resistance from other forms of resistance is “its implicit disavowal

of public and symbolic goals” (Scott, 1985, p. 33). Instead of pursuing systematic change in an institution, everyday resistance aims for meeting pressing needs, and informal, covert, and least resistance approaches are often taken by peasants to make meeting those needs relatively safe (Scott, 1985).

According to Scott, the relationship between thoughts and acts is complicated, but consciousness helps us understand the process of peasants’ resistance. He explains their relationship from two aspects: first of all, intentions and acts are complementary. Acts originate from intention while influencing consciousness and intention as well. Back to resistance, the act of resistance and the thought behind it are always in constant interaction; secondly, the rhythm of consciousness and intention may not be in harmony with acts. It is easy and common for people to have thoughts, but not all the thoughts will turn into actions due to the existence of different conditions. When a condition changes in the future, the action that was impossible in the past may become implementable.

Based on the analysis of slowdown by slaves in plantations (Stoler, 1985), the purloining of materials by German workers, and the poaching of wood by Prussian peasants (Linebaugh, 1976), Scott (1985) notes that it is difficult for peasants, living at the bottom of society, to oppose in a more organized form due to the lack of discipline and knowledge, and peasants’ everyday forms of resistance are a more appropriate way of resistance which does not require much leadership and coordination. Everyday resistance, also noted by him, can be supported and reinforced by other peasants in a popular culture of resistance within which “the risk to any single resister is generally reduced to the extent that the whole community is involved” (p. 35). Everyday forms of resistance are a way to work the system to their minimum disadvantage (Hobsbawm, 1973). Scott (1989, pp. 15-16) notes that everyday forms of resistance are common in socialist agriculture, and a major reason lies in the few

options for opposition left to peasants in such systems. He notes that everyday forms of peasant resistance in China, including misreporting of cropping yields, exaggerated claims about spoilage of grain, and the illegal hoarding of grain, provoked a fiscal crisis and was instrumental in forcing the massive policy change at the end of collectivization and the implementation of massive economic reform beginning in 1978, such as the family responsibility system in agriculture. Since the 1990s, many scholars, such as Kevin J. O'Brien and Lianjiang Li, have begun to give attention to another form of resistance, rightful resistance which is introduced in the next section.

3.4.3 Rightful resistance

In the book “Domination and the arts of resistance”, Scott (1990) mentions another type of resistance which is different from everyday forms of resistance because it adopts the terms of dominant ideologies and takes the values of the ruling group. This type of resistance is discussed by McCann (as cited in O'Brien, 1996) when he analyzes the adoption of antidiscrimination laws to argue for equal pay in America. A name of “in-between forms of resistance” is used by Turton (as cited in O'Brien, 1996, p. 32) when he describes petitions in Thailand. Later, based on the context of rural China, the term of “policy-based resistance” was coined by L. J. Li and O'Brien (1996, p. 26) to distinguish it from everyday forms of resistance, rebellion, and revolution. After a deep exploration of the conditions in rural China, and being aware that villagers are struggling to assert “rights they had already been granted, or rights they believed could be derived” (O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. xii), they think that “rightful resistance” is a more precise term (L. J. Li, 2004; O'Brien, 1996; O'Brien, 2001; O'Brien & Li, 1999). Rightful resistance is explained in detail in their book “Rightful resistance in rural China”. In the book, they define rightful resistance in two ways.

Compared with other forms of resistance:

Rightful resistance is a form of popular contention that operates near the boundary of authorized channels, employs the rhetoric and commitments of the powerful to curb the exercise of power, hinges on locating and exploiting divisions within the state, and relies on mobilizing support from the wider public. (p. 2)

On the ground in China:

It entails the innovative use of laws, policies, and other officially promoted values to defy disloyal political and economic elites; it is a kind of partially sanctioned protest that uses influential allies and recognized principles to apply pressure on those in power who have failed to live up to a professed ideal or who have not implemented some beneficial measure. (pp. 2-3)

Higher authorities admit that most of peasants' appeals are lawful or at least reasonable (O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 33). At the same time, they often insist that peasant organizers or leaders have ulterior motives (The Research Office of the Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission of the CPC, 2001), and are happy to put them in prison (O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 33). This ambivalent attitude of higher authorities toward peasant resistance makes rightful resistance "rightful, but also resistance" (O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 49).

One important reason for the appearance of rightful resistance is the inconsistencies in central policies and local government acts. Here, central policies refer to all important pronouncements issued and set by the central government, such as the Central Committee of the CPC, National People's Congress, and the State Council, ranging from laws, regulations, and Party documents (O'Brien and Li, 2006). Peasants use the central government's pledges to resist official misconduct, including villagers'

committee elections, village finances, cadre corruption, inappropriate land use, and so on (Bernstein & Lü, 2003; Y. S. Cai, 2003; X. L. Guo, 2001, L, J. Li and O'Brien, 1996; Y. W. Liu, 2000; J. R. Yu, 2010a). In the course, rightful resisters usually appeal to higher authorities and generally “address the central state as an ally in the fight against ‘wayward’ local cadres” (Brandtstädter, 2006, p. 711).

Contractual thinking is a basis and key feature of rightful resistance (Brandtstädter & Schubert, 2005). In discussing the role that ideology and culture play in the construction of responsible government in China, C. X. Pan (2008) defines contractual thinking as an “intersubjective understanding between the government and citizens that there exists an interdependent, reciprocal relationship in which the vital interest of each side is considered ultimately inseparable from its responsibility to the other” (p. 52). Contractual thinking is linked to “[a] reward mechanism and mutual empowerment logic” (p. 62). He also notes that citizens’ loyalty and acceptance of the legitimacy of regime, one of the government’s interests, can be achieved by the implementation of the contract with citizens. If there is a big disparity between a government promise and its real performance, contractual thinking’s dysfunctional and punishment mechanism, rightful resistance, may start (C. X. Pan, 2008). In rural China, if eagle-eyed peasants find village cadres or government officials engaging in prohibited behaviors and failing to respect the contract, then they may use it as a good reason to refuse their obligations (O’Brien and Li, 2006; J. R. Yu, 2010a).

Though rightful resistance is a new concept, this type of resistance has long existed in Chinese history, and there has been no decade free of rural unrest since the beginning of the 20th century (Bernhardt, 1992; Bianco, 2001; Fang, 2013; O’Brien & Li, 2006). Petitioning has been a popular resistance form in peasants’ contention history (Fang, 2013).

In recent years, the number of rightful resistance incidents has been rising in China. Economically, the implementation of the family responsibility system in agriculture and marketization made peasants wealthier and more independent; politically, the end of mass political campaigns, such as the *Anti-Rightist Movement* (1957-1958), *Cultural Revolution* (1966-1976), and *Criticize Lin (Biao) Criticize Confucius Campaign* (1973-1976), freed peasants, reduced the political risk, and made them more assertive in defending their rights and interests (O'Brien & Li, 1995; O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 11). Peasants now are more knowledgeable about their exploitation with increased media penetration and mobility (O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 11; J. R. Yu, 2010a). All these changes provide rich soil to rightful resistance, making it less risky (O'Brien & Li, 1995; Oi, 2004), more effective, and greater in number (O'Brien & Li, 2006). Despite these advantages, the process of rightful resistance is still hard for peasants. Firstly, village cadres and government officials think that it is difficult for them to control peasants if they become more knowledgeable. Therefore, they obstruct the spread of central policies (L. M. Chen, 2001; Ding, 2001; Z. D. Ma, 2000; Y. X. Yan, 1995; J. R. Yu, 2010a; X. Yu, 1993, C. L. Zhang, 2002), and even detain peasants publicizing them (O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 70; J. R. Yu, 2010a). In addition, officials at higher levels often use police to suppress peasants who participate in rightful resistance, or they may influence "judicial authorities to conduct perfunctory investigations of highly credible charges, or spend years taking testimony and auditing finances" (O'Brien & Li, 2006, pp. 12-13).

There is an overlap between rightful resistance and other forms of resistance or contention. O'Brien and Li note that rightful resistance also involves collective challenges, common purposes, and group solidarity. In this regard, it is similar to social movements (Tarrow, 2011). They also note that both rightful resistance and everyday forms of resistance are opportunistic, because people using these forms of resistance are not organized and lack collective consciousness compared with other

well-formed organizations or groups. Meanwhile, O'Brien and Li emphasize that rightful resistance is different from other forms of resistance in many respects. Specifically, rightful resistance is episodic and extra-institutional rather than sustained (Tarrow, 2011) or institutionalized (Goldstone, 2003; Meyer & Tarrow, 1998); rightful resistance is local rather than national or transnational (Tarrow, 2005; Tilly, 1976); rightful resistance falls short of violence compared to rebellion; rightful resisters seek the attention of authorities or elites rather than to avoid them; and rightful resistance is public, open, and noisy, whereas everyday forms of resistance are anonymous, disguised, and quiet. Social movements in western countries are so routine and institutionalized (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998) that they have become part of social structures (Goldstone, 2003). Therefore, there is no or low risk in holding these activities in western countries. To reduce the risk, everyday forms of resisters in the Third World are quiet and anonymous, and avoid confronting the elites directly. Similarly, rightful resisters try to mitigate the risk using laws, policies, and officially approved channels with proclamation of "their allegiance to core values" (O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 4).

3.5 Summary

This review was presented from two aspects: conflict and resistance. The first part of this chapter is about conflict. Classical conflict theories were briefly reviewed after the discussion of definitions. Then, to explore conflict in tourism in rural China, the social context of rural China was introduced, including common conflicts in rural China, China's evaluation and promotion system for officials, and policies on ethnic minorities. The second part is about resistance. In this chapter, two important resistance categories, everyday forms of resistance and rightful resistance, were discussed. Both of these are related to peasant resistance closely, and are formed in

the context of Asia, especially the latter one, which is connected to rural China directly. Based on the first three chapters, how to design a research methodology to answer the research questions is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the research methodology employed in this study. Section 4.2 explains the choice of research methods. Section 4.3 outlines the principles used in selecting the study sites. Section 4.4 describes the data collection methods. Specific data collection procedures and tactics are also discussed in this section. Section 4.5 introduces the methods of data analysis and procedures, and the final section discusses the challenges encountered in the process of data collection.

4.2 Research Methods

A case-oriented qualitative comparative method was adopted in this study. To explore conflict and the logic of peasant resistance, “what”, “who”, “why”, and “how” questions need to be investigated. While “what and who” questions help to form the skeleton of the story, “why and how” questions help to reveal its essence. All questions work together to achieve the research objectives. The specific research questions are as follows:

- (1) What issues cause conflict and are there any commonalities/connections among them?
- (2) Who are the major parties in the conflicts and what roles do they play?
- (3) Why does conflict happen?
- (4) What strategies do local peasants choose to defend their rights and interests?

(5) How do they choose these resistance strategies?

Yin (2008) notes that “why and how” questions are more explanatory so it is more appropriate to adopt such research methods as case studies, experiments, and histories. This study focuses on contemporary events instead of historical events. Beeton (2005) notes that case studies can help to gain an in-depth understanding of contemporary events in their real-life contexts. O’Brien and Li (2006) state that in rural China unrest is a sensitive topic, about which relevant information is scarce, and fieldwork is also fraught with uncertainties. This situation still exists today. Furthermore, conflict is a complex phenomenon, and little relevant data has not been collected on it in the field of tourism. Therefore, having details of individual experience is particularly important to achieve the research objectives of this study. Being immersed in the real context of a phenomenon is the key to getting details, and to understand the phenomenon in depth. A prominent advantage of qualitative methods lies in their attention to complexity and the real context of this (Ragin, 1989). Qualitative research, therefore, is a better method which is not limited by structured questions, and has advantages in exploring details. In contrast, quantitative research focuses on examining relationships among variables, and does not give much attention to context and details.

Comparison is inherent in the social sciences. According to Ragin (1989), comparative social science has many prominent features, especially in case studies, such as qualitative orientation, appreciation of complexity, and emphasis on interpretive questions. He notes that the comparative method is essentially a case-oriented strategy, and that it has advantages in many respects compared with variable-based statistical method. First of all, it produces explanations that account for every example of a certain phenomenon, which makes it suitable to build new theories or to synthesize existing theories. Secondly, it highlights the characteristics of each case. To make comparisons to understand the whole meaning, the investigator needs

to examine each case carefully and compare each one with other cases. It requires the investigator to familiarize themselves with the cases relevant to the analysis. In contrast, the statistical method disaggregates cases into variables, and is weak in examining the similarities and differences among cases. In other words, the qualitative comparative method is well suited to answer the above research questions, and achieve the research objectives. To have a better understanding of the phenomenon, four cases were selected. One is the main case study, and the others are supplemental case studies. Site selection and relevant rationales are elaborated in the following section.

4.3 Study Sites and Rationale

The site which was considered as the main case study is Hongkeng village in Fujian Province. Why was this village selected as the main case study? Firstly, it is a world heritage site, and only properties with outstanding world value can be inscribed as world heritage. Conflict is the result of the pursuit of interest by different parties (Francis, 2006). World heritage sites usually have immense popularity, and can attract large numbers of tourists due to their outstanding value (M. M. Li, Wu, & Cai, 2008), which means that tourism at these sites probably brings much economic interest. J. J. Yang, Ryan, and Zhang (2013, p. 85) note that economic interest has been a major subject of conflict in tourism due to its uneven distribution among different stakeholders. The issue of economic interest, therefore, is likely to trigger conflict at world heritage sites. Probably, conflict phenomenon at these sites will be clear, comprehensive, and representative. In addition, heritage preservation is an important topic in tourist destinations. When short-term economic interest is pursued, preservation may be ignored or not be given enough attention in some places. This contradiction is likely to be observed more clearly at world heritage sites because

heritage protection has been a central issue in these places and the title of world heritage can bring huge economic interest to these places. Therefore, world heritage sites can help to have a better understanding of conflict phenomenon in the field of tourism and are more appropriate to be study sites. Secondly, conflict really happened at this site. There have been relevant media reports that local people blocked the entrance and did not let tourists enter (e.g., X. L. Chen, 2011; Y. T. Han, 2014; Qu, 2011). Thirdly, material retention is also a concern in this study. Relevant materials may not be saved by peasants for a long time. Hongkeng was listed as world heritage in 2008, not long ago. The fieldwork verified my guess: in Likeng and Hongcun, many important materials which can help to understand the phenomenon are lost.

To have a better understanding of this complex phenomenon in rural China, three other sites were also selected. To ensure the representativeness of selected sites, three criteria were adopted in the selection process:

(1) They should be located in different provinces and non-world-heritage sites should be included. Cases with different types in different locations can further strengthen the representativeness of conflict phenomenon and help to form a complete picture;

(2) Some sites should be located in ethnic minority areas and most villagers should belong to ethnic minority groups. Exploring the reason of conflict is an important objective of the research. Comparative studies between ethnic minority areas and ethnic majority areas may help to understand the reason of conflict clearly; and

(3) Conflict or resistance at these sites should have special characteristics. All important resistance strategies hardly emerge in one case in a short period. The understanding of logic of peasant resistance would be incomplete and biased based on one case study. Therefore, it is necessary to search cases with different resistance

forms.

Based on the above standards, three tourist villages were selected as supplemental study sites: Likeng, Hongcun, and Zhaoxing. Figure 4.1 shows the specific location of each site and Table 4.1 illustrates their characteristics.

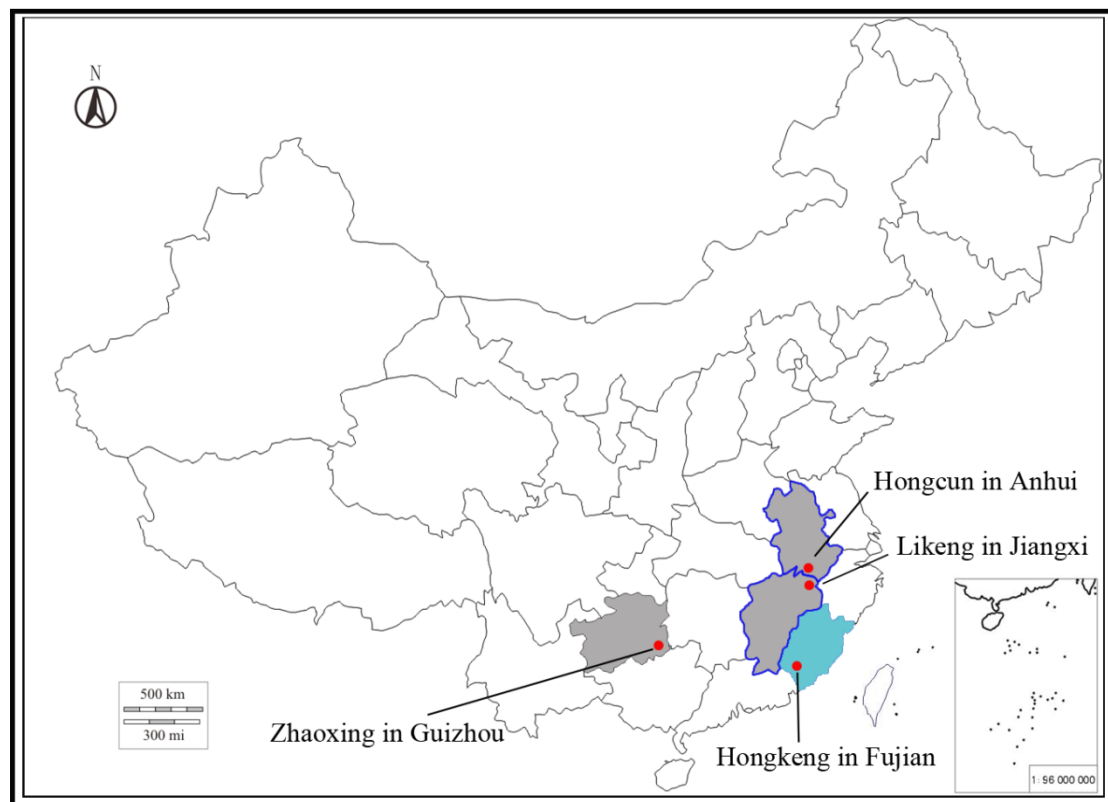


Figure 4.1 The location of the four study sites in China

Source: adapted from China (n.d.) and National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation (n.d.).

Table 4.1 Specific characteristics of the four study sites

	Hongkeng	Likeng	Hongcun	Zhaoxing
World heritage	YES	NO	YES	NO
Ethnic characteristics	Han	Han	Han	Non-Han
Reported resistance form	Traffic blockade	Traffic blockade	Lawsuit	Riot

Likeng, located in Jiangxi Province, is a Han village and a non-world-heritage site. Based on media reports, several relatively large collective resistance activities (traffic blockades) happened in this village in 2004, 2007, and 2011 (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011) and someone was even stabbed in the process (H. L. Wang, 2011; X. H. Zhao, 2011). Hongcun, located in Anhui Province, is a Han village and is a world cultural heritage site. Its special feature is the use of lawsuits by local peasants to defend their rights (H. S. Liu, 2004; X. M. Zhang, 2006), a feature not found at other sites. Zhaoxing, located in Liping County, Guizhou Province, is an ethnic minority village and a non-world-heritage site. In Liping, there are more than twenty ethnic minorities which account for about 85% of the population. Among all the minorities, the Dong group is the biggest one. About 70% of the population in Liping belong to the Dong group¹³. In Zhaoxing, almost all the villagers (98%) are Dong people (Cornet, 2015). On June 27, 2015, a big riot happened in this village and dozens of police cars were turned over and destroyed¹⁴.

4.4 Data Collection Methods

4.4.1 Interview

In the process of fieldwork, ethics was considered carefully to make sure that it was conducted in a manner respecting local culture and custom. Relevant information, such as research topic, research aim, data usage, participants' rights, and contact

¹³ The data about Liping is from the official website of Liping County Government <http://www.lp.gov.cn/e/action/ListInfo/?classid=30>

¹⁴ The information concerning this riot is available on the website of http://wickedonna.blogspot.jp/2015/06/2015627_29.html

information, was explained to participants before the interviews. The confidentiality of participants is maintained. All interviewees' names appearing in this dissertation have been replaced with numbers. The people, who are not interviewees but mentioned by other interviewees, have been coded with letters which are not acronyms of their names. All collected materials have been kept in a secure manner.

During the field study, unstructured interactive interview and participant observation were two important tools employed to collect data, in particular the former.

Unstructured interview is one category of qualitative research methods which “seeks to foster learning about individual experiences and perspectives on a given set of issues” (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 314). Corbin and Morse (2003) note that the purpose of unstructured interview is to encourage interviewees to share information about phenomena that are significant experiences or events in person's lives. As mentioned in section 4.2, unrest is a sensitive topic in China and it is a complex phenomenon. Klenke (2016) notes that unstructured interview is appropriate to probe more complicated issues and sensitive information. In addition, conflict in rural tourism is rarely investigated in depth by scholars so relevant information is still lacking. Y. Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) point out that unstructured interview is a good study approach to understand a phenomenon with little understanding. It encourages the interactive process between an interviewer and an interviewee, which is lacking in structured interview. The questions in structured interviews are usually standardized and close-ended, which is usually used in quantitative research (Bryman, 2008), and is not proper to explore complex phenomena with little understanding. Surveys are similar to structured interviews, except that they are administered in writing rather than orally (Y. Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). This research aims to investigate conflict and logic of peasant resistance through key informants' personal experiences. So, in this study, details are important. Corbin and Morse (2003) note

that story tellers are central actors in the process of unstructured interviews and they can determine where to begin and what topics to include. The comfortable setting created in unstructured interviews is useful to get details of individual experience or events especially involving sensitive topics. The role of researchers is to probe and ask for clarification (Fontana & Frey, 1998; Rubinstein, 2002). Imposing too many restrictions on the interview will inhibit informants' responses and it is hard to get a complete understanding of complex phenomena (Y. Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Therefore, unstructured interviewing is appropriate for this study.

Who should be interviewees? In term of sampling, a phenomenological study usually identifies and locates individuals who experienced or are experiencing a phenomenon (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Following this principle, I tried to locate people who were closely connected to conflict at these sites, including people participating in conflict activities directly or knowing them clearly without direct participation. For exploring the logic of peasant resistance, activists, such as leaders or organizers of collective resistance, were chosen as key persons. They were the initiators of resistance activities and experienced the whole process so they are most likely to know the details. How do I know who belongs to this group and how do I select?

Three methods were adopted here. The first method is conveniently sampled interviews that mainly took place in the initial stage of my field study. In this stage, I just went into a strange setting as an outsider with little knowledge on local people and the conflicts at the site. Key persons were not readily identifiable at this stage and it was also a process to establish rapport with local people. I interviewed local peasants conveniently. Local peasants in the hostel where I stayed or on the street were chosen as interview targets. As the study progressed, I began to know more about the village and to attain trust from local people. At this point, I requested the interviewees to recommend key persons.

The second method is snowball sampling. Some peasants recommended other persons actively. No matter which method is employed, establishing rapport with interviewees is paramount for unstructured interviewing (Fontana & Frey, 2005) and is essential for a successful interview especially if the topic is sensitive (Y. Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). This method has two advantages. The first advantage is that it is easy to locate relevant informants because rural China is an acquaintances society (Fei, 2004). Local people have been living in their village since they were born and they know each other very well. Therefore, many peasants knew what happened in the village and who got involved in conflict. It saved me much time in the process of seeking proper interview targets. The second advantage is that it can help to establish trust with potential interviewees fast especially when involving sensitive topics. If an interviewee introduces some potential interviewees to an interviewer in person, the rate of successful interview will rise because to some extent, his/her participation can help to dispel the potential interviewee's worry in an acquaintance-based society.

The third method to select interviewees was to locate potential key interviewees through media reports. If a conflict is reported in the media, key persons who knew the conflict are likely to be interviewed. Some key informants in Likeng and Hongcun were located through this way.

Two rounds of field study were conducted, and a total of 61 people were formally interviewed at the four sites¹⁵. The first round lasted eleven days from September 14th to September 24th, 2015. It was conducted in Hongkeng, Fujian Province. The second round started on March 1st and ended on April 2nd. The study sites include Hongkeng, Fujian Province; Likeng, Jiangxi Province; Hongcun, Anhui Province; and Zhaoxing,

¹⁵ A total of 77 people were interviewed, including 61 formal interviews and 16 casual interviews (See Table 4.2-4.5). Detailed description of casual interviews is in section 4.4.2.

Guizhou Province. A total of 37 people were formally interviewed in the case of Hongkeng, nine in Likeng, six in Hongcun, and nine in Zhaoxing. All the interviews were conducted in their villages except interviewee 50 and 51 who were working in Xiamen, the capital of Fujian Province. Villa Rojas (1979) notes that rapport is the only basis on which reliable information can be collected, and close contact with local people may help to establish this.

During the field study at the four sites, I lived with local people, especially key informants, which gave them a better understanding of me and my work. Bryman (2008) notes that an interviewee may be interviewed several times in unstructured interviewing. To probe and clarify some details, multiple-interview was adopted in this study. Some key persons were interviewed a couple of times, as shown in Table 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4. There are several reasons to conduct multiple interviews. Mishler (1999) notes that interviewees may not tell details until they establish rapport with researchers. Second, some of them have many stories which cannot be finished in one interview. Likeng is a good example. I extended the departure date twice with the request of some interviewees who had many stories to tell and wanted to share them with me. Thirdly, some incidents happened many years ago and the interviewees could not remember clearly. Multiple-interview could help to clarify the details and promote the accuracy of collected data. Small group interviews were also conducted in some occasions to get more accurate data. In terms of interview time, I respected local interviewees completely and many interviews were carried out in the evening or at night because some of them needed to do tourism businesses or farm work in the daytime. Some interviews lasted several hours until late night. In the process, I fully respected their right of rest and proposed to continue the interview the next day several times. But sometimes they insisted on continuing conversation with me, saying that they often went to bed very late even if they had not been interviewed.

Table 4.2 Interviewee list in Hongkeng (Formal interview and casual interview)

Interviewee Number	Interview Date	Interview Venue	Remark
1	September 14 th , 2015; September 15 th , 2015; September 16 th , 2015; September 24 th , 2015; March 3 rd , 2016; March 4 th , 2016; March 9 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
2	September 14 th , 2015; September 22 nd , 2015; March 4 th , 2016; March 5 th , 2016; March 6 th , 2016; March 7 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
1 and 2	March 11 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
3 and 4	September 15 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
5	September 15 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
6	September 15 th , 2015; September 25 th , 2015 March 11 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
7	September 16 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
8	September 17 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
9	September 17 th , 2015; September 19 th , 2015; March 5 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
10	September 18 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
11, 12, and 13	September 18 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
14	September 18 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
15	September 18 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
14 and 15	September 19 th , 2015; September 23 rd , 2015	Hongkeng	
16	September 19 th , 2015; March 8 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
9 and 17	September 19 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
17	September 25 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
18	September 20 th , 2015;	Hongkeng	

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Interviewee Number	Interview Date	Interview Venue	Remark
	September 21 st , 2015; March 6 th , 2016		
19	September 21 st , 2015; September 24 th , 2015; March 5 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
20	September 22 nd , 2015; March 9 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
21	September 23 rd , 2015	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
22	September 23 rd , 2015	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
23	September 23 rd , 2015	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
24	September 24 th , 2015; March 5 th , 2016; March 8 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
25 and 26	September 24 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
27	September 24 th , 2015	Hongkeng	
28	March 3 rd , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
29	March 3 rd , 2016	Hongkeng	
30	March 3 rd , 2016	Hongkeng	
2 and 31	March 4 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
32	March 5 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
33	March 5 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
1 and 33	March 6 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
34	March 6 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
35 36, 37, and 38	March 7 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
35	March 11 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
39	March 8 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
40	March 8 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
41	March 8 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
42	March 8 th , 2016	Hongkeng	Casual Interview
43 and 44	March 8 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
45 and 46	March 9 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
47	March 9 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
48	March 9 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
49	March 11 th , 2016	Hongkeng	
50	March 12 th , 2016	Xaimen	
51	March 12 th , 2016	Xiamen	

Table 4.3 Interviewee list in Likeng (Formal interview and casual interview)

Interviewee Number	Interview Date	Interview Venue	Remark
52, 53, and 54	March 13 th , 2016; March 14 th , 2016; March 16 th , 2016	Likeng	
55 and 56	March 14 th , 2016	Likeng	Casual Interview
52, 53, 54, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, and 62	March 15 th , 2016	Likeng	

Table 4.4 Interviewee list in Hongcun

Interviewee Number	Interview Date	Interview Venue	Remark
63 and 64	March 18 th , 2016	Hongcun	
65	March 18 th , 2016; March 19 th , 2016	Hongcun	
65, 66, and 67	March 18 th , 2016	Hongcun	
68	March 19 th , 2016	Hongcun	

Table 4.5 Interviewee list in Zhaoxing

Interviewee Number	Interview Date	Interview Venue	Remark
69	March 28 th , 2016	Zhaoxing	
70	March 29 th , 2016	Zhaoxing	
71	March 31 st , 2016	Zhaoxing	
72	March 31 st , 2016	Zhaoxing	
73, 74, and 75	March 31 st , 2016	Zhaoxing	
76	April 1 st , 2016	Zhaoxing	
77	April 1 st , 2016	Zhaoxing	

Online interviewing is another way to collect information, which is an extension of field study. This took place when I came back to Japan. Due to a good relationship established with the interviewees, some of them kept contact with me through communication tools, such as Wechat (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6 Online interviewee list

Interviewee Number	Interview time	Remark
1	May 12 th , 2016	Instant messaging
29	October 18 th , 2015; November 6 th , 2015	Instant messaging Video
33	May 5 th , 2016; May 7 th , 2016; May 22 nd , 2016; May 7 th , 2016; September 8 th , 2016	Instant messaging Instant messaging Instant messaging Online phone Instant messaging
53	April 22 nd , 2016; February 17 th , 2017	Video Instant messaging

4.4.2 Participant observation

DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) note that understanding the nature of phenomena is the goal of qualitative research and participant observation is one method to achieve this goal. To some extent, participant observation is an essential component of all qualitative studies (Marshall & Rossman, 2005, p. 100). This method demands researchers to immerse themselves in social settings to see, to hear, and to experience reality (Marshall & Rossman, 2005), which can help to provide a clear and complete picture of the phenomenon under study. DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) argue that participant observation can enhance the quality of collected data and of its interpretation. The method includes participating in relevant events in person, observing the events and people's behaviors, doing casual interviews and so on (Musante, 2015). In this study, the method was mainly used to collect data in the following two aspects. The first aspect is casual interview with local peasants on the street. A total of sixteen people were interviewed casually, including fourteen in Hongkeng and two in Likeng (Table 4.2 and 4.3). The second one is to observe to verify descriptions made by interviewees, some of which were recorded in the form of

photo, such as the pictures shown in chapter five and six.

4.4.3 Secondary data collection

The two methods discussed above, interview and participant observation, were used to collect primary data. In addition, secondary data, such as documents on laws, regulations, policies, and the number of tourist arrivals, was collected. Official websites of the government, newspapers, magazines, TV programs, and uploaded videos are important channels to collect secondary data. In addition, I went to the Yongding County Government Office to collect relevant materials on land acquisition, compensation, and tourist arrivals on March 10th, 2016. Secondary data is an important supplement to the primary data.

Collection and review of some secondary data were done prior to the two rounds of field study. This had several advantages. Firstly, it helped me select appropriate study sites. Secondly, it helped me have an initial understanding of those study sites, including local culture, people, and conflict, which played a certain role in the process of probing during interviews. Thirdly, it helped to locate key informants.

4.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted through three phases. Firstly, analysis on the main case study was done; secondly, the three supplemental case studies were analyzed; and the last phase was a comparison and synthesis of the first and second analyses. Chapter five and six cover these analyses.

For the main case study, specific analytic procedures are indicated in Figure 4.2.

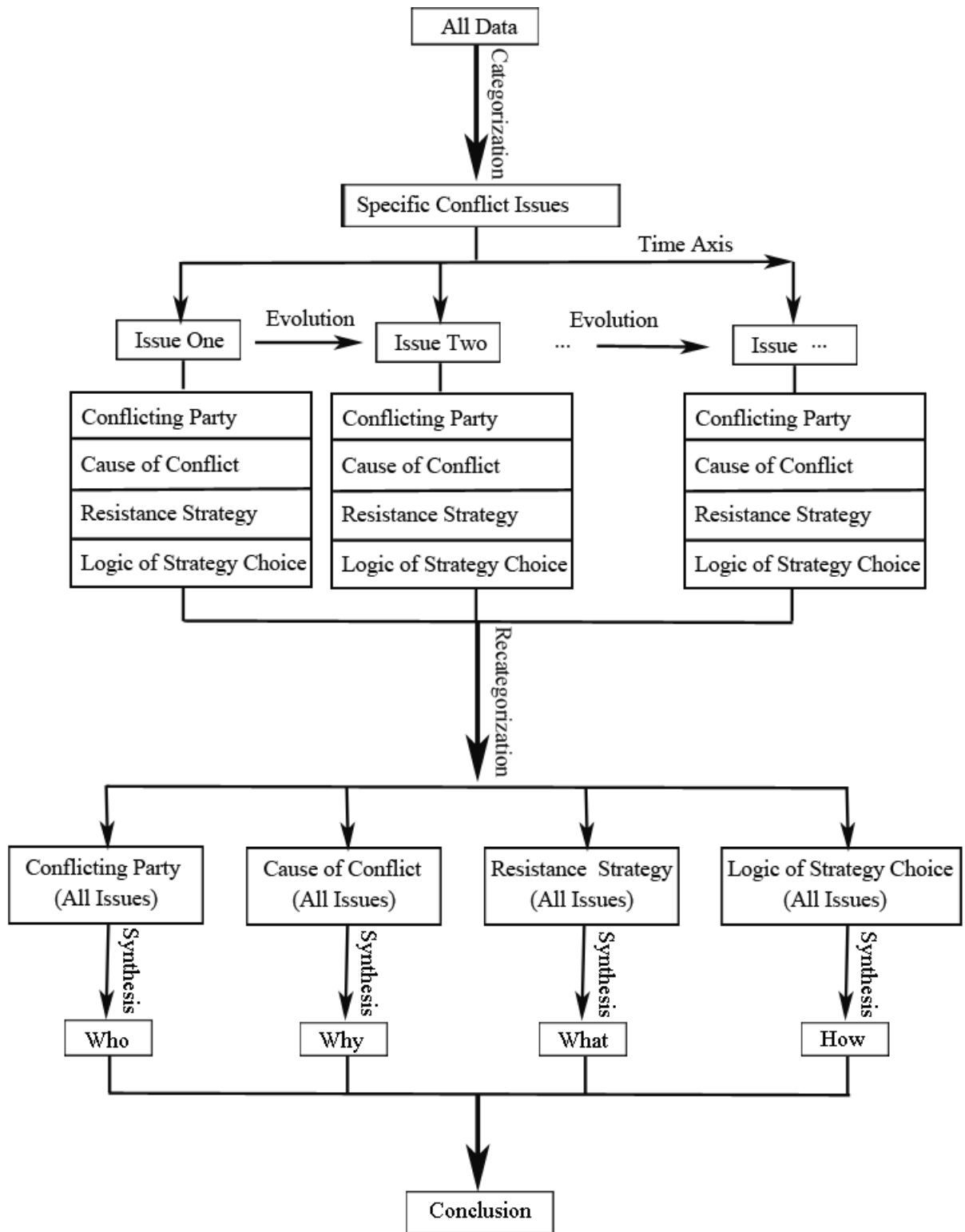


Figure 4.2 Flow chart of the main case study analysis

Source: the author.

Firstly, all the collected data was processed and categorized based on the type of conflict issue. Data related to each issue was put in one matrix which was arranged by time sequence. In each matrix, the data would be further classified according to the research questions: conflicting party, cause of conflict, resistance strategy, and logic of strategy choice. At this stage, the “what” question concerning conflict issues would be answered firstly. Then, evolution process of these conflict issues and possible relationship among these issues would be clarified. Afterward, the data related to each research question would be put together and synthesized to answer “who”, “why”, “what”, and “how” questions respectively in the second stage. Lastly, conclusions were formulated based on the results of the above two stages.

The method of analysis in the three supplemental case studies was analogous to the main case study. One difference is that only major conflict issues were identified and discussed in the three supplemental case studies. The supplemental case studies were selected as important supplement for the main case study to understand the complex phenomena. The identification of major conflict issues in the supplemental cases can guarantee the comparison among all cases. The final conclusions of the dissertation would be formed after addressing their differences and similarities.

4.6 Challenges of Data Collection

Language was one challenge I encountered during the stage of data collection. This problem mainly appeared in Zhaoxing. Firstly, most local peasants are Dong people who speak their own language in daily life, and this is different from Mandarin. Many people cannot speak Mandarin clearly and fluently especially old people. Though it is easy for young and middle-aged people to understand Mandarin, some of them could not express their ideas clearly due to their limited vocabulary. In this condition, I tried

to look for interviewees who could speak Mandarin relatively, and asked them to repeat what they had said if I failed to understand them clearly.

The second challenge was the sensitivity of the topic. On the one hand, some people did not want to accept my interview due to this reason. On the other hand, I also worried that local government might stop me conducting the research or take away my collected data due to their lack of understanding of this research, although I thought China had improved a lot in this aspect over the years. A master student from Taiwan did research in the field of tourism in Hongcun in 2002, and most of the collected materials involving negative news of the local area were confiscated (H. S. Liu, 2004). Generally, the whole process of my fieldwork was relatively smooth, although one interviewee in Likeng once reminded me that some people (from local government) might come to me if I continued staying there.

The third challenge referred to my identification. Some people really wanted to talk with me, and hoped that their stories could be reported and spread to the outside world. They expected that the village could be given much attention, and their problems could be resolved through this way. After understanding the research aim and my identification, some of them refused to be interviewed. One person described my work as a pupil's homework. They wished that I were a journalist instead of a student. Some people asked me whether what I was doing would be useful for resolving their problems and how much it could help them. Hearing that, I felt sad because there was little benefit from my study for the local peasants in the near future. I explained to them honestly on this issue. Just as DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) note, the main benefit accrues to the discipline and the researchers. To some extent, the peasant was correct: in a similar way to a pupil, I was also doing "homework".

It may not be appropriate for it to be called a challenge, but I would like to share my

experience related to China-Japan relationship. After hearing that I was studying in Japan, an old man refused the request of interview. His reason was that what I was doing would spread to Japan and affect the reputation of the CPC. There are two possible reasons for his refusal. One is the continuously tense relationship between China and Japan in recent years. The other one may be related to Japanese aggression against China in the Second World War. Although I encountered a couple of challenges, I have been trying to remain neutral and objective in the process of data collection and data analysis.

4.7 Summary

This chapter described the methods employed in this study. A case-oriented qualitative comparative method was adopted to investigate conflict and the logic of peasant resistance. The approach to data collection and analysis were presented and justified. The analysis and findings of the four case studies are presented in chapters five and six.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: THE MAIN CASE STUDY

5.1 Introduction to Hongkeng Village and Fujian *Tulou*

Hongkeng Village is in Yongding County, Southwestern Fujian Province, 45 kilometers away from the county seat, Fengcheng Town. Figure 5.1 gives its specific location in China. There were 2,992 residents in 2015¹⁶, and all of them belong to the Lin patriarchal clan of the Han Chinese. Local villagers are called *Hakka people*, literally meaning “guest families”. Their ancestors were said to have moved here from what is today’s Central and Eastern China hundreds of years ago (Mogi, 1991). A small stream (Hongchuan Stream) passes through the village, along which are situated the villagers’ traditional residences in their unique construction style, *tulou* (Figure 5.2).

¹⁶ The population of 2015 is from a notice post on the wall of Hongkeng Village.

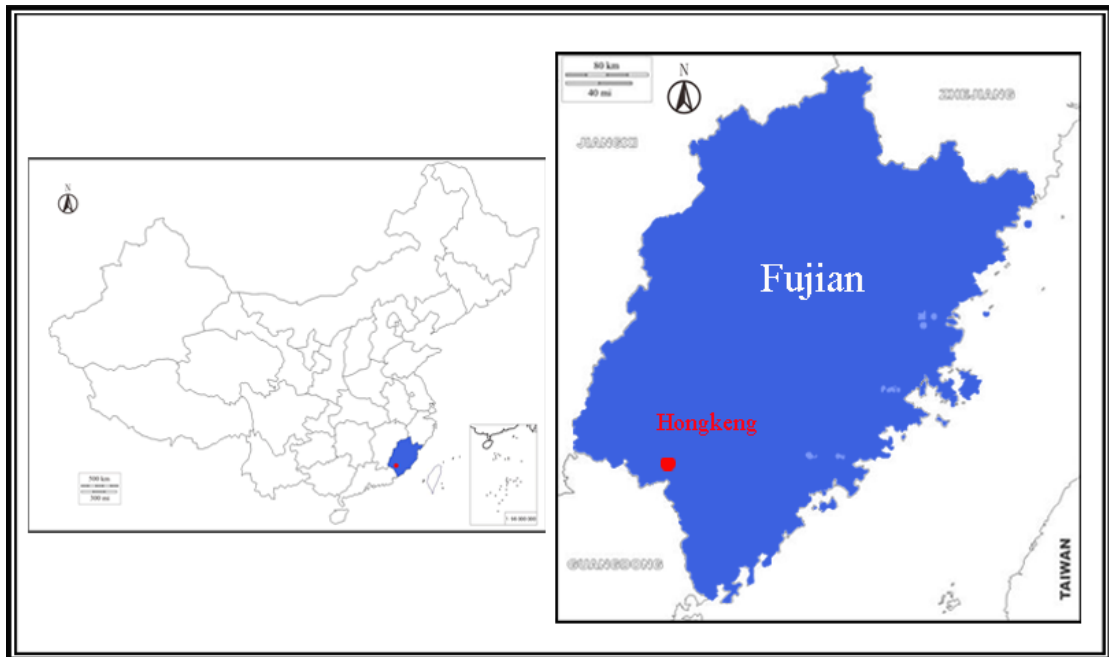


Figure 5.1 The location of Hongkeng Village in China

Source: adapted from China (n.d.), Fujian (n.d.), and National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation (n.d.).



Figure 5.2 The exterior of Zhencheng Lou

Source: taken by the author (September 2015).

Tulou, literally meaning “earth building”, is usually a large enclosed building in

between three to five stories, most commonly circular, rectangular, or square in configuration, which houses up to several hundred people. It is mainly distributed in Fujian, Jiangxi, and Guangdong provinces; among these the Fujian *tulou* is particularly well known due to a couple of factors, such as its number and integrity. In 1986, a stamp with the design of Fujian *tulou* was issued by China Post. In 2010, a similar stamp entitled “Fujian *tulou*” was issued in Hongkong. Featuring tall fortified mud walls and usually one entrance, the Fujian *tulou* was originally built for defense with thick rammed earth walls. In the center of the *tulou* is an open courtyard or another small *tulou* (Figure 5.3). It is usually occupied by a large family clan of several generations and is divided vertically among families with one or more rooms on each floor for each household. The courtyard and communal facilities such as water wells are shared by all residents of the building.

Inspired by traditional *tulou*, a famous student dormitory in Denmark, *Tietgenkollegiet*, won the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) European Award in 2007 (Welch, 2016). It was designed based on the idea of “community” with a communal courtyard in the center encircled by individual rooms, achieving a perfect blending of communal space and personal space (Bjerring, 2013). Traditionally, the first floor of a Fujian *tulou* was used for the kitchen, the second floor for storing grains, and the third and above for living, with an open courtyard in the center for raising livestock, such as chicken and pigs. Built at different times and reasonably arranged, these *tulou* buildings merge with the green mountains, rivers, bridges, and farmland (The State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China, 2008). The Fujian *tulou* was recognized as an outstanding example: “exemplifying a particular type of communal living and defensive organization,” and an exceptional example of human settlement embodying harmonious relationship between man and environment (Fujian Tulou, n.d.).

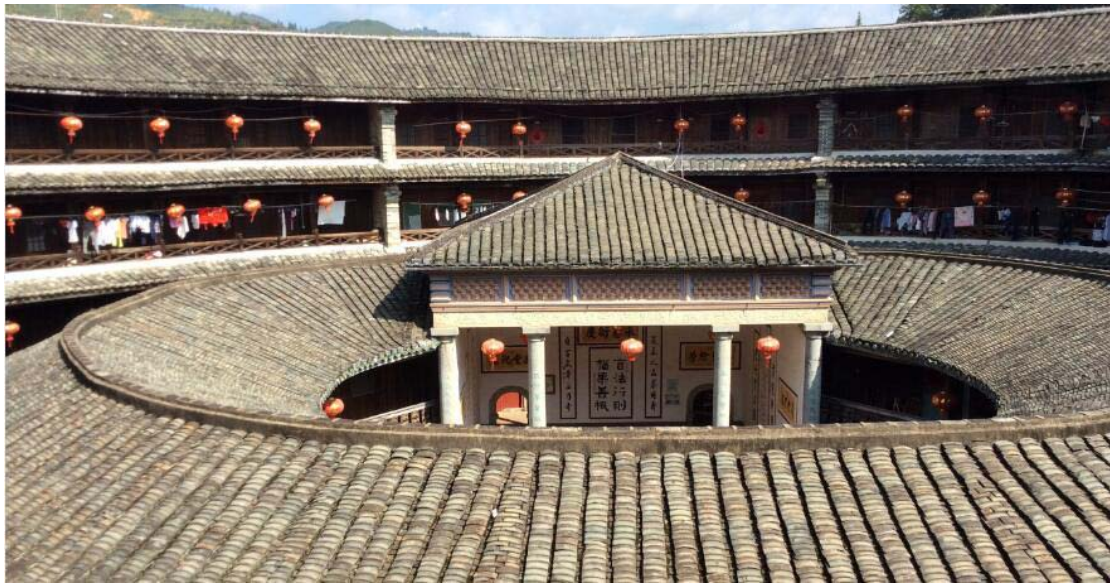


Figure 5.3 The interior of Zhencheng Lou

Source: taken by the author (September 2015).

In 1993, Hongkeng village received the title of China's Hakka Folk Culture Village (The State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China, 2008). In 2001, Zhencheng Lou, Fuyu Lou, and Kuiju Lou, three of Hongkeng's dozens of *tulou* buildings, were proclaimed as major historic sites under national protection by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage. The town in which Hongkeng is located, Hukeng, was rated jointly by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage as a famous national historical and cultural town in 2014, while in July 2008, the Hongkeng *tulou* cluster was listed by UNESCO as world cultural heritage at the 32th session of the world heritage committee in accordance with criterion (iii), (iv), and (v) (UNESCO, 2009). The citation reads:

Criterion (iii) The *tulou* bear an exceptional testimony to a long-standing cultural tradition of defensive buildings for communal living that reflect sophisticated building traditions and ideas of harmony and collaboration, well documented over time;

Criterion (iv) The *tulou* are exceptional in terms of size, building traditions, and

function, and reflect society's response to various stages in economic and social history within the wider region; and

Criterion (v) The *tulou* as a whole, and the nominated Fujian *tulou* in particular are, in terms of their form, a unique reflection of communal living and defensive needs, and in terms of their harmonious relationship with their environment, an outstanding example of human settlement.

The cluster includes seven *tulou* buildings: Guangyu Lou, Fuxing Lou, Guijiu Lou, Fuyu Lou, Rusheng Lou, Zhencheng Lou, and Qingcheng Lou.

Hongkeng initiated tourism in the 1980s, and Lin Rigeng was the first villager to have a tourism business. Cooperating with the local township government, he opened a folk culture exhibition room in 1986 (S. T. Ji & Wu, 2007). In 1991, the Yongding Tourism Administration was established by the county. In September 2007, the Fujian Hakka *Tulou* Tourism Development Co., Ltd. (*Tulou* Company), a county-owned enterprise, was founded and since then, it has been running Hongkeng's tourism. In 2011, Hongkeng was rated as "National 5A-rated Tourist Attraction" by the National Tourism Administration, the highest level of a tourist attraction in China¹⁷.

A couple of special terms and place names must be used in this chapter. To avoid confusion and to understand them easily, it is necessary to make a brief explanation in advance. In China, there are two types of village (Cun): the natural village (Ziran cun) and the administrative village (Xingzheng cun). A natural village is a traditional

¹⁷ The evaluation of tourist attractions is conducted according to "the Classification and Evaluation of the Quality Grades of Tourist Areas" (GB/T 17775-2003) promulgated by the National Tourism Administration. Qualified tourist attractions can be rated as one of five levels from A to 5A (or AAAAA). As of August 3rd, 2016, there are 218 5A-rated tourist attractions in China.

settlement which is formed spontaneously through people's natural gathering and inhabitation in a place for generations. Its formation is associated with factors such as topography and lifestyle. On the other hand, the formation of the administrative village fulfills the needs of government management. An administrative village may correspond to a natural village, or consist of several natural villages. Villagers' committees are self-governing organizations of administrative villages rather than natural villages. An administrative village is further divided into several villagers' groups. The size of a group varies with the scale of a village. In the high-density population areas of Eastern China, a villagers' group can have dozens of households or even hundreds of households, while in remote areas of Western China, it may include as few as ten families (Ye & LeGates, 2013).

The relationship between a natural village and a villagers' group also varies from region to region: a natural village may coincide with a villagers' group while a natural village may also include multiple villagers' groups. In this chapter, I mention places of Hongkeng, *Liulian*, *Tangxialong*, *Dabitou*, *Dabaxin*, *Yazidi*, *Wannianao*, *Liujiiao Ting*, and *Zhongsi*, whose characteristics are described below (Table 5.1). Hongkeng and *Liulian* are two adjacent administrative villages. In Hongkeng, the natural village and the administrative village are the same. *Liulian* Village, literally six connected villages, is made up of six natural villages: *Dabitou*, *Anbei*, *Zengwuzhai*, *Wugan*, *Shanzixia*, and *Chizhujia*. The names *Tangxialong*, *Yazidi*, *Meizijiao*, *Louziqian*, and *Wannianao* are conventional location descriptions of these places by local people for the convenience of daily life. All these places were farmland before land expropriation: *Tangxialong* was expropriated by the county government to settle some Hongkeng villagers. *Zhongsi* is one of the seventeen villagers' groups of Hongkeng.

Table 5.1 Description of some special place names

Name	Description
Hongkeng	An administrative village
Liulian	An administrative village, including Dabitou, Anbei, Zengwuzhai, Wugan, Shanzixia, and Chizhujia
Dabitou	A natural village
Tangxialong	A place in Liulian Village
Yazidi	A place in Liulian Village
Meizijiao	A place in Liulian Village
Louziqian	A place in Liulian Village
Wannianao	A place in Hongkeng Village
Dabaxin	A place in Hongkeng Village
Liujiao Ting	A hexagonal pavilion in Hongkeng Village
Zhongsi	A villagers' group of Hongkeng

In this study, conflict is defined as a behavior rather than an attitude. The behavior includes disruptive protests between conflicting parties, such as traffic blockades. Non-disruptive actions such as petitions are also viewed as signs of conflict in this study. In addition, this study focuses on the conflict between local peasants and other parties, so intra-party conflict is not discussed in this study except where it can help us to understand inter-party conflict.

Since the establishment of the Yongding Tourism Administration and the involvement of local government, there have been a series of conflicts between local peasants and other parties. This chapter seeks to answer the following five research questions, taking Hongkeng as the main case study. The initial answers to the five questions with a brief analysis are presented in section 5.2. To understand peasant resistance, their perception of other conflicting parties is explored in section 5.3. In-depth analysis and

discussion based on the data presented in sections 5.2 and 5.3 is conducted in section 5.4 covering the following aspects: the evolution of conflict, the identification of the core conflicting party, causal analysis, and the logic of peasant resistance.

- (1) What issues cause conflict and are there any commonalities/connections among them?
- (2) Who are the major parties in the conflicts and what roles do they play?
- (3) Why does conflict happen?
- (4) What strategies do local peasants choose to defend their rights and interests?
- (5) How do they choose these resistance strategies?

5.2 Conflict Issue: Conflict and Resistance

5.2.1 Conflict issue: House demolition

According to the Hongkeng villagers, the earliest demolition started at an old *tulou*, which was older than the existing *tulous*, in around 1992. Though the owner of the building did not want to move out, he was forced to leave (Interviewee 1 and 33). Since then, large scale house demolition, including newly built modern buildings, has occurred several times until 2010. There are several reasons for house demolition. One is for applying for the title of world heritage. As I mentioned in the introduction, many *tulous* were built hundreds of years ago for the purpose of defense so they have many limitations and disadvantages such as the lack of privacy. Furthermore, the traditional big families with several generations living together are gradually being replaced by small families. It seems that traditional *tulou* buildings are hard to adapt to the demands of modern people. Therefore, the concrete and brick houses built in the past thirty years in the village have all been modern styles which were thought to

be quite incompatible with *tulou* in style and were required to be torn down for the heritage application. The other one is the need to develop tourism. To keep the style consistent and to make space to improve and build tourist facilities and infrastructure, many houses were demolished. For example, the old *tulou* demolished in 1992 was replaced by a hotel managed by local government (Interviewee 1 and 33). Actually, an important aim of applying for the title of world heritage for local government is to develop tourism, which may also apply to many other countries, especially developing countries, which spend, are spending or plan to spend considerable time and money on their applications.

To resettle Hongkeng peasants whose houses were demolished, the county government expropriated a piece of farmland from a nearby village, *Liulian* Village, for their new settlement. There are a couple of reasons why people did not want to move out, such as the inconvenience of the resettlement area and attachment to place.

The demolition started in around 1996, and they demolished all houses in *Dabaxin*. Living there was very comfortable, with one river and one stream on each side. Villagers did not want to move out...The place we are living in was a farmland with no road and electricity and no one wanted to move here at the time.

(Interviewee 15, female)

The reason mentioned by local peasants the most is low compensation. In rural areas, a house is not just a place for living but has special meaning for people. The physical “house” is an important and necessary part of “home” in Chinese eyes. They are willing to spend much money, even all of their savings on it (Cheng, 2016; Johnson, 1997). As mentioned in chapter three, a major law on rural land acquisition and house demolition is the *Land Administration Law*, which was adopted at the 16th Session of

the Standing Committee of the Sixth National People's Congress on June 25, 1986. After that it was revised three times. However, no unified and special regulation on house demolition in rural areas is included in any version, and local government is authorized to act. Specifically, Article 27 (1988 version), Article 47 (1998 version), and Article 47 (2004 version), stipulate that the standards for compensating for ground attachment and green crops on the land expropriated shall be determined *de novo* by provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities. Here, there is no special stipulation concerning buildings and they are classified as ground attachments. There is no detailed stipulation on compensation standards, demolition process, and identification of evaluation agencies. All these are decided by local government, which leaves a lot of uncertainty in the process of demolition.

Hongkeng villagers commonly expressed their dissatisfaction with the low compensation standard (Interviewee 9, 16, and 39).

Previously, I had a house near Zhencheng Lou and it was demolished later on. Initially, the compensation standard was only ¥100 (\$15.24)¹⁸ per square meter. We did not agree.

(Interviewee 9, male)

However, compared with local government, they are powerless. They have no choice but to face house demolition and move out. The only thing they can do is to struggle for reasonable compensation. Two specific resistance forms are usually taken: blocking traffic and petitioning.

¹⁸ The exchange rate between US Dollar and Chinese Yuan is \$1= ¥6.56 (May 25th, 2016). All calculations in this dissertation are based on this rate.

Traffic blockades in this study refer to blocking village entrances or to blocking roads leading to these villages. Such blockades are often used as a tactic by peasants defending their rights and interests. Thus, it not only appears in this main case study but also in the supplemental case studies (please see chapter six). In addition, it can be seen in many non-tourism areas (X. Chen, 2009). Two specific features were seen during the traffic blockade in Hongkeng: the use of the vulnerable group and the behavior of kneeling down:

Previously, there were many buildings around Zhencheng Lou and *Liujiao Ting* (a hexagonal pavilion). Later on, all were demolished and local villagers were forced to move to *Tangxialong*. Many women, including old women, knelt on the ground, held the leg of the mayor of Yongding County Government and begged for help.

(Interviewee 20, male)

In the process of house demolition, women and old people stood at the forefront and played a vanguard role. This phenomenon is not unique in Hongkeng but also found in other areas of China (H. J. Dong, 2008; X. Dong, p. 25; H. L. Wang, 2011; J. R. Yu, 2010b). In China, people do not kneel without serious reasons and kneeling in front of people shows that they give up their dignity to attain help (X. Chen, 2009, p. 458). Kneeling down in Hongkeng is not only a tactic of blocking traffic, but also appears in the process of petitioning.

In the big scale house demolition in around 2001, local villagers lodged a complaint with the Yongding County Government and the Longyan Prefectural Government due to dissatisfaction with the low compensation standard.

We went to the (Yongding) County Government. It was useless. Then, we went to the Longyan Prefectural Government, held banners and knelt there.

(Interviewee 39, male)

Petitions are a commonly used resistance form by peasants to argue for justice, in which peasants send letters to or directly go to higher authorities to lodge complaints and hope they can help them to correct lower authorities' wrong doings. A top-down appointment system is implemented in China, which means that higher authorities have a decisive say on the promotion and punishment of lower officials (Landry, 2008, p. 117; Lieberthal, 2011, p. 19). Therefore, it is easy to understand why peasants go to higher authorities for petitioning. When interviewee 39 was forced to move out with low compensation, he and other villagers began to petition. Firstly, they went to Yongding county government but it was useless. Then, they turned to a higher authority and knelt down in front of the government gate, which gave an opportunity to talk with higher officials. Finally, the compensation standard rose (Interviewee 39).

Not only the houses in Hongkeng were demolished, but also the nearby village, *Liulian* Village. While interviewing Hongkeng villagers, a person from *Dabitou*, came to me and told me their stories (Interviewee 37). The following is from a petition letter provided by him:

Since *tulou* got attention by the government and outside world, our quiet and peaceful life was disrupted thoroughly. In 1994, local government expropriated our homestead almost free of charge and built the first parking lot and the memorial archway of Hongkeng. In 2000, to apply for the title of World Cultural Heritage, local government demolished stores and houses along the road and expropriated all the farmland in *Tangxialong* to resettle Hongkeng villagers (due

to their house demolition). In 2007, all the farmland and some houses behind *Huanxing Lou* were expropriated for the second parking lot. In 2009, to build and improve infrastructure and apply for the title of “National 5A-rated Tourist Attraction”, all the farmland in *Yazidi*, *Meizijiao*, and *Louziqian* was expropriated and then 95% of farmland in *Dabitou* was expropriated.

After experiencing expropriation four times, peasants in *Dabitou* lost almost all their farmland for a small amount of compensation according to them. For smooth demolition, Hukeng Township Government lied to provide them with jobs, and the same good treatment as Hongkeng people. Interviewee 37’s house was demolished but he has been refusing to pick up the compensation due to the low compensation standard. To maintain their rights, they lodged a complaint with different authorities. However, there has been no change.

Though local people did not want to move out and were not satisfied with the compensation, local government expropriated a piece of land (*Tangxialong*) from a neighboring village and resettled them. Since then, the approval of building new houses in Hongkeng has become difficult or impossible, which brings another conflict issue because of the increasing need for new houses. This will be discussed in the section on house building.

Summary (Table 5.2). In the early period of Hongkeng’s tourism development, house demolition was a source of major conflict, which lasted for a long time. Not only Hongkeng but also a nearby village was affected. The conflict was between peasants and the county and township governments. The county government had a decisive say on house demolition and the township government assisted. One important reason for resistance was local peasants’ dissatisfaction with the low compensation standard set by the county government. However, in the current law, there is no detailed stipulation

on house compensation in rural areas, and local government has a final say on compensation standards and the demolition process. Petitioning and blocking traffic were main resistance forms used by local peasants during house demolition, in which specific tactics, such as the usage of the vulnerable group and kneeling down were used.

Table 5.2 Conflict issue: House demolition

Conflict issue	House demolition
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus the county and township governments
Main Cause	Low compensation; Attachment to place
Resistance form	Traffic blockade; Petition
Period	From the beginning of the 1990s until around 2010

5.2.2 Conflict issue: Land expropriation

Here, land mainly means farmland and land expropriation conflict does not include house demolition. There are several aims for land expropriation. One is for improving or building infrastructure, such as roads along the river, parking lots around the village, squares in front of Zhencheng Lou, and the ticket center; another one is to build commercial facilities, such as the hotel and shopping street in *Yazidi*. From the petition letter provided by interviewee 37, we can see that land expropriation not only involved Hongkeng but also *Dabitou*, where most of their farmland was expropriated. The reasons for petitioning included low compensation and local government false promises.

The timeline of land expropriation is similar to house demolition, and began in the

1990s and lasted until around 2010. The land in front of Zhencheng Lou was firstly expropriated. Twenty years ago, it was a piece of farmland belonging to *Zhongsì* group (A villagers' group) instead of today's square shown in Figure 5.2. To develop tourism, the farmland was expropriated by local government, but the compensation was very low and local villagers were very discontented. As a result, the peasants of *Zhongsì* group refused to pay the public grain tax and some of them also refused the little compensation offered (Interviewee 9). Another example is the case of the building of a new road going to Hongkeng. For this, farmland in *Wannianao*, was expropriated by the county government at the unreasonable price of ¥6,000 (\$914.63) per *mu* (one *mu* equals 667 square meters) (Interviewee 1, 2, and 33). Local villagers were angry because the county government did not obey the law and compensated at a low price. The specific regulations on compensation of expropriated cultivated land are as follows.

According to the *Land Administration Law*, the compensation for cultivated land is made up of three parts: land compensation, resettlement subsidies, and compensation for young crops. Land compensation should be six to ten times the average annual output value of the expropriated land. Resettlement subsidies should be calculated based on the agricultural population needing to be resettled. The calculation method for agricultural population is dividing the area of the expropriated land by the per capita cultivated land of the unit. The subsidy standard for each person should be four to six times the average output value. The right of prescribing the compensation standard on young crops is authorized to local government.

In 2005, the Fujian Provincial Government issued a notice (No.: M. Z. W. [2005] 592: Notice on Unifying the Annual Output Value and Compensation Standards for

Expropriated Cultivated Land¹⁹) on detailed compensation standards of expropriated cultivated land. This notice stipulates that cultivated land is divided into five categories with different prices according to its average output value and the lowest one is ¥1,000 (\$152.44) per *mu*. In addition, a uniform standard is prescribed that the compensation including land compensation and resettlement subsidies should be 25 times the annual output value, and the compensation on young crops is one time the annual output value.

In accordance with this notice, Yongding County Government issued in 2009 (No.: Y. Z. Z. [2009] 375) the *Notice on Further Formalizing the Administration over Land Acquisition*. It divides Yongding into four areas with different compensation standards and Hongkeng is in the area with the lowest compensation standard. Meanwhile, cultivated land is classified into four categories different from the notice issued by Fujian Provincial Government.

Through the above three regulations, we can see that the notice issued by the Yongding County Government is not consistent with that prescribed by the Fujian Provincial Government. A strange phenomenon is that the real compensation standard [¥6,000 (\$914.63) per *mu*] on the land in *Wannianao* was not followed by either of them: Hongkeng villagers complained that unfair compensation also appeared in other land expropriation cases (X. L. Chen, 2011).

To defend their interests, some villagers even stood in front of an excavator to stop it working (Interviewee 33). This interviewee also phoned the Fujian Provincial Bureau of Land and Resources on this issue, and the relevant staff admitted that they had

¹⁹ The full text of this notice is available on the website of http://www.gov.cn/banshi/2006-01/05/content_148014.htm

known that and it was unreasonable but did nothing. Facing unreasonable and low compensation, another peasant directly refused the compensation and petitioned, but there has been no change (Interviewee 33).

Though local people did not agree with land expropriation, they could not stop it. Some people refused to sign their names to sell their land and held banners in protest (Interviewee 37). However, all these efforts were useless. For smooth implementation of land expropriation, a conference was held between representatives of *Liulian* Village and Hukeng Township Government on April 9th, 2009, in which seven promises were made in written form by the township government: (1) Land acquisition compensation. The compensation standard is ¥26,000 (\$3,963.41) per *mu*; (2) Social security of landless peasants. Peasants losing more than 70% of their land can enjoy an extra compensation with a minimum of ¥18,000 (\$2,743.90) per person; (3) Construction of a shopping street. The local township government is responsible for building a shopping street along the road near *Dabitou*; (4) Public service. The township government is responsible for the construction of street lights and a pavilion, and the transformation of the previous kindergarten into a senior center; (5) Construction projects. The township government should advise relevant agencies to employ local people for the construction of small projects on the expropriated land; (6) Treatment. *Dabitou* villagers should enjoy the same treatment as Hongkeng villagers;²⁰ and (7) Other. After land acquisition, the user of the land should pay extra compensation for public service and the township government helps to deal with it. But the township government did not keep its promises. Peasants of *Dabitou* began to petition but this was also useless. Interviewee 37 from *Liulian* said that young people could find jobs in cities after losing farmland, but what about the old people such as

²⁰ According to interviewee 37, it means that they should enjoy the same distribution of ticket revenue as Hongkeng villagers.

him with such little compensation?

Due to land expropriation, many villagers lost their land and farmwork. However, to survive, they found and/or created other jobs. Some of them chose to find jobs in the cities, and some of them chose to stay to find possible opportunities brought by tourism development. A couple of groups were formed after land expropriation. A brief introduction to these groups is given here. In front of the memorial archway (an entrance of Hongkeng), there is a group of villagers from *Liulian* Village who earn money through transporting tourists to nearby tourist spots on their motorcycles. In front of the current ticket center, the main entrance to Hongkeng, there is a group of female villagers from Hongkeng, who call themselves tour guides but their identification is not admitted by the authorities because they are not certified tour guides. They are called *yedao* (wild tour guides) by local government and the *Tulou* Company. Every day, they wait there and ask the passing tourists if they need a tour guide service. The number of this group varies according to tourist arrivals: in the boom season, there are dozens of people, while there are only several people in the slack season. To maintain a harmonious relationship, a rule of “first see, first serve” was formed among them. The one who sees a car firstly has the right to ask the tourists in the car if they need tour guide service. Near the exit of *Qiling* Highway, ten kilometers away from Hongkeng, there is a group of men from Hongkeng who are usually the husbands of the female group, and their job is to follow tourist cars to Hongkeng with their motorcycles. In this case, only the follower’s wife has the right to ask tourists if they need a tour guide service. Inside Hongkeng, there is a group of people who provide transportation service with their tricycles in and out of the village. In fact, all these activities are illegal and some of them are even dangerous. Though local government have taken such measures as confiscating their tricycles, it seems useless.

Summary (Table 5.3). As with house demolition, land expropriation began in the 1990s and lasted for a long time. Local government, particularly the county government, are the main conflicting party. The county government is the one who makes decisions on land expropriation and specific compensation standards. As the subordinate, the township government followed its superior's (the county government) orders, and assisted it to finish land expropriation. Expropriation without peasants' agreement and low compensation are two direct causes of conflict. Though there is a stipulation on the level of compensation, the local county government did not follow it, and even did not follow the regulation made by itself. To keep land expropriation going smoothly, the township government made written promises to peasants but refused to implement them. To protect their farmland and defend their rights, some peasants refused to sign, held protest banners, and even stood in front of an excavator to stop it working. Similar to house demolition, local people petitioned. However, this did not work.

Table 5.3 Conflict issue: Land expropriation

Conflict issue	Land expropriation
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus the county and township governments
Main Cause	Low compensation; Illegal expropriation; False promises from the township government
Resistance form	Petition; Standing in front of an excavator to stop it working; Refusing to pay agricultural tax; Holding bands in protest
Period	From the 1990s until around 2010

5.2.3 Conflict issue: House building

House demolition started as early as the 1990s and lasted for about twenty years. Though the county government expropriated a piece of land to resettle Hongkeng villagers, there are still many people who need new houses. However, it has not been allowed to build new houses since the beginning of the twenty-first century for the consideration of world heritage application and protection, which caused the issue of house building. From local villagers' point of view, there are two primary causes for this issue: the need for housing and unfair treatment. The former can be further subdivided into three sub-causes: increasing population, disadvantages of traditional *tulou*, and pressure of marriage in rural China.

5.2.3.1 Increasing population

The need for building new houses has existed for over ten years. A lot of villagers need and desire new houses, especially young people. Figure 5.4 indicates the change in population in the past ten years. With increasing population, the issue of house building is becoming more serious.

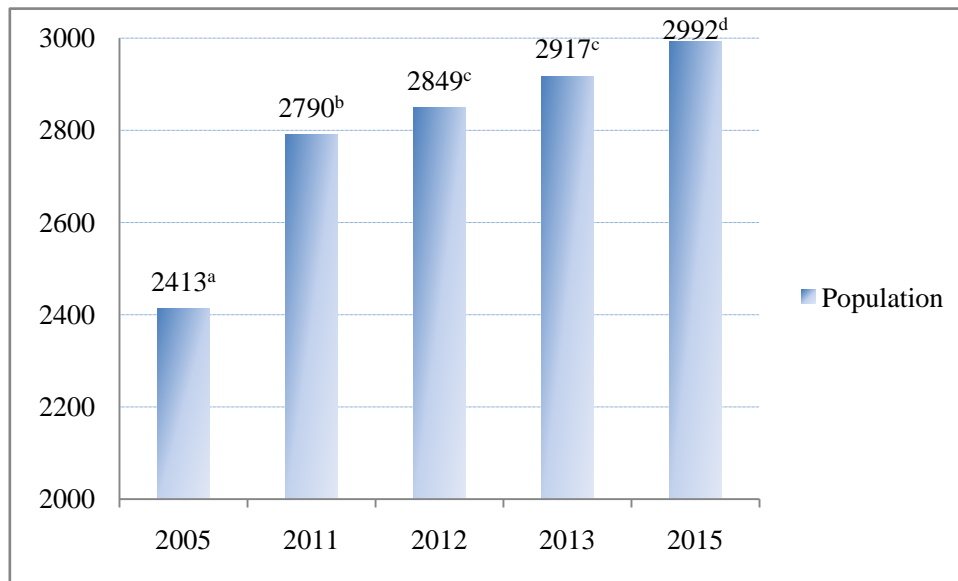


Figure 5.4 The change in population in Hongkeng

Source: the author.

Note. ^a The population in 2005 is cited from the State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China (2008). ^b The population in 2011 is cited from Yongding County Government (2014). ^c The population in 2012 and 2013 is cited from Hukeng Township Committee of the CPC (2014). ^d The population in 2015 is from a notice post on a wall of Hongkeng Village.

5.2.3.2 Disadvantages of traditional *tulou*

Even for people whose houses are big enough, they also expect to move out from *tulou* and live in new and modern houses. Why? Though *tulou* has the reputation of world heritage, it has many disadvantages. Firstly, there is no bathroom and toilet inside *tulou*, which are located in the open courtyard or outside of *tulou*, and it is not easy or not allowed to install them inside due to preservation consideration. Secondly, it is a wooden-structured building and the sound-proof effect is very bad. Thirdly, local people have the tradition of raising chickens and pigs (Figure 5.5), which made the public yard dirty and unhygienic. There are many households in one building and sometimes it is hard to get an agreement on how to live. Meanwhile, more and more young people want to have their own private space and do not want to live with other families. All of these factors promote Hongkeng people to move out from a *tulou*.

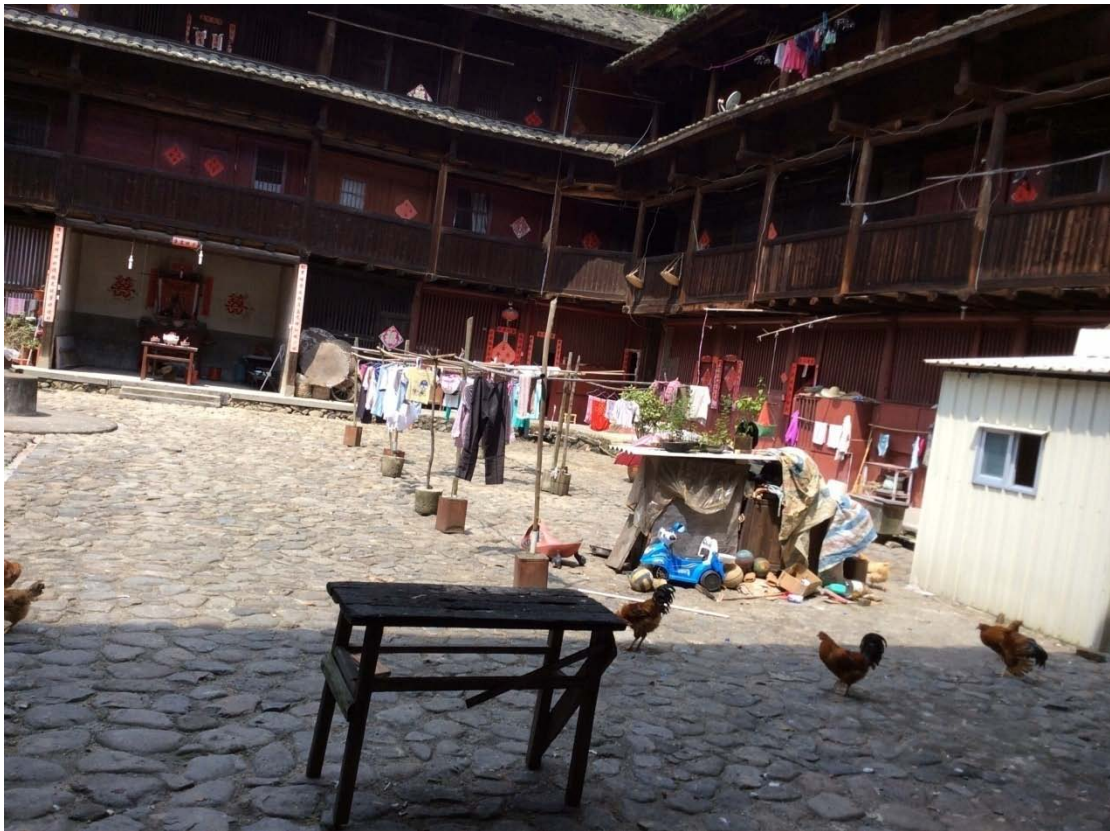


Figure 5.5 Chicken, chicken droppings, and a bathroom (the white one) in an open courtyard

Source: taken by the author (September 2015).

They (floor and ceiling) are made of wood. You can hear “bang, bang” in the second floor if someone lives in the third floor and the dust also falls down. All want to live in new houses and no one wants to continue living in the old houses.

(Interviewee 13, male)

No one likes living inside. (It is) small, stuffy, and dim. There are also fleas. Many people moved out and there are few people living inside.

(Interviewee2, male)

I stayed in *tulou* for three nights and experienced its inconvenience. The sound-proof effect was bad and you could even hear other rooms' conversation in your room. If you go to a restroom in the night, you have to walk downstairs and go outside even in the cold winter. Otherwise you have to prepare a chamber pot inside, which does not adapt to the demand of modern people, especially young people.

Many people have moved out of *tulou* and left them empty. These people do not want to spend money on their maintenance because they do not live there any more. Local government only cares about the condition of the seven *tulous* listed as world cultural heritage, and gives little attention to the rest of the buildings. Consequently, some of them are in bad condition and even in danger of collapse (Figure 5.6). As for buildings located on the main street, local government just did some decoration on the exterior due to the consideration of beauty and security and left the interior worsening (Figure 5.7 and 5.8). Although these *tulous* are not part of the listed property, they are located in the core or buffer zone and contribute to the integrity of the listed property. A buffer zone is an area surrounding the listed property and aims to give an added layer of protection to the property. According to *Operational guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, an integrated approach should be taken that the protection and maintenance should go beyond the listed property and include buffer zones and broader settings. Actually, several buildings that were more than one hundred years old, located in the core (buffer) zone of Hongkeng, were demolished for a tourist road. Some non-listed *tulous* continue deteriorating without much attention.



Figure 5.6 The exterior of a *tulou* in danger
Source: taken by the author (September 2015).



Figure 5.7 The exterior of Qingyuan Lou after decoration

Source: taken by the author (September 2015).



Figure 5.8 The interior of Qingyuan Lou

Source: taken by the author (September 2015).

5.2.3.3 Pressure of marriage in rural China

In rural China, there is a tradition that a new house is usually a must for a marriage. The imbalanced sex ratio at birth 123:100 (male to female) in rural China (N. Lü & Gui, 2007) further intensifies the contradiction. Finding a partner for a male in some rural areas is becoming an issue. Numerous media reports feature it, such as Y. Huang (2015), Branigan (2011), and Winter (2013). More seriously, cross-border human

trafficking happens continuously over the years. Many girls from such countries as Vietnam and Cambodia have been sold to China (Blomberg & Odom, 2015; Hong, Bélanger, & Duong, 2007; Moore, 2015). The difficulty in finding a wife also pushes up the price of betrothal gifts which usually include a new house. The intention of owning a new house for a young man is particularly strong. A new house may even decide whether a male can find a wife (X. L. Chen, 2011).

Here, many people need houses. The government does nothing about resettlement and does not allow us building houses (in the village) either. Some people have several children and need new houses for their marriage.

(Interviewee 5, female)

Who will marry you if you do not have a new house? Which girl does not want a new house? No one is willing to live in an old house. (Pointing to a man standing near her) Look at him. He is already 36 years old and has not got married due to the house issue.

(Interviewee 27, female)

5.2.3.4 Unfair treatment

Many villagers complained that they went to apply for approval to build new houses but were rejected with all kinds of reasons. According to interviewee 43 and 44, their houses were in danger and could not live in them again. They asked local officials to check the condition of their houses, and these officials also agreed orally that they could build new ones. However, they were not allowed to build when they had torn down the old one. The newly built part was also torn down. Lacking house is one

issue haunting local people but to make them angrier is the unfair treatment by local government.

They do not allow us to build houses, but there are still many people building new houses and they do not deal with them. The head and foot (the two ends) of the village is Macau and the middle is Mainland China²¹. People living at the two ends are rich and powerful and they are allowed to build new houses. Even people who have *guanxi* (connections) with a very small official can do it. Everyone should be treated fairly.

(Interviewee 27, female)

Even in the core zone of Hongkeng, new buildings were built in the very recent years, such as one building near Zhencheng Lou. Local people complained that why this big and high building could be built and used as a hotel to earn money but other people without houses could not build for living (Interviewee 48).

We want to support tourism development, but resettlement should be the bottom line. In rural areas, living conditions are poor. Who will marry you without a new house? Who wants to live in an old house with you? It is ridiculous.

(Interviewee 25, male)

When the issue of house building was mentioned, *guanxi* (connections) and

²¹ Under the policy of “one country, two systems”, Macau Special Administration Region of China maintains a separate political system from Mainland China and has a high degree of autonomy. It enjoys independent executive, legislative, and judiciary powers. Here, this villager’s words mean that compared with people residing in the middle of the village, people at the two ends enjoy some privileges.

corruption were two most mentioned words by peasants besides expressions of anger.

Previously, it was a small vegetable plot. Later, (the county government) wanted to build a new road and needed to expropriate it and part of my old house. After that, I built the current house. If they did not allow me to build a new house, I would not agree on the expropriation. Now it becomes strict. Previously, the government just turned a blind eye (to the phenomenon). People who had *guanxi* (connections) or bribed them were allowed to build.

(Interviewee 2, male)

One villager drove me to look at one building under construction (Figure 5.9) and emphasized that the owner of this building was very rich and was the brother of the current villagers' committee head.



Figure 5.9 An “illegal” building in peasants’ eyes

Source: taken by the author (September 2015).

The conflict over house building has been ongoing over ten years. During the period, local government promised many times to address this issue but they always support through words not through actions. In a reply to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) during the period of application, the Yongding County Government said that it would move qualified residents to *Yazidi* to release the heavy population pressure, and this decision was included in the Thematic Conference Summary of Yongding County Government (April 24, 2007) (The State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China, 2008). On the one hand, the county government realized the need for house building long time ago; on the other hand, it also promised to expropriate land in *Yazidi* to resettle qualified Hongkeng residents. However, the fact is that the county government expropriated the land in *Yazidi* successfully with false promises, but it was not for Hongkeng peasants' resettlement. On this piece of land, many facilities such as a new ticket center, an administrative building, a hotel, and a huge parking lot were built. In addition, a large shopping and leisure center, named Fujian *tulou fengqing jie* (Charming Street) sits there. It covers almost 90,000 square meters, includes 19 monolithic structures and is claimed to be the largest commercial real estate in Fujian Province (Y. L. Liu & Chen, 2013). However, there is no place left for local villagers.

I went to have a look in September 2015. There were almost no tourists there, and many stores were empty. Local people were quite dissatisfied with the county government's acts. The government tried to sell the commercial real estate to local peasants in a high price instead of drawing a piece of land for peasants to build houses by themselves (Interviewee 25). They complained that they could build a house in a lower cost than buy the commercial real estate. Actually, local people are used to the false promises of local government. In October 2015, one villager sent me a message that the township government had conducted a survey again about house building, which was only regarded as another lie by them. Here, it can be seen that local

government do not really concern itself with local people's real needs but only focus on pursuing their economic interests.

Facing the pressure of the need for housing and the discontent with unfair treatment and false promises, conflict on house building often happened in the past and is still going on. Forms of resistance, such as petitions, closing gates, and beating gongs in public are used. To get the right to build new houses, interviewee 20 petitioned many times. However, it did not work. The villagers of Zhencheng Lou closed the gate a couple of times and refused tourists entrance (Interviewee 48). Zhencheng Lou is the most visited *tulou* and they wanted to use this strategy to apply pressure to local government. However, there are many households in Zhencheng Lou, and some of them do not lack for houses. Meanwhile, any closure will affect their business. Hence, the closures usually do not last long, and it seems that the technique does not work.

The villagers of Qiansheng Lou also used tourists as a tool to pressure local government. They were given a verbal promise that they could build a new house. However, local government ate their words and tore down part of their newly built building, which made them very angry (Interviewee 43 and 44). It is believed that the more the participants, the bigger the pressure (Y. S. Cai, 2010, p. 33; X. Chen, 2009, pp. 464, 466). The idea of "a big disruption leads to a big solution, a small disruption leads to a small solution, and no disruption leads to no solution" exists in many peoples' minds (Y. Chen, 2013; Ding, 2001; Z. M. Han, 2012; Zhonggong Sichuan shengwei zuzhibu ketizu, 2001, p. 46). Hongkeng is not an exception. Instead of a couple of people, over ten people organized to beat gongs and hold bands with words of unfairness in front of Zhencheng Lou in 2015 when hearing that some high-level leaders would come soon (Interviewee 43). Their aim is to pressure local officials using tourists and higher officials. They succeeded in getting attention from local officials and got their approval to build new houses.

Interviewee 47's house was torn down twice. He did not give up but was also scared that it might be torn down again. He realized that spring festival holidays might be an opportunity to construct because relevant government offices were closed on those days. He used this period and finished a one-storey house with a temporary ceiling. Later, he was warned that his house would be torn down again if he continued building.

Summary (Table 5.4). With the increase of population, the pursuit of modern life, and the pressure of marriage, building new houses has become urgent for Hongkeng villagers. But the title of world heritage means that they are not approved. However, at the same time, some people have built new houses successfully even in the core zone, which made the others angry. The county government expropriated a piece of land and promised to spare one part for resettlement. However, it was just lip service. Instead of resolving urgent needs, local government built commercial facilities, which fully exposed its lack of concern for local villagers. Due to these reasons, the relationship between Hongkeng villagers and the county and township governments has been very tense. A series of conflicts has constantly occurred. Several specific resistance forms were used here, such as petitions, beating gongs in public, and closing gates to refuse tourists.

Table 5.4 Conflict issue: House building

Conflict issue	House building
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus the county and township governments
Main Cause	Increasing house need with no resettlement and no approval of building in Hongkeng; Perceived unfair treatment; False promises from local government
Resistance form	Petition; Beating gongs in public; Closing gates to refuse tourists
Period	From around 2003 until now

5.2.4 Conflict issue: Vending rights

Before being listed as a world heritage site in 2008, some villagers worked as vendors illegally along the street but the number was not big. More tourists have come to this mountainous village, and more villagers have become vendors after attaining the title, including young people, especially after 2010. This phenomenon lasted until 2012. After that, young people gradually quit the job, left the village, and transferred to other industries (Interviewee 1). Generally speaking, the number of vendors increased gradually until 2012 but began to decline afterward.

There are three important time points: 2008, 2010, and 2012. In 2008, Hongkeng was listed as world heritage, which increased its fame and attracted a lot of tourists. In 2010, the former president Jintao Hu visited Hongkeng, which accelerated its development. In 2012, the anti-corruption campaign was carried out in the whole of China, which inhibited public servants travelling on public expenses, and the number of tourists also declined. As a result, young vendors left for big cities to find jobs.

Local villagers were not allowed to vend along the street until 2013. According to a local government official, they set up stands everywhere without order and made the street dirty (X. L. Chen, 2011), which would affect the experience of visitors negatively. In the perspective of local government, how to attract and keep more tourists and bring more revenue are their major concern. Why were the local people insisting on setting up stands after experiencing a series of conflicts?



Figure 5.10 Uniform stands and an old vendor

Source: taken by the author (September 2015).

I counted the number of stands in March, 2016 and there were around 69 along the street. However, about one-third of stands lay idle due to few tourists. They have the following characteristics based on my observation and interviews.

The first characteristic is “women and old people”. Most of them were women and the elderly. Some of them were over 70, even 80. In China, the average life expectancy is

74.83 years old (The Sixth National Population Census Leading Group Office, 2012).

People vending here are all old people. I'm 72. That one is over 80 (pointing to the one who has a stand on the opposite side of the street), and the one near him is his brother and he is also over 70 (Figure 5.10). The villagers vending here are all old people or women. Young people do not do this. Yesterday, I sold just ¥5 (\$0.76); and she (pointing to the person who is talking with another vendor) has undergone big surgery, and also said she sold very little today.

(Interviewee 16, male)

The second characteristic is “no special skill”. These people do not have special skills or their health conditions do not allow them to do other jobs. Vending along the street may be the best option for them.

I'm 40 years old. In 2009, I was hit by a car and the driver ran away. It cost me over ¥60,000 (\$9,146.34) totally. Look at my leg (showing me her leg). Due to this accident, I cannot do heavy work and cannot do farming work any more. Then, I began to vend. I have done this for around 4 years.

(Interviewee 22, female)

Another vendor next to interviewee 22, once a good carpenter in Hongkeng, experienced a gas poisoning accident, which killed his wife and he could not do carpentry again though he was brought back to life (Interviewee 15).

The third characteristic is “low-income”. Many of them belong to low-income groups. Due to land expropriation, the area of farmland per capita is very limited (Interviewee

2 and 16). And much of the existing farmland is far from their homes (Interviewee 1). Because of age or other reasons, such as disability and sickness, these vendors do not have other income sources but have to support themselves and/or a big family. According to interviewee 24, there are five people in her family including her mother-in-law and two children. Her husband is one-eye blind and her leg is broken. Life is tough and she has a lot of burden. Although the daily income as a vendor is low, these people do not give up their vending business because many of them do not have any better options. Due to the severe homogeneity of tourist souvenirs in China, the sales in Hongkeng were not satisfying. I interviewed a few of them arbitrarily, and found that sometimes their daily income was even less than one dollar. Due to too low income, some people, especially young people, have turned to other industries.

Previously, I worked outside, then I came back because working outside was not easy and the income was also low. Five or six years ago, I began to vend on the street. After Jintao Hu's visit, there were a lot of tourists. Since Jinping Xi went to office, the number of tourists has decreased greatly. Previously, they travelled with public expenses and did not bargain. We also did not ask a high price. Nowadays, tourists often bargain. A bamboo hat is just ¥10 (\$1.52) but they bargain ¥7 (\$1.07) or ¥8 (\$1.22). How can it be so cheap? Now the business is not easy. See, I have not sold one thing in the whole morning! If some restaurant wants me to work there, I would like to go.

(Interviewee 23, female)

The elderly in rural areas have poor living conditions though there has been some improvement in recent years. According to research by the World Bank (F. Cai, Giles, O'Keefe, & Wang, 2012), on average, rural elderly are poorer than rural young people and poorer than urban elderly, and they are more likely to remain poor. There is a

striking difference between urban elderly and rural elderly in sources of support. A pension is an important source for urban elderly, but very few people in rural areas can enjoy it. The World Bank research also notes that labor income and family support (by adult children) are still the primary sources of support for the elderly in rural China. Rural people in their sixties are likely to support themselves through labor income, whereas people over 70 depend more on support from their children.

In Hongkeng and *Liulian*, the villagers lost most or even all of their farmland due to land expropriation. Farmland in rural areas has been a security guarantee, and losing land means the loss of security. So, it is easy to understand why they have to find a way to make it up. To some extent, vending is a proper replacement. They can work in the village without going far away and it does not need much capital and special skills. Unlike western countries, there was no national rural pension system in China before 2009, and taking care of the elderly is the legal duty of children. Whether the elderly can get support and how much support they can get depends on the economic status and filial piety of their children. Interviewee 49 is 69 years old and has been vending along the street for over ten years. Her husband was palsied for six years and passed away in 2009. Currently, she is often taken care of by her daughter because her son is not filial. However, her daughter's life is also tough. To reduce her daughter's burden, she still vends although she is too old to carry the stuff to the designated vending area. In 2009, the central government started a pilot national rural basic pension with ¥55 (\$8.38) each month for each person over 60, and local government can advance the standard according to actual conditions (State Council, 2009). The basic pension in 2014 and 2015 was ¥100 (\$15.24) (Yongding County Human Resource and Social Security Bureau, 2015) and ¥110 (\$16.77) (Yongding County Human Resource and Social Security Bureau, 2016) respectively in rural Yongding County. The amount is low, and does not reduce residents' worries about their future significantly. Though the number of tourists has declined in the past years, the elderly or women still vend.

Before 2008, there were not many vendors and inspections were not frequent and strict either. However, due to the application for world heritage listing, vending along the street was banned and the inspections became frequent and strict. A serious conflict happened in 2008 in which a vendor was beaten by local city inspectors. Here, it is called a “vendor incident”. Later, Hongkeng people blocked the entrance. In addition, other conflicts between local people and the city inspectors often happened until 2013 (Interviewee 16, 17, 19, 20, and 34). Stands of the vendors were often thrown away, damaged, or confiscated by the city inspectors.

Previously, it was not allowed to vend. They threw your stuff away. This kind of board, they destroyed it. They destroyed mine and I went to get another one. They are dogs and temporary workers (a satire on their job).

(Interviewee 16, male)

To prevent stuff from being confiscated, peasants might obstruct city inspectors’ work.

Previously, it was not allowed to vend along the street. They (city inspectors) threw vendors’ stuff away or confiscated it directly. Once, they wanted to confiscate a female peasant’s stuff and put it in their law enforcement vehicle. Then, she crawled under the vehicle directly which was made unable to move.

(Interviewee 17, female)

To avoid being caught, a game of cat and mouse often took place.

When they came, we began to package and run. The first (person’s stuff) may be

confiscated, but we have run away. When they left, we came back again.

(Interviewee 34, male)

After many years' constant resistance either by blockade or maintaining their vending jobs despite of the ban, Hongkeng villagers were finally allowed to vend along the street in 2013 by the county government. To make it look beautiful and tidy, uniform stands were provided (Figure 5.10). To some extent, the vending issue has thus been addressed by local government.

Summary (Table 5.5). Before 2008, there were not many vendors and the inspections were not frequent and strict either. After the inscription as world heritage, the county government took strict measures to ban peasants vending along the street. In the peak of tourist development in around 2011, many young people became vendors but they quit as the number of tourists declined. There was still a group of villagers who kept their business, though they were expelled by the city inspectors and the revenue per day was very low. They have the following characteristics: female, old or disabled, no special skill, and low-income. The conflict was between local peasants and the city inspectors. The vendors' stuff was thrown away, damaged, or confiscated directly. Therefore, fights and quarrels often happened, including a traffic blockade. It was local government' lazy governance and ignorance of the weakest group that caused the conflict. After many years' consistent resistance, Hongkeng people were finally allowed to vend.

Table 5.5 Conflict issue: Vending rights

Conflict issue	Vending
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus the county and township governments
Main Cause	Most of them belong to the vulnerable group: the elderly, women, disabled, no special skill, and low-income; Land expropriation made them lose their farmland
Resistance form	Traffic blockade; Running away when encountering investigation; Obstructing city inspectors' work
Period	Starting before 2008 and ending in 2013

5.2.5 Conflict issue: Ticket revenue distribution

The distribution of benefits from tourism has become a focus of social concern (Zuo, 2016, p. 12), among which ticket revenue distribution is a particularly important one because it easily becomes a point of conflict. Ticket revenue distribution is usually called *saoraofei* (disturbing fee) or *ziyuanfei* (resource use fee) by local villagers. Three main reasons lead to this issue. Firstly, the arrival of tourists disturbs local people's normal life; secondly, the *tulous* derive from their ancestors and are their private property, but the *Tulou* Company is using their resources; thirdly, to develop tourism, they sacrificed many things, such as land and house, and the company is supposed to share the benefit with them.

Since the Fujian *Tulou* was listed as world heritage in 2008, a lot of tourists have flooded into Hongkeng Village, which was thought by local villagers to have disturbed their normal life seriously.



Figure 5.11 The blockage along a hallway

Source: taken by the author (September 2015).

Take Zhencheng Lou as an example. In the past, the hallway in each floor was connected and residents could move freely, but now it is blocked and separated into several parts. Every day, some tourists visit Zhencheng Lou in the early morning when most residents of the building are still sleeping. It is a wooden-structured building and sound-proofing is bad, so the sound of going up and down stairs affects their normal sleep. Therefore, they installed a door (Figure 5.11), or put other stuff in the hallway and separate it into several unconnected parts to stop tourists from passing by their rooms.

The county government and the *Tulou* Company used local people's property to earn

money, but paid nothing as compensation. It was thought to be unfair and local villagers were dissatisfied. However, their voice was just ignored. Finally, the anger broke out when a vendor was beaten by the city inspectors.

He (Interviewee 17's husband's cousin) was a vendor and sold something near the memorial archway, which was not allowed by the city inspectors. Then, he quarreled with them and was beaten. Afterward, his mother knocked a gong from the village head to the village end to call for villagers. Soon a lot of villagers went out, enclosed the city inspectors, and did not allow them to leave. Then, the resource use fee came after the villagers' resistance in this way.

(Interviewee 17, female)

The *Tulou* Company and the county government used local villagers' private property and affected their normal life, but took it as granted and ignored their reasonable appeal. The "vendor incident" provided local villagers with a good opportunity to resist. With the call of the beaten villager's parents, Hongkeng villagers came out, enclosed the city inspectors, and blocked the entrance. After this incident, the county government began to distribute the ticket revenues (Interviewee 1, 2, 9, 18, and 35). The distribution plan is: 8% of the ticket revenues goes to Hongkeng villagers (Yongding County Tourism Industrial Development Committee, 2014a), 2% to the villagers' committee, and ¥2 (\$0.30) for each ticket (around 2% of the ticket revenues) to the township government (Yongding County Tourism Industrial Development Committee, 2014b). The amount distributed to each villager is listed in Table 5.6. About this distribution, there are two aspects local people are dissatisfied with, one is the distribution rate, and the other one is the possible corruption behind it.

Table 5.6 Ticket revenue distribution per villager in Hongkeng from 2008 to 2015

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Amount(¥)	87	370	713	698	982	791	661	624
Amount(\$)	13.26	56.40	108.69	106.40	149.70	120.58	100.76	95.12

Note. The data in this table is from Hongkeng villagers.

Local people commonly complained that it was too little. When mentioning the distribution percentage, they usually took an example of Mount Wuyi where local people obtained a higher distribution percentage of ticket revenue (Interviewee 9, 18, 25, and 46).

Last year (2015), we just got ¥620 (\$94.51). There are 365 days per year and less than ¥2 (\$0.30) for each day. How can I live (with such little money)? ... Mount Wuyi is a world heritage site, so is Hongkeng; Mount Wuyi is a 5A-rated (tourist attraction), so is Hongkeng. (But) Our distribution is not enough for living expenses.

(Interviewee 9, male)

Though many villagers emphasized that the ticket revenue distribution originated from the “vendor incident”, no one knew how the distribution percentage was decided, and they were never asked to have a conference to discuss it or to sign to agree with it. Many interviewees even could not answer the exact percentage correctly. One important reason is the lack of freedom of information on village affairs, including the amount of total ticket revenues. The general manager and director of the Yongding Tourism Administration said:

It is impossible to publicize the ticket revenues to the villagers and it is not necessary either. ... 12% of the ticket revenues will be returned to the township government. ... Whether the township government distributes it to the villagers according to the rules, it is not their business. ... Each ticket is taxed and you can check in the tax bureau. (Qu, 2011)

The *Tulou* Company refused to publicize the amount of ticket revenues under the veil of secrecy. Actually, Hongkeng is not a unique case, and this phenomenon appeared in many other tourist spots, such as Xidi (X. M. Zhang, 2006). Does the villagers' committee know the exact amount? In 2013, a notice in terms of the total ticket revenues of 2012 was posted on a wall and the proof of tax invoice was also attached (Figure 5.12). However, it was the first time since 2008 according to interviewee 18. It happened in the term of the villagers' committee head of ZY who was given high profile by Hongkeng villagers.

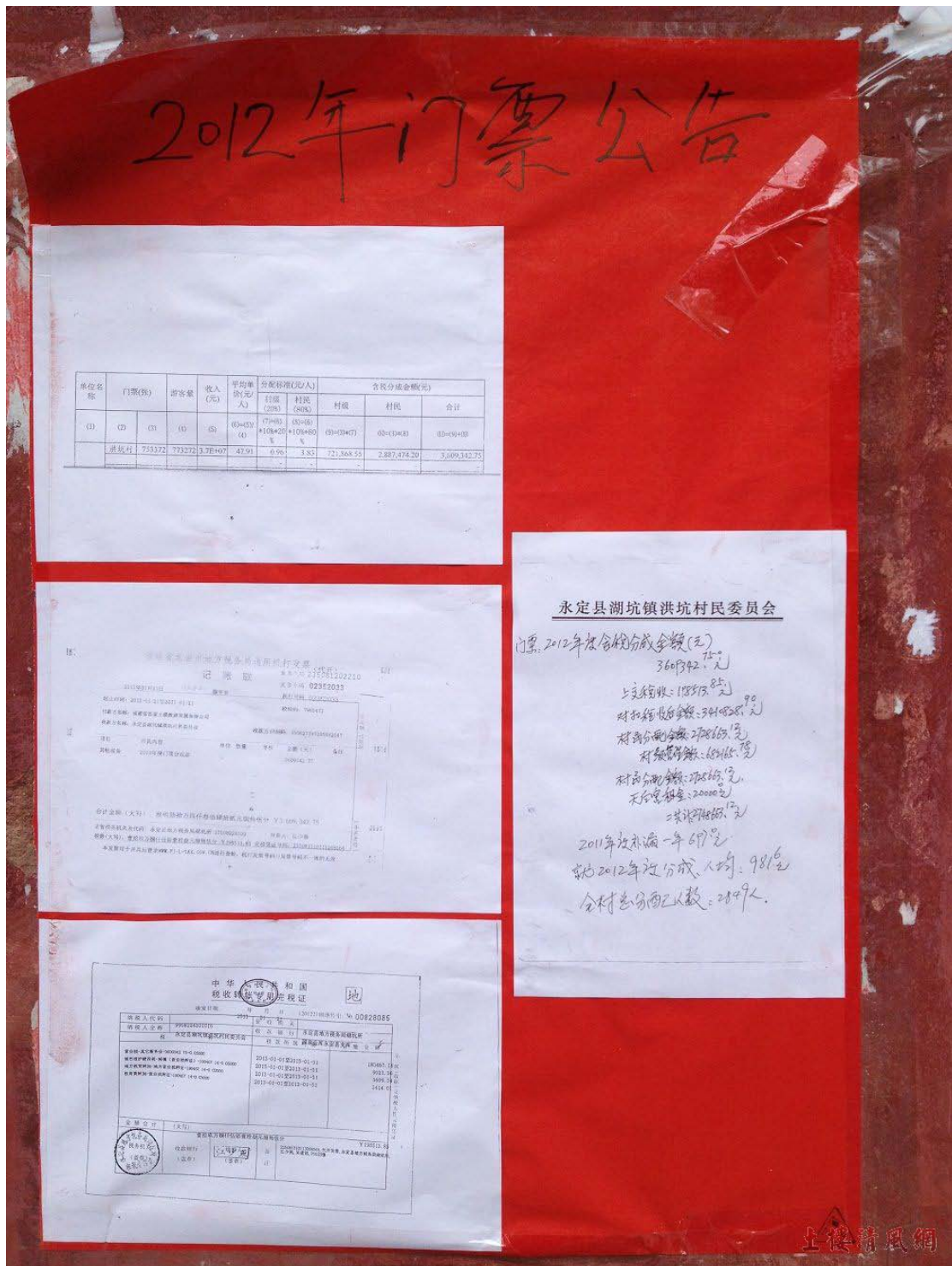


Figure 5.12 Notice on the ticket revenue distribution in 2012

Source: "Notice on Ticket," (2013).

According to interviewee 50 and interviewee 51, they wanted to publicize village

finances in detail but it was rejected by a village accountant with the excuse that it would involve too many village cadres. Publicizing complete and correct village finances is still difficult and ordinary people have no way to get relevant information. It is not unique in Hongkeng, but is a common issue in Rural China (O'Brien & Li, 2006). Many villagers thought that they were too powerless to do anything and it was not an individual affair but involved all Hongkeng villagers. Due to the psychology of powerlessness and helplessness, local people prefer to go their way than do battle with the villagers' committee and local government.

I do not know how the ticket revenues are distributed and its exact percentage. Each villager is given the same share, so I do not try to know more information. The villagers can do nothing and I do not care about it. I just focus on my work.

(Interviewee 11, male)

It is also common among villagers who do business in Hongkeng. One interviewee said:

I cannot tell an exact amount. There are five people in my family. They give us a bankbook and the money is transferred to that bankbook which is kept by my father. There is only several hundred *yuan* (Chinese dollar) each year, so I do not care.

(Interviewee 1, male)

We do not care about it. Just several hundred *yuan*, we can earn it within several days.

(Interviewee 10, male)

Due to the non-transparency of village affairs and distrust of local government and the villagers' committee, local villagers considered that there was corruption on the distributional amount based on their own information source and perceptions.

Some people working in the *Tulou* Company let it out to us that every year we should have been distributed more than ¥1,500 (\$228.66), now we just got over ¥600 (\$91.46).

(Interviewee 20, male)

I heard from my manager that we should have been distributed over ¥1,000 (\$152.44).

(Interviewee 18, male)

Since the visit of former president Jintao Hu in 2010, a lot of tourists have flooded into Hongkeng and the Party Secretary of Hukeng Township once said publicly to local people that everyone could be distributed more than ¥1,400 (\$213.41) that year, but actually it was only ¥700 (\$106.71) (Interviewee 50).

ZY (Interviewee 50), the former villagers' committee head, was given laudable comments and won many villagers' trust (Table 5.7). So, the distribution of year 2012 (when she was in office) was commonly thought as fair and was often used as a reference when making a comparison with other years. According to local people, the number of tourists in the first two years after Jintao Hu's visit was much higher than the year of 2012, but the money distributed in 2012 was higher than the previous two

years (Interviewee 6 and 18). Therefore, villagers doubted it seriously.

When she was the villagers' committee head, there were not many tourists but each villager got over ¥700 (\$106.71). Before her, there were more tourists but we did not get more than that.

(Interviewee 6, male)

Table 5.7 Hongkeng villagers' comments on ZY

Interviewee	Comment
6	She is the best villagers' committee head since the Mao Zedong (former chairman of China) era.
8	The villagers' committee is useless. (But) The previous one (ZY) did very well. She is the first one in our village who really cares about the villagers after the founding of China.
15	She is not corrupt.
19	ZY is a good villagers' committee head and very clean-handed.
20	She is a good villagers' committee head.

Petitions are a main resistance form used by local people on this issue. Interviewee 18 is an active petitioner. He even did not graduate from a primary school. He worked as a plumber but had to give up this job after one of his eyes went blind in an accident. Now, he is a security officer of a *tulou*, being responsible for reporting to the *Tulou* Company if there is any hidden danger and damage. The salary is very low, only ¥300 (\$45.73) per month. He thought that the distribution of the ticket revenues was not fair and there was corruption. Therefore, he lodged complaints with relevant authorities many times in 2009 and 2014.

In her term of office, ZY publicized detailed information about the ticket revenue

distribution and attached a relevant proof, tax payment voucher, which was viewed by interviewee 18 as the most powerful evidence to prove if there existed corruption in the villagers' committee and the township government. Interviewee 18 went to the Yongding Tax Bureau and tried to get a copy but was rejected. With only primary school education level, he even did not know how to use computer. Yet, he tried to use the Internet to search useful information and prepare petition materials. To get Hongkeng villagers' authorization, he collected 400 peoples' signatures, which was a big number considering that many people were working in big cities at the time. The raising of money was voluntary and he refused to accept any donation more than ¥100 (\$15.24). In 2014, he started his journey of petition in February and the process lasted around ten months. He lodged complaints with authorities at different levels, including Yongding County, Longyan City, and Fuzhou (capital of Fujian Province). He went to many Party and government organs, such as the Bureau for Letters and Visits, People's Procuratorate, Public Security Bureau, People's Congress, and the Discipline Inspection Committee.

After a series of petitions, he received several government files. However, he did not believe the explanations and the numbers provided by the county and township governments. Apart from Hongkeng, the distrust of the data provided by local government happens in other tourist spots, such as Mount Wutai and Likeng (which will be discussed in chapter six).

Mount Wutai is a world cultural heritage site which was inscribed in 2009. According to the contract signed between the local government and Shaolin Monastery, 30% of the ticket revenues was distributed to Shaolin Monastery (J. S. Ma & Dai, 2014). However, the local government refused to calculate the amount of ticket revenues based on the officially publicized tourist arrivals, and explained that the official number was only for propagation and the real number was less than that (L. Wu,

2012). This explanation may be true because local officials sometimes exaggerate their achievements to leave a good expression to the masses and higher officials (e.g., Q. B. Wang, 2010), but due to distrust of local government, Shaolin Monastery installed another ticket checking machine to monitor tourist arrivals (J. S. Ma & Dai, 2014; L. Wu, 2012). When I asked the Yongding County Government about the number of tourist arrivals to the area, they also admitted that the officially publicized number was incorrect, and refused to provide the real number in the name of trade secrets. L. Yang (2007) note that official statistics related to economic development or industry indicators are often larger than reality for political and methodological reasons.

According to a survey mentioned in Ling Zhao (2004a; 2004b), only 2% of petition cases in China are resolved. Similarly, interviewee 18's efforts did not bring the result he expected. Before the journey of petition, he thought the problem could be resolved very soon and did not expect that he would rush about these government agencies and spend much time. Although there is a gap between the central government's commitments and local officials' implementation, O'Brien and Li (2006, p. 47) note that peasant activists often overestimate this opening, and trust high authorities excessively. After almost one year's rush, he was thoroughly disappointed and gave up. During the interview, he hoped I could publish their story in a newspaper. Maybe that is his last hope to resolve the problem.

Summary (Table 5.8). A lot of tourists flooded into Hongkeng after the inscription. While the local people's normal life was disturbed, they did not benefit much from the resulting tourism development. The "vendor incident" was a fuse which caused a traffic blockage directly, and the ticket revenue distribution issue indirectly. However, local villagers did not participate in the making of decisions on distribution and they were dissatisfied with the distribution percentage. Meanwhile, due to the lack of

freedom of information, corruption was commonly perceived. This conflict was mainly between local peasants and local government, especially the county government. Petitions were mainly used in this conflict issue, and the process was tough and long. It lasted around ten months in 2014 with no success.

Table 5.8 Conflict issue: Ticket revenue distribution

Conflict issue	Ticket revenue distribution
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus the village committee, and the county and township governments
Main cause	No distribution; Lower percentage of distribution; Perceived corruption
Resistance form	Petition
Period	From 2008 until now

5.2.6 Conflict issue: Village elections

According to the distribution plan decided by the county government, 8% of the ticket revenue is distributed to Hongkeng villagers and another 2% goes to the villagers' committee that has power to decide how to use it. It is this 2% that triggered fierce election campaigns and caused conflict (Interviewee 1, 7, 33, and 51).

Before the distribution of the ticket revenues, no one wants to be the villagers' committee head. After that, the campaign becomes fierce because there is much money to control. Vote buying is very common and each candidate does that. Hongkeng villagers working outside come back before each election because they can get money from candidates. The candidates even go to Xiamen to pick them up and then send them back (for free). Many people in our village are working in Xiamen. Everyone coveting that position wants to rake in money. Everywhere is

the same in China.

(Interviewee 1, male)

To be elected as the villagers' committee head, bribery is very common in Hongkeng (Interviewee 1, 2, 7, 33, 50, and 51).

The government intervenes in elections and candidates canvass (in an illegal way). ... (Candidates) pick them (villagers working in cities) up or reimburse the transportation fee. ... The elected villagers' committee heads in recent years are not good. Dining and wining at public expenses is very common. The relationship between them and (ordinary) villagers has been very tense. We do not care whether they dine and wine at public expenses, which is very common in China, but they need to do something practical for the villagers.

(Interviewee 7, male)

The fierce and illegal elections were not only performed by bribery but also in other ways. In one election, to avoid much spending in buying votes, the candidates decided to cast lots to determine who would be the only candidate (Interviewee 51). In another election, a clash erupted at the election scene in which a candidate was beaten and splashed with urine by another candidate (Interviewee 6 and 15).

Another aspect local people were very dissatisfied with is the role local government plays in village elections. Local government are thought to meddle with elections, and want to pick candidates who would be compliant.

The government interfered with village elections and took over.

(Interviewee 7, male)

ZY's case is an example of government interference. She was elected as the villagers' committee head in 2012 after experiencing the urine-splashing incident. But she was removed from office by the township government due to the construction of her house without permission (Hukeng Township Committee of the CPC, 2014; Yongding County Government, 2014). Many people thought it a pretense.

The villagers' committee is useless. The previous villagers' committee head did very well, struggled for villagers' interests, but the government regarded her as an obstinate person.... The government removed her from office using the excuse of her newly built house (without permission). The house has been torn down and the fine has also been submitted. Why did they still remove her from office? That is just an excuse. She wanted to distribute the remaining office expenses budget to the villagers. She was very clean-handed. Government officials ate in restaurants but she never reimbursed it. There was no free dining and wining provided to them at the time. Previously, the money went into their pockets directly. (But when she was in the office) she wanted to distribute the money (to the villagers). Everyone was happy about it. She was the first one in our village who really cared about the villagers after the founding of China. It is difficult to be a good person. She is highly spoken and admired by the villagers. She asked for our advice whether 60% (office expenses) should be distributed to the villagers. Of course, we all agreed.

(Interviewee 8, male)

According to interviewee 50, she was dismissed because of a village conference. She heard that Hongkeng Township Government had decided to establish a new

committee to manage the 2% of the ticket revenues. She thought it was a means to take away her right and take the money from the village. She did not want this part of money to be taken and eaten by the township government and decided to assign the money to the villagers directly. Therefore, she planned to let the villagers decide how to deal with the money via a village conference. According to the *Organic Law of the Villagers' Committees*, they have the right to decide how to deal with the money because it belongs to village affairs. However, she was threatened with dismissal by the township government if she held a conference (Interviewee 50) but she still insisted on holding it. It was claimed that she was dismissed immediately after sending out a notice to Hongkeng villagers (Figure 5.13). Luckily, she recorded the threatening remarks which can be regarded as evidence of a wrong doing of the township government. Otherwise, her new house might have been torn down according to her.

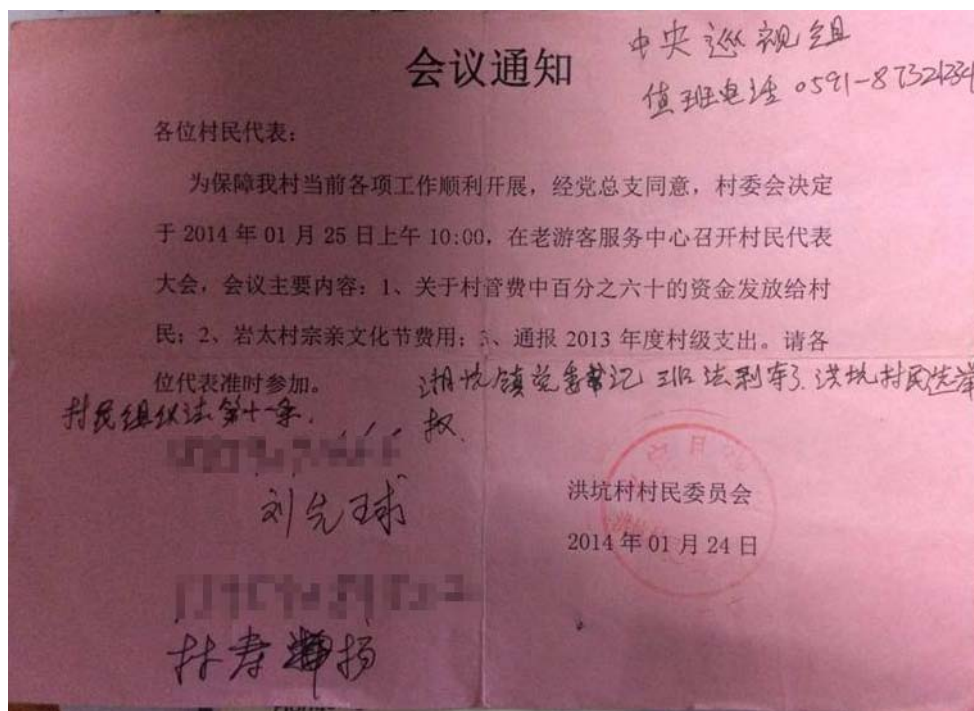


Figure 5.13 A conference notice
Source: provided by a villager.

On the village conference notice, there are two lines of words written by hand which are “村民组织法第十一条” (Article 11 of the *Organic Law of the Villagers' Committees*) and “湖坑镇党委书记非法剥夺了洪坑村民选举权” (the Party Secretary of Hukeng Township deprived Hongkeng villagers' election right unlawfully). What is the content of Article 11 and who has the right to dismiss the elected villagers' committee head?

Article 11 The villagers' committee head, vice villagers' committee head(s), and members of a villagers' committee shall be directly elected by villagers. No organization or individual may designate, appoint, or replace any member of a villagers' committee.

According to the *Organic Law of the Villagers' Committees*, no organization and individual has the right to designate, appoint, and replace the villagers' committee head. There are only two exceptions. Firstly, he/she is dismissed by the villagers themselves through voting; secondly, he/she is incapable of legal transaction or given criminal punishment, which is stipulated in Article 16 and 18 respectively.

Article 16 A group of at least one-fifth of the villagers who have the right to elect or at least one-third of the villagers' representatives may propose the recall of members of a villagers' committee. ...

A proposal for the recall of members of a villagers' committee shall be adopted only if at least half of the villagers who have been registered for election cast their votes and at least half of the voters vote for it.

Article 18 The office of a member of a villagers' committee who loses capacity of legal transaction or is given criminal punishment, shall be terminated

automatically.

In a reply to interviewee 18 [No.: Y. H. W. F (2014) 45] (Hukeng Township Committee of the CPC, 2014), Hukeng Township Committee of the CPC (Hukeng Township Party Committee) used the word “suspension” instead of “dismissal”, and explained that this decision concerning ZY was made according to a notice issued jointly by the Organization Department of Yongding County Committee of the CPC (Organization Department of Yongding) and Yongding Civil Affairs Bureau (No.: Y. W. Z. Z [2004] 48, Notice on Establishing the Practice of ‘Take Blame and Resign’ among Village Party Branches and Villagers’ Committees). On the one hand, in the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committees*, there is no saying of and stipulation on “suspension” so the township Party Committee is suspicious of playing the “edge ball”. It is suspension in name but dismissal in effect because she was not reinstated to the end of her term. On the other hand, the notice that Hukeng Township Party Committee followed has flaws. For example, it stipulates that village cadres will be dismissed by the county government according to “relevant regulations” if they refuse to resign. Firstly, “relevant regulations” are not described in detail in this notice. Secondly, local government has no right to dismiss villagers’ committee members according to the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committees*, so the regulations between the notice and the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committees* are contradictory. The former was issued by a government agency and a Party department at the county level while the latter was issued by the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, a main legislative body. Following the principle that laws at the higher legislative level have priority over that at the lower level, the regulation issued by the former should be disregarded. Furthermore, the aim of the latter is to achieve “self-governance” based on its legislative spirit and principle so both “suspension” and “dismissal” made by local government are against them.

Dismissal of the villagers' committee head unlawfully is not a unique case, and it often happens in other areas. According to a survey in Qianjiang, 57% of elected village leaders were dismissed by local government within a three-year term from 1999 to 2002 (G. M. Huang & He, 2002). Some people have lodged complaints with higher authorities but this did not work. Some sued local government in the courts but the courts refused to hear them. The *Administrative Litigation Law* was passed in 1989 and went into effect in 1990. It was revised in 2014. However, the dismissal of the villagers' committee head is not within the scope of cases accepted by the court in each version. In other words, using law to correct the wrongdoings of local government and defend their basic right does not work. Therefore, it is hard for the elected villagers' committee head to serve villagers when under pressure.

To be against the township government's intervention in village affairs, interviewee 18 and other villagers lodged complaints with higher authorities in 2014. The following part is excerpted from their petition material:

ZY, the villagers' committee head of Hongkeng, is an impartial and upright comrade, who served the villagers diligently and conscientiously. But such a good person was removed from power by Hukeng Township Party Committee and there was no document from (Yongding) County Committee (of the CPC) on her dismissal. Please return us the election right and justice.

Before the petitions in 2009 and 2014, interviewee 18 planned to take legal action and went to law firms to ask for help but was rejected. In China, suing the government in the courts is regarded as sensitive and risky and it is difficult to win.

With the popularity of the Internet, some villagers tried to spread their stories via the Internet to get attention.

I worked as a tour guide. Once I guided an official and he/she advised me to use Wechat and write a comment. I did that and wrote a comment: *Xi Dada* (Jinping Xi) likes to catch corrupt officials, but why didn't he catch corrupt officials in Yongding. I do not know whether he has seen my comment.

(Interviewee 27, female)

The election issue was not only limited to between local villagers and the candidates. Local government also got involved and played a negative role. Due to bribery, corruption, and interference, many people are very disappointed.

All the village cadres are corrupt, and no one is clean-handed. Bribery is very serious during village elections and all the candidates give money to the villagers. No matter who is elected, the result is the same and there is no change. Therefore, I give my vote to those who give me money the most.

(Interviewee 1, male)

Summary (Table 5.9). Two percent of the ticket revenue is distributed to the villagers' committee, and it is this part of money that caused fierce village campaigns and a series of conflicts. Bribery, cheating, and violent conflict happened in this process. The township government played a negative role and contributed to the conflict, such as intervening in village elections and village affairs. To defend their rights and interests, local people lodged complaints with different authorities. However, there is no change. Before petitions, some villagers planned to take legal action but failed to brief a lawyer due to the sensitivity of the case.

Table 5.9 Conflict issue: Village elections

Conflict issue	Village elections
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus the villagers' committee and the township government
Main Cause	Perceived corruption of the villagers' committee; Buying votes; Interference in election by the township government
Resistance form	Petition
Period	From 2008 until now

5.2.7 Conflict issue: Entry restrictions

Yongding residents can enter Hongkeng village free of charge with their *shenfenzheng* (Identification cards), as can their friends or relatives. To prevent tourists from pretending to be local villagers' friends or relatives, the *Tulou* Company requires the villagers to go to the entrance to pick them up in person and accept possible questioning from the security guards. Many villagers complained about this troublesome process. In the perspective of Hongkeng villagers, Hongkeng is their home and they have lived here for generations. Their friends and relatives could visit freely previously and they did not have any duty to pick them up and accept their inspection (Interviewee 2 and 31). The attitude of the security guards in the process of inspection made them uncomfortable and angry.

We Hakka people are very hospitable. When our relatives and friends come, they (the security guards) always ask many questions and we need to do a lot of explanation. We are angry about that. For example, my son has many colleagues and friends. When they came, the security guards asked many questions, not just asking my son but also his friends. So we all hate them.

(Interviewee 15, female)

I have a comrade-in-arms, working in Fujian TV, who came to visit me. They (the security guards) did not allow him to enter and interrogated us separately. Was it violating human rights?

(Interviewee 20, male)

In addition, the county government issued a regulation that the villagers could not drive their cars inside from 10am to 4pm in ordinary days, and from 9am to 5pm during national holidays. Though there are tour cars arranged to transport the villagers during this period, they are dissatisfied with its low running frequency and long waiting time, which is also regarded as bringing much inconvenience to them (Interviewee 8 and 35).

Lastly, the villagers think they are treated unfairly. This can be explained from two aspects: one is the rent-seeking behavior of the security guards. Sometimes the security guards use their power to pursue unjust enrichment. For example, some villagers might help tourists evade tickets (with the help of the security guards), and then they share the gain with the security guards. Some people earn money through entry but others need to be interrogated, which makes local people angry (Interviewee 20) and heightens the tension between local people and the security guards.

They (the security guards) are very corrupt. ... Sometimes they can even bring one whole tour group inside (without buying tickets).

(Interviewee 15, female)

Interviewee 9 was one of them who often helped visitors evade tickets to earn money.

You have to provide them (the security guards) with wine and dine and bribe them. They are very corrupt. I only treat and bribe their chief.

(Interviewee 9, male)

The unfair treatment is also reflected in the entry of cars. Local people complained that if cars were banned, all the people should be treated equally but actually they are not. According to interviewee 2, when his daughter came to visit him, she was not allowed to drive in. He just waited outside. After seeing several cars enter without being stopped, he became very angry and quarreled with the security guards. About this regulation, some people choose to wait and observe and if they find that they are treated unfairly, they would ignore the regulation (Interviewee 1 and 2).

He (a villager) told me (Interviewee 1) that sometimes the security guards did not let him in when he came back (from outside). He just waited there and if he saw some other car enter he would follow that car. If he was stopped, he would fight with them.

(Interviewee 1, male)

In the second field study in March 2016, I carried out observations at noon on March 10th for about half an hour and found that all the cars (over 10 cars) were allowed to enter easily.

The relationship between local villagers and the security guards (*Tulou* Company) has been very tense. A security booth was burned (X. L. Chen, 2011 and Interviewee 8),

the telephone lines were damaged (X. L. Chen, 2011) and the villagers and the security guards fought with each other physically (Y. T. Han, 2014; Interviewee 1, 2, 8, 30, 31, and 33). During the spring festival of 2016, a fight occurred due to the entry issue and some villagers were taken into custody (Interviewee 47).

In September 2016, another villager fought with a security guard and was detained for five days (Interviewee 33). Tourism brings a lot of inconvenience to local people, and they do not want to cooperate with the *Tulou* Company and local government (Interviewee 35).

The security guards' attitudes are bad. We even want to beat them to death. Once, one of their guards was beaten half dead by some unknown person(s) in the night. A security booth was also burned up. The tourism company never considered the villagers.

(Interviewee 8, male)

We all hate them. They were often beaten before. They are like dogs.

(Interviewee 15, female)

The negative impression security guards leave with the villagers is further heightened through their attitudes on tourists. For example, a serious conflict happened between tourists and security guards in 2015 (Interviewee 2, 9, 15, 17, and 31). Initially, it was a parking fee dispute between a security guard and tourists. But soon dozens of security guards joined and the tourists were beaten badly and sent to the hospital. It is not a unique case in Hongkeng (Interviewee 15, 17, 20, and 31). One villager commented:

The security guards fought with tourists several times. How could you fight with tourists? Tourists are a god.

(Interviewee 20, male)

Summary (Table 5.10) The entry issue is mainly between Hongkeng villagers and the *Tulou* Company's security guards. To prevent people from escaping buying tickets, the *Tulou* Company took strict measures which brought a lot of inconvenience to local villagers. The county government issued a regulation on cars which also brought inconvenience. However, local people thought that Hongkeng was their home and they should not have set so many regulations. The inconvenience, the rude attitudes, and the unfair treatment, plus little benefit made the villagers angry and they are not willing to cooperate. The violent behavior by the security guards to tourists also left a very negative impression. All these intensified the negative relationship between residents and the security guards. As a result, conflict happened from time to time. A security booth was burned, the telephone lines were destroyed, and some security guards were beaten.

Table 5.10 Conflict issue: Entry restrictions

Conflict issue	Entry restrictions
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus the <i>Tulou</i> Company
Main Cause	Much inconvenience (picking up their friends and relatives in person, questioned by the security guards, and the regulation on cars); Unfair treatment
Resistance form	Petition; Fight; Burning a security booth; Damaging telephone lines; Beating security guards
Period	From 2008 until now

5.3 Peasants' Perceptions of the Conflicting Parties

Scott (1985) notes that it is important to explore the consciousness and intention or thought of counteraction to understand peasant resistance. To have a good understanding of what happened in this village and the logic of peasants' resistance, the perceptions of local peasants on other conflicting parties will be explored in this section.

5.3.1 Perception of the *Tulou* Company

The relationship has been very tense between local villagers and the *Tulou* Company. Burning a security booth, damaging telephone lines, and beating security guards are good examples. Awful service, overstaffing, and endless receptions are three main aspects of local villagers' perception of the company.

Service is one important aspect often mentioned by local people.

The service of the staff is very bad. Once, I led tourists to buy tickets, they were very cold to tourists. ... Another time, one foreigner and his wife booked my hostel. There are several entrances to the village. Initially, they wanted to enter from one entrance and were rejected, and were required to buy tickets and enter from another one. When they got to another entrance, they looked like drowned rats with sweat all over. (After seeing that) the ticket seller laughed at them, which made them very angry.

(Interviewee 1, male)

The tourism company is a rotten legacy. No matter how much you do, it is the same. The service is very bad and they (staff) expect no tourist to come²². In the busy noon period, only one ticket window was open and the rest of the staff went to have lunch.

(Interviewee 8, male)

The fights between the security guards and tourists discussed previously also indicate the awful service of this company.

The second obvious perception of the *Tulou* Company is overstaffing but few jobs for local villagers.

There are too many employees in this company. The children of some leaders or other people who have *guanxi* (connections) are employed. For example, it

²² *Tulou* Company is a county-owned enterprise. Here, it means no matter how much the staff members do, they get the same salary. And if no tourist comes, their work will be easier.

employs three hundred people to do what one hundred people can finish.

(Interviewee 7, male)

Only local villagers who have *guanxi* (connections) may be employed and (actually) the *Tulou* Company does not want to hire people from our village.

(Interviewee 9, male)

Although there is no evidence to verify how many employees are Hongkeng residents, one thing is true that they never hire security guards from this village according to a vice manager in charge of the security. His reason is that they might collude with other Hongkeng villagers and disclose their information to them.

While it seems that the post of the security guard does not require special skills, it is not easy to get it if you do not have *guanxi* (connections). Interviewee 21 is a security guard. To some extent, his words are consistent with the views of local people.

As long as you do not make big mistakes, you will not be fired. Furthermore, (the security guards) are recruited through *guanxi* (connections), how can they be fired? Some people's positions (who introduce the security guards to the company) are even higher than our general manager. How can you (*Tulou* Company) fire them? The general manager is also the director of (Yongding) Tourism Administration. ... My father has worked in the government for many years and is very familiar with our general manager. If someone wants to work here, he/she needs *guanxi* (connections).

(Interviewee 21, male)

Many employees of the *Tulou* Company are Yongding residents. Having frequent contacts with them, it is not difficult for Hongkeng villagers to know how some employees were recruited (Interviewee 13).

Endless official receptions are another impression felt by Hongkeng villagers. Table 5.11 shows the number of tourists derived through official receptions. In 2011, almost forty thousand people visited Hongkeng in the form of the official reception²³. Jinping Xi, the president of China, came into office in 2012 and conducted a large scale anti-corruption campaign soon afterward. A series of relevant regulations was issued, such as the *Provisions of Party and Government Organs on Administration over Domestic Reception* jointly issued by the General Office of the CPC and the General Office of the State Council in 2013. The number of official receptions declined significantly in the following years. For these people, they did not need to buy tickets (Yongding County Tourism Industrial Development Committee, 2012), and might be treated with public expenses. Therefore, Hongkeng villagers were dissatisfied with the *Tulou* Company and even expected it to be bankrupt as soon as possible (Interviewee 1, 9, and 13).

²³ The official reception here means that *Tulou* Company, a county-owned enterprise, receives people from Party and government organs who visit Hongkeng in the name of study, communication, conference or investigation.

Table 5.11 The number of people belonging to official receptions

Year	Ticket (Number)	Tourist arrivals	Official reception (Number)	Ticket revenues (8%)	The lost revenue ^d
2011 ^a	628,125	667,130	39,005	¥1,917,257.34 (\$292,264.84)	¥265,390.02 (\$40,455.80)
2012 ^b	753,372	773,272	19,900	¥2,728,663.12 (\$415,954.74)	¥135399.60 (\$20,640.18)
2013 ^c	473,495	487,858	14,363	¥2,271,364.93 (\$346,244.65)	¥97,725.85 (\$14,897.23)

Note. ^aThe data in 2011 are from Yongding County Tourism Industrial Development Committee (2012) and Hukeng Township Committee of the CPC (2014). ^b The data in 2012 are from Yongding County Tourism Industrial Development Committee (2013) and Hukeng Township Committee of the CPC (2014). ^c The data in 2013 are from Yongding County Tourism Industrial Development Committee (2014a) and Hukeng Township Committee of the CPC (2014). ^d The lost revenue = Official reception × Ticket price (¥90) × Distribution percentage (8%) × [1 – Tax percentage (5.5%)].

5.3.2 Perceptions of the villagers' committee and the government

The villagers' committee and the government are important conflicting parties. To have a good understanding of these conflict issues, it is necessary to investigate local people's perception of them. Table 5.12 lists the comments of interviewees.

Table 5.12 Villagers' perceptions of the villagers' committee and government

Interviewee	The villagers' committee	The government
1	All village cadres are corrupt.	
2	All the candidates want to rake in money.	The number of corrupt officials being caught is still small after Jinping Xi went to office.
3		The central policy is good, but it does not work in the county government and the township government.
4	It is hard to comment.	
5		The township and county government are a union and both prey on us. All crows under heaven are black (It means that all officials are corrupt). The central government is good. However, it is hard to reach here and only high (corruptive) officials were caught.
6	The village cadres spent money on dining and wining.	
7	The village cadres often dine and wine at public expenses.	
8	The villagers' committee is useless. But, last one did well. All the money was eaten by them (the village cadres). All crows under heaven are black.	The central government is good. But root cadres are not.
9	The villagers' committee is useless. They all listen to the township government.	The mountain is high and the emperor is far away (It means that the central government has little influence over local affairs). The policies from the central government are good, but local government officials do not follow. Where there are policies from above, there are counter-measures from below. The county government is several billion in debt and run out of the money on dining and wining. (Local) government is

Interviewee	The villagers' committee	The government
		like a bandit.
10	The villagers' committee is useless. We do not care. They are neither good nor bad.	(The existence of the township government and the county government) is not necessary.
13	Every day hundreds of official receptions. We know nothing about the village finances.	The mountain is high and the emperor is far away. I hope that all corrupt officials can be caught.
15		(The local) Government is like a bandit.
16		Policemen are like dogs and wolves.
18	All the money was eaten by the villagers' committee.	All bureaucrats shield each other in wrongdoings. (The central) inspection group is also deceptive. All are deceptive.
19	Being the villagers' committee head one time, you cannot use it (black money) up in the rest of your life.	The township government officials often dine and wine in our village.
20	Compensation for production and living (Distributed ticket revenues) was eaten by the village cadres. They are corrupt.	The township government is very corrupt. Jinping Xi is good to us, but local officials are very corrupt.
23	The village cadres are corrupt.	The township government is corrupt.
27	During elections, they (candidates) all buy votes.	China is corrupt, and bureaucrats shield one another in wrongdoing.
29		(The Local) government officials are very corrupt. They suppress peasants.
35		We are dissatisfied with the local government officials. They just suppress you.
36		They are like rats. The local government is not good. Only the central government can help.
37		We are very dissatisfied with the measures (taken by the local government). (The

Interviewee	The villagers' committee	The government
		local) government is a liar.
39		The county government is not good. The higher (the government), the better (they treat people).
43		The central policies are very bright, but local government is like devils.
45		The county government ate too much (money).
50	The village cadres ate too much (money).	The central policies are good, but they are not implemented by local government.
51	A lot of money was spent on receptions. The villagers' committee owed much money to restaurants. How can a village have so many receptions?	They (the local government officials) all raked in money.

About sixteen villagers gave clear views on perception of the villagers' committee. And all of them commented the villagers' committee negatively, except interviewee 4 who thought "it is hard to comment". Among their comments, the words indicating "corrupt", such as "dining and wining", "eating money", and "receptions" were used. A total of twenty-three villagers gave comments on local government and all these comments were negative. Similarly, words indicating "corrupt" and "cheating", such as "liar", "raking in money", and "corrupt", were often used. When a government is often described as a liar, it means that distrust has been formed between local people and the government. On September 15th 2015 a poetry recitation contest was held in Hongkeng and some policemen came to maintain order. A two-year old baby pointed to a policeman and called him a "bad guy" (Interviewee 8). The perception of local government in Hongkeng is similar to a survey by a high-level government official on villagers' perception of a local police station in Hebei Province, in which no villagers gave a positive comment (Xu, 2016). In contrast, when mentioning the central

government, all gave good comments except interviewee 18 who petitioned many times. His case is consistent with J. R. Yu's (2005) research on petitioners, many of whom changed their views on the central government after lodging complaints in Beijing. From their comments, we can see that the villagers' committee and local government left a bad expression on local villagers but they still trust the central government. Though local government are not further classified in this study, to some extent, this result is consistent with a popular saying that has spread in rural areas for a long time, which is "the Centre is our benefactor, the province is our relative, the county is a good person, the township is an evil person, and the village is our enemy" (A. Chen, 2010; O'Brien & Li, 1995, p. 778; H. A. Zhang & Meng, 1993). Similar sayings can also be observed, such as "the scripture is good, but bad monks recite it incorrectly" (X. B. Lü, 1997, p. 132; O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 41), and "policies from higher levels are upright (zheng); policies from lower levels are crooked (wai)" (L. J. Li, 2004, p. 232). In addition, the above result is verified by a couple of empirical studies (X. Chen, 2009, p. 6; L. J. Li, 2004). Whether it is the villagers' committee or local government, Hongkeng villagers' common perception of them is "corrupt". To have a good understanding of the corruption situation of China, the Corruption Perception Index of China (Table 5.13) and a set of number on China's anti-corruption campaign are given as references. As of the end of 2015, 68 officials at the ministry level had been found to be corrupt, and the average number per year after 2012 is more than 10 times higher than that before 2012 (G. Q. Wu & Qian, 2015). Based on the above analysis, it appears that corruption in China is severe and this may contribute to the conflict issues seen in Hongkeng.

Table 5.13 China's world ranking in the Corruption Perception Index

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Rank	70	72	72	79	78	75	80	80	100	83	79

Source: Transparency International (n.d.).

5.4 Discussion

5.4.1 The evolution of conflict

In section 5.2, seven specific conflict issues were identified: house demolition, land expropriation, house building, vending rights, ticket revenue distribution, village elections, and entry restrictions. Figure 5.14 illustrates explicitly the timeline of these issues and their intrinsic relations.

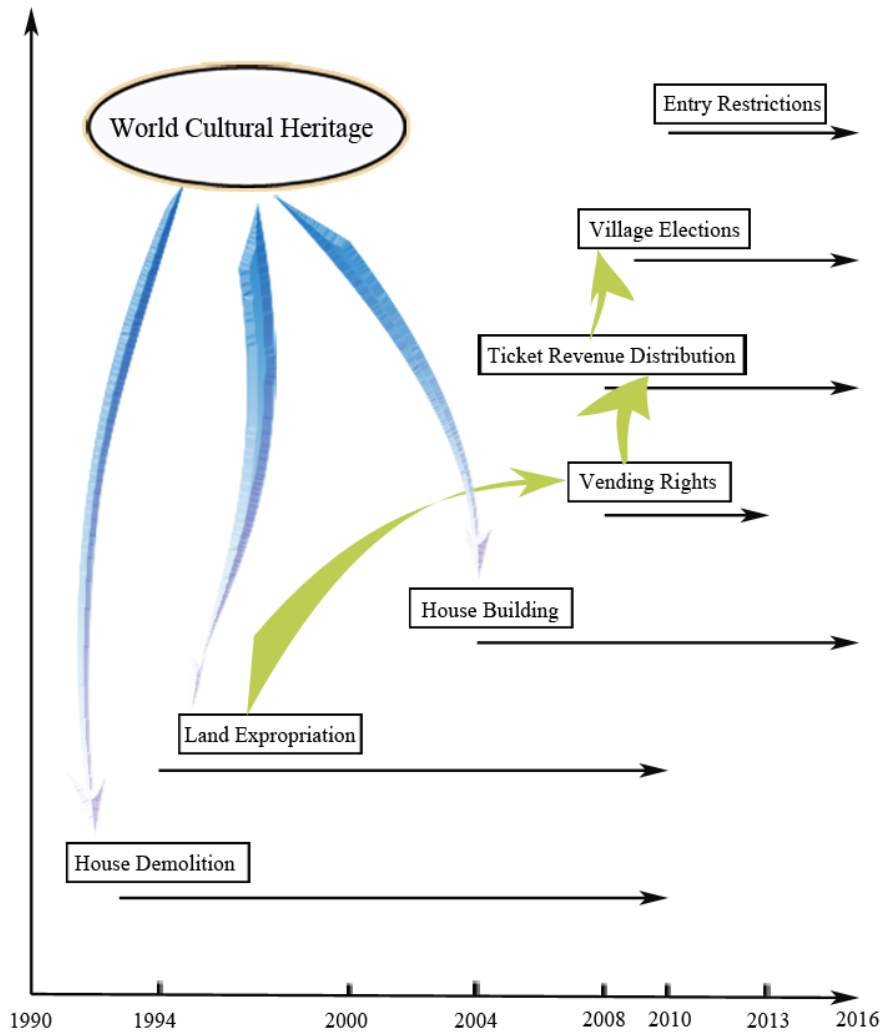


Figure 5.14 The evolution of conflict

Source: the author.

Though Fujian *Tulou* was inscribed as world heritage in 2008, the preparation for registration by the Yongding County Government dates back as early as the 1990s, when a special agency was established for its application (J. R. Zhu & Yu, 2008). The whole application process lasted over ten years. The first three conflict situations started before its successful inscription. To apply for the title of world heritage and to build relevant infrastructure, Hongkeng villagers' houses were demolished, land was expropriated, and new houses were not allowed to be built, which triggered a series of conflicts. However, after successful inscription, the conflicts around the three issues did not disappear. To facilitate tourism development and generate profits from years' hard work on the application, a new scale of construction, including commercial facilities, office buildings, and infrastructure, was implemented, which caused further continuous conflict. These conflicts were not limited to Hongkeng but also spread to a nearby village.

As shown in Figure 5.14, conflict about land expropriation and house demolition ended around 2010. However, it may appear again in the future if local government plans to start a new round of construction and continues to ignore local villagers' interests. A strict regulation on construction was imposed on core and buffer zones of the world heritage site, so it is almost impossible for the villagers to build new houses without *guanxi* (connections) in Hongkeng. The draconian policies of local government (no resettlement measures and restriction on building new houses) made the house building issue worsen. The current evidence indicates that the need for houses remains as the main cause of the house building issue. If the current situation continues without any improvement, serious resistance might happen in the future under the stimulus of economic interests. Likeng and Zhaoxing are two striking examples which will be discussed in detail in chapter six.

Another obvious feature shown in Figure 5.14 is the concentration of conflicts around

the inscription year of 2008. Land expropriation made local villagers lose their farmland, a security guarantee. Young people can move to big cities for work but this is not realistic for the vulnerable group. The influx of tourists brought them a business opportunity, vending, which does not need much capital and special skills. However, local government prohibited them from doing vending business in the name of beautification to attract tourists. Instead of finding a way to benefit both sides, they just banned it. As a result, a game of cat and mouse happened between the vendors and local government, which did not end until 2013 with the concession of the latter. A serious “vendor incident” occurred in 2008, which caused a traffic blockade, and also contributed to the birth of the ticket revenue distribution indirectly. Local government started to sell tickets as early as the 1990s. Initially, the Yongding Tourism Administration was in charge of ticket sales. Then, the *Tulou* Company took over after its establishment in 2007. Local government has been using Hongkeng villagers’ private property to get revenue but refused to share the economic benefits with them before the “vender incident”. Later, although 8% of the ticket revenue was finalized to be distributed to Hongkeng people, they were dissatisfied with the percentage as well as the amount, which was perceived to be less than what they were entitled to receive due to corruption.

Meanwhile, 2% went to the villagers’ committee, which aggregated the competition for the villagers’ committee head. Previously, very few people were interested in this position, but since the 2% distribution, election campaigns have become fierce, and a series of illegal election activities has occurred, such as buying votes and threats. The interference in village affairs by the township government intensified the conflict and made it more complicated. In addition, a series of regulations on entry set by the county government and the *Tulou* Company also brought a lot of inconvenience to local people and caused continuous friction. From the evolution of the conflict issues shown in Figure 5.14, we can see that each issue is not isolated. The application for

world heritage and preservation of *tulou* after successful inscription caused house expropriation, land expropriation, and house building issues. A direct result of land expropriation is the loss of farmland, an important security guarantee for peasants, which promoted the appearance of the vending issue. The “vendor incident” triggered a traffic blockade and promoted the distribution of the ticket revenues indirectly. The distribution of the ticket revenues intensified the competition for the villagers’ committee head and caused the village election issue.

Farmland is a peasants’ basic means of production, and houses are a peasants’ basic means of livelihood; the distribution of the ticket revenues to the world heritage item is basic compensation for using local villagers’ private property; vending is a direct response to losing farmland; the right to vote is the peasants’ basic political right, and fair elections are the foundation of fair economic distribution; and the entry issue is more an expression of dissatisfaction with the above conflict issues. Accumulated discontent over the years was released when the villagers met with arrogant security guards. These issues are related to local peasants’ basic needs and rights and influence their normal life. In Scott’s (1985) words, many of them belong to bread and butter issues. Therefore, if these basic needs and rights are infringed seriously or deprived thoroughly, local peasants would try to resist in their own way. The big influence of these issues on local people’s life indicates that they are the most possible sources of conflict and they would also appear in other places if they are ignored by local government. Generally, these conflict issues can be classified into three main categories: conflict based on economic interests, such as land expropriation, ticket revenue distribution, and vending; conflict based on basic social needs, including house demolition, house building, and entry restrictions; and conflict based on basic political right, such as village elections. According to previous analysis, we know that the latter two categories are also related to economic interests to some extent. For example, low compensation is an important cause for the conflict of house demolition

and many conflict incidents during the village elections are due to the distribution of the ticket revenues.

At different world heritage sites or in different tourist villages, the specific conflict issues and their evolution process might have a small variation. Firstly, not all of these issues appear at each site. If a village initiated tourism long time ago and does not have many modern buildings which are inconsistent with traditional ones, house demolition might not exist or not be so severe. If local government is forward-looking and does reasonable arrangements for villagers at the beginning, such as allowing vending, relevant conflict would not possibly happen. Secondly, some other issues not covered in Figure 5.14 might appear. For example, a struggle to get control of the management right happened at another world cultural heritage site, Hongcun, and lasted for a couple of years (please see chapter six). Thirdly, the sequence of appearance of conflict issues may be different. For example, though a riot happened due to the issue of house building in Zhaoxing, the vending issue has not appeared because there are few people vending along the street (please see chapter six). Though differences exist in specific conflict issues, conflict over economic interests is probably the most common.

In chapter three, common conflict issues in rural China were discussed. Fang (2013) notes that peasants' burden of tax, rural land acquisition, and urban demolition were three top reasons for people's resistance after the opening-up and reform in 1978. Since the abolishing of agricultural tax for peasants, the importance of land expropriation and house demolition have exceeded that of heavy tax, and have become the main conflict issues in rural China (J. R. Yu, 2005a). According to the State Bureau of Letters and Visits, land acquisition and urban demolition are two of top five fields of complaints lodged by the masses (Y. J. Li & Wei, 2007). Land expropriation and house demolition, two major issues in rural China, also appeared in

this tourist village. The difference is that in rural China, these issues mainly appeared in the process of urbanization while in this tourist village, they are manifested because of the world heritage status and tourism development. J. R. Yu (2005a) notes that illegal and compulsory acquisition and low compensation have contributed to the conflicts in rural China and similar things also happened in Hongkeng. In addition, common conflicts in rural China also included village elections, cadre corruption, and village finances (G. Z. Yan, et al., 2011), which were also found in Hongkeng.

Among the conflict issues, only the vending issue has been resolved. Land expropriation and house demolition have ended temporarily. The rest of the issues (House building, Ticket revenue distribution, Village elections, and Entry restrictions) still remain. If there is no improvement on these six issues, bigger conflicts may happen in the future, especially among the issues of house building and ticket revenue distribution. The village election issue is not limited to Hongkeng, as it often happens in other rural areas. Since 2008, there have been five villagers' committee heads (including a temporary one) but no one works more than one term (ZY was dismissed by the township government). And local villagers commonly have negative perception of the villagers' committee heads and members except ZY. Hongkeng villagers realized that no matter who is in the office, he/she would be corrupt and abusive because "all crows under heaven are black" in their words. As a result, some expressed tolerance on their corruption and some voted someone who gave them money the most. Conflict over village elections in Hongkeng will continue in the future and the competition on the position of the villagers' committee head will be still fierce. The 2% ticket revenue is likely to be a fuse of future conflict. In terms of the issue of ticket revenue distribution, local people have been complaining the low distribution percentage. Meanwhile, the need for housing has become urgent. These two issues may also trigger serious conflicts in the future. Based on fieldwork in the village, there were no clear leaders who wanted to lead peasants to resist collectively.

The next possible big conflict might also rely on a fuse similar to the “vendor incident”. But the vending issue has been resolved so the fuse is likely to be some other individual conflict with local government, such as tearing down newly built houses or friction between local people and the *Tulou* Company.

5.4.2 Core conflicting party and causal analysis

According to section 5.2, parties participated in these conflicts include Hongkeng peasants, the *Tulou* Company, the villagers’ committee, and local government (Yongding County Government and Hukeng Township Government). The main conflicting parties involving each conflict issue with local peasants are depicted in Figure 5.15.

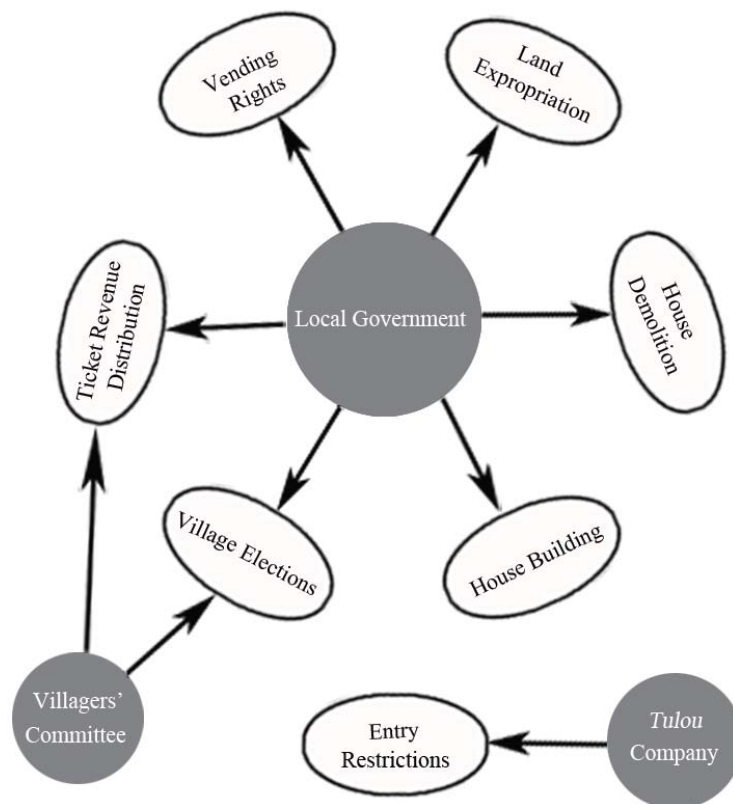


Figure 5.15 Main conflicting parties in each issue with local peasants
 Source: the author.

Local government is the most important party that participated in all the conflict issues with local peasants except the entry issue. The villagers' committee was involved in the issues of village election and ticket revenue distribution while the *Tulou* Company was associated with the entry issue. Why is local government the most important conflicting party? In most of these conflict issues, only local government has the authority and ability to implement and finish relevant tasks. The *Tulou* Company and the villagers' committee do not have the authority according to the law. Specifically, it was the county government which made decisions on house demolition and land expropriation. According to section 5.2, many peasants did not want to move out, did not want their land to be expropriated, or were not satisfied with low compensation. But they were powerless to stop the actions of local government. During land expropriation, a large group of policemen were deployed to maintain the order. In local peasants' eyes, this was a threat (Interviewee 2 and 37). It was the county government that issued a series of regulations to restrict local people to building houses. Also, only local government has the authority to examine and approve the application for building new houses.

For the consideration of preservation and conservation of world heritage and its surroundings, banning the construction of new houses is reasonable to some extent. The key is how to resettle the peasants who need houses. Only local government has the law enforcement power to deal with the vending issue. As for ticket revenue distribution, the county government makes the plan, which can be attested from a series of government documents, such as No.: Y. L. F. W. [2013] 14²⁴, No.: Y. L. F. W. [2009]. 6, and No.: Y. L. Y. G. Z. [2009] 2. Here, local government involving these

²⁴ The full name is "Notice on Tourism Ticket Revenue Distribution of Yongding *Tulou*" (Chinese: Yongdingxian tulou lvyou menpiao shouru fenpei banfa) issued by Yongding Tourism Industrial Development Committee in 2013.

issues includes Yongding County Government and Hukeng Township Government. According to the previous analysis, we can see that it is the county government that plays a critical role and the township government, as its subordinate, has to follow the orders from, and finish the tasks assigned by, the county government.

A villagers' committee is a self-governing organization according to the *Organic Law of the Villagers' Committees*. Self-governance promised by law is conceived as having the abilities of democratic election, decision making, management, and supervision (O'Brien & Han, 2009). Therefore, such decisions as whether, when, and how to develop tourism should be made by local peasants instead of local government. Similarly, democratic elections should be held by local peasants and cannot be interfered with. In other words, local peasants should have the right to manage their village affairs by themselves. They should play an active and major rather than passive and negligible role. However, in reality local government has deprived local peasants of these rights. The entry issue is mainly a result of the *Tulou* Company's management failure. But, to some extent, it is also related to local government because it is a county-owned enterprise, and the general manager of the company is also the director of the local tourism administration.

Furthermore, it was the county government that issued the regulation on the entry of cars, which caused friction. Too many cars entering the village make it not safe for both villagers and tourists, especially during holidays. Therefore, this regulation is reasonable to some extent. The key is how to reduce the inconvenience brought by it. Generally speaking, the entry issue is a matter of management. Corresponding to the variation of conflict issues, conflicting parties related to each issue may not be the same. For example, some media report that village committees participated in land expropriation and house demolition in non-tourist villages (Hua & Sun, 2016), which has not been found in this study. This discrepancy partly comes from insufficient

information on the role of village committees play in land expropriation and house demolition as found by this study. Regardless of village committees' involvement in these issues, local government remains the most important conflicting party because village committees only play a subsidiary role in the process.

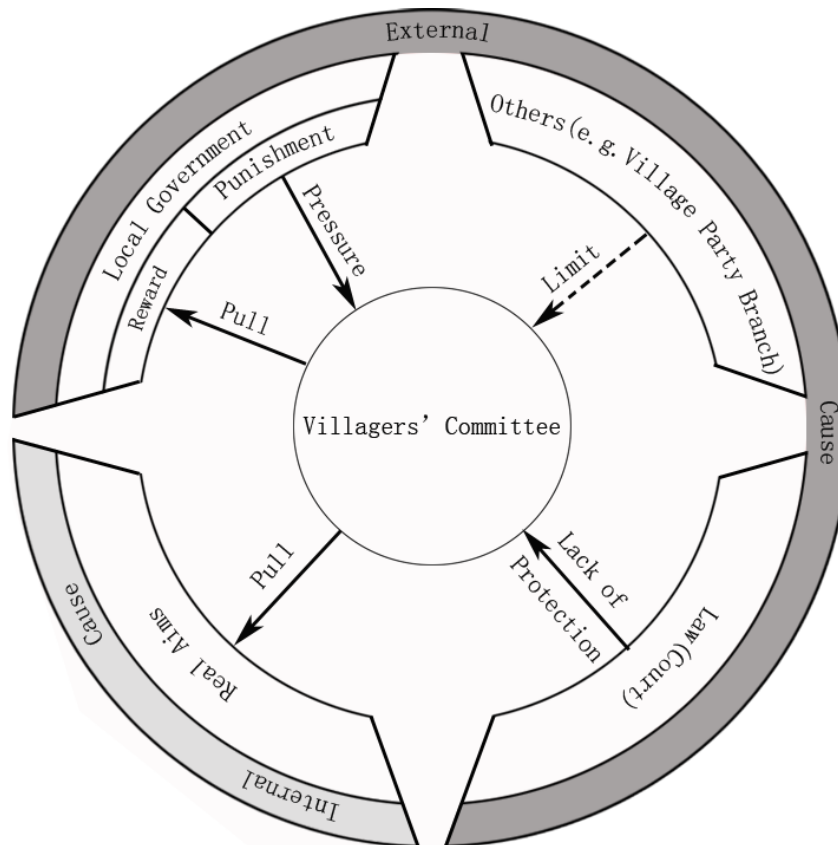


Figure 5.16 Factors influencing villagers' committees

Source: the author.

A villagers' committee is elected by villagers and should represent and defend all villagers' interests, but this is hard to achieve in reality due to many factors, such as intervention by local government and village Party branches, as discussed in chapter three. Based on a series of conflicts in Hongkeng, further discussion on villagers' committees is carried out here (Figure 5.16). A villagers' committee is a self-governing organization, and is not an extension of a township government. The

latter can provide guidance to a villagers' committee but has no right to lead it. However, township governments or county governments often assign a lot of tasks to villagers' committees and requires them to finish on time. If villagers' committee members fail to finish these tasks, they would be punished probably. The condition in Yongding County is the same. The document (No.: Y. W. Z. Z [2004] 48) issued jointly by the Organization Department of Yongding and Yongding Civil Affairs Bureau, stipulates that villagers' committee members should take blame and resign if they fail to finish some required assignments, and if they refuse to resign, they should be dismissed and their wages suspended. In contrast, if they can finish the assigned work, especially the unpopular and tough tasks, they should be awarded. Take land expropriation as an example. The document issued by Yongding County Government (No.: Y. Z. Z [2011] 210), stipulates a couple of rewards. One of them is that a sum of money equal to 2.5% of total compensation for expropriated land will be awarded to villagers' committees if they can finish this task on time. Another one is that if land-expropriated peasants sign to agree to be compensated by the way of "yearly constant return payment"²⁵ instead of "lump-sum payment", a sum of money equal to 1% of the compensation paid to signatories will be awarded to villagers' committees.

However, villagers' committees not only face the pressure of punishment from local government but also lack legal protection if their legal rights are deprived by local government because suing the government in many conditions, such as unlawful dismissal of villagers' committee heads, is not included in the articles of the

²⁵ The county government stipulates two ways of distribution of compensation fees. One is called "lump-sum payment", in which all the compensation fees are payed to peasants at one time. The other one is called "yearly constant return payment", in which the county government just pays the constant return (the constant rate of return is between 12%-15%) every year to peasants within the rest of the contract period and pays the principal to peasants at the end of the contract period (Rural land belongs to collective land so peasants need to sign a contract with villagers' committees to contract land and the duration of the contract for cultivated land is thirty-years.).

Administrative Litigation Law and can be refused by the courts. Though there is no evidence to show if other factors, such as village Party branches, influenced the villagers' committee of Hongkeng, it is still listed as a potential influential factor (dotted line in Figure 5.16). The above analysis is conducted from external factors affecting villagers' committees. If the original intention of people competing for the position of the villagers' committee head is to benefit illegally, the expectation of villagers' committees to serve villagers well is hard to achieve. Based on a series of incidents during the village elections, such as buying votes, the "urine-splashing" incident, and the local government's unlawful intervention, it can be seen that the real aim of the candidates is probably related to seizing economic interests. The approach of "carrot and stick" by local government, the lack of "shelter" from the law (court), the influence of others, and the real aim of people running for villagers' committee members constrain villagers' committees to stand in the side of peasants to maintain their interests and rights. Figure 5.16 illustrates the factors affecting and limiting villagers' committees' justice.

"Stakeholder" has been a lively topic which has attracted a lot of comment in the literature. Locals and tourists are two important stakeholders in tourism (Byrd, Bosley, & Dronberger, 2009; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003; Ryan, 2002; Sautter & Leisen, 1999; Waligo, Clarke, & Hawkins, 2013; J. J. Yang, Zhang, & Ryan, 2016). Based on the above analysis, we know that the villagers' committee plays a certain role in tourism development and the distribution of benefits, be it positive or not. Though the members of the villagers' committee are also residents, they are different from ordinary residents and their interests are often not consistent with ordinary villagers. Hence, it is necessary to distinguish villagers' committees from ordinary residents. However, in reality, researchers rarely discuss them separately when investigating relevant issues involving rural tourism in China. Ignoring the role of villagers' committees or equating villagers' committees with local communities (Ying & Zhou,

2007, p. 103) is not appropriate because it may lead to an incomplete and biased analysis which results in unpractical suggestions and recommendations. In addition, tourists in this study were only regarded as a tool or bargaining chip by local villagers for pressuring local government and arguing for more benefits. To some extent, tourists are often victims of conflict. For example, after a vendor conflict, tourists were not able to enter Hongkeng because the villagers blocked the entrance. Tourists whose access was denied due to blockage also occurred in other places. In Mount Emei, hundreds of local people blocked the road due to their discontent with the decision of Emei Scenic Area Administrative Committee (X. D. Li, Wei, & Lei, 2014; S. L. Zhang, 2014). In Likeng, Jiangxi Province, villagers blocked the entrance because they were dissatisfied with the ticket revenue distribution (H. L. Wang, 2011; P. G. Wang & Qin, 2011;).

Due to the lack of information, it is hard to judge what kind of role the *Tulou* Company played in determining the distribution plan of the ticket revenues. It is a county-owned enterprise and its general manager was also the director of the Yongding Tourism Administration, an agency of Yongding County Government, therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the county government plays a decisive role in the distribution of the ticket revenues.

According to the public choice theory, a government is composed of individuals and acts like homo economicus to pursue maximum self-interest (Hill, 1999, p. 1), which is embodied explicitly in the above conflict issues. In term of land expropriation and house demolition, local peasants were forced to sell their farmland and move out from their houses with low compensation which caused common dissatisfaction and continuous resistance; an old building with hundreds of years of history was demolished and replaced by a hotel; and based on the original preservation plan, no modern road could be built inside of the village but local government expropriated a

piece of land and demolished local people's houses to do just that (Qu, 2011). Furthermore, some demolished buildings had a history of over one hundred years, but were located in the core or buffer zones.

Therefore, it is reasonable to doubt that the real aim of local government is for heritage protection through a world heritage application. In expropriating local peasants' farmland without considering the the vulnerable group, local government banned them from vending along the street in the name of beautification (to attract tourists). For the ticket revenues, local government took it granted to use local people's private property to earn money but never considered to share it with them. It was the "vendor incident" that caused a traffic blockade and pushed local government to distribute the ticket revenues. The distribution plan was made by local government without discussing with local peasants or getting their agreement. In terms of house building, local peasants were not allowed to build new houses in their own village by local government. Meanwhile, local government did not try to resolve this issue either. In contrast, they expropriated a large piece of land and built commercial real estate. Though 2% of the ticket revenues were distributed to the villagers' committee according to the distribution plan, the township government coveted this sum of money through interfering with village affairs.

All these examples show that local government is homo economicus, and always try to get the most benefits. There are several possible explanations for their acts. From the literature review, we know that economic indicators, such as GDP and fiscal revenue, are important evaluation and promotion criteria for officials' performance, and that there exists a positive relationship between these indicators and officials' promotion. Achievement evaluation and promotion may be important reasons pushing local government to do these things without considering local peasants' interests. Another possible explanation is that they wish to benefit illegally. This can be inferred

from local government' interference in village affairs. After hearing that the township government had decided to establish a new committee to manage the 2% of the ticket revenues, interviewee 50 planned to hold a villagers' conference and let the villagers decide how to deal with the money, but was threatened to be dismissed if she did that. Ignoring the warning, she was dismissed illegally by the township government as soon as she sent out a conference notice.

5.4.3 Peasant thinking and corresponding deprivation

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) note that an individual's behavior is influenced by his/her attitude in their theory of reasoned action. During interviews, it was easy to see local villagers' expressions of discontent and anger when talking about the above conflict issues. Exploring the formation of their attitudes is helpful to understand the conflict phenomenon and their resistance behavior. This dissertation tries to discuss this from the logic of peasant thinking.

Exploring local peasants' thinking logic is important to understand their resistance behavior. Contractual thinking was discussed in the part of literature review, which played an important role in local peasants' resistance. For example, local government should do the resettlement if local peasants are not allowed to build houses at the world heritage site. If not, local government violates the contract with local peasants, and this becomes a possible source of conflict. The failure of implementation of the contract by local government is called contractual deprivation here. In this case study, local government is the subject of deprivation and local peasants are the object of deprivation. In effect, the subject deprived the object of rights and interests. Contractual deprivation is physical, and a real deprivation that belongs to the category of social existence. This deprivation targets the whole group of peasants so it has the feature of universality and no differentiation. (Figure 5.17).The specific content of

contractual deprivation is shown in Table 5.14.

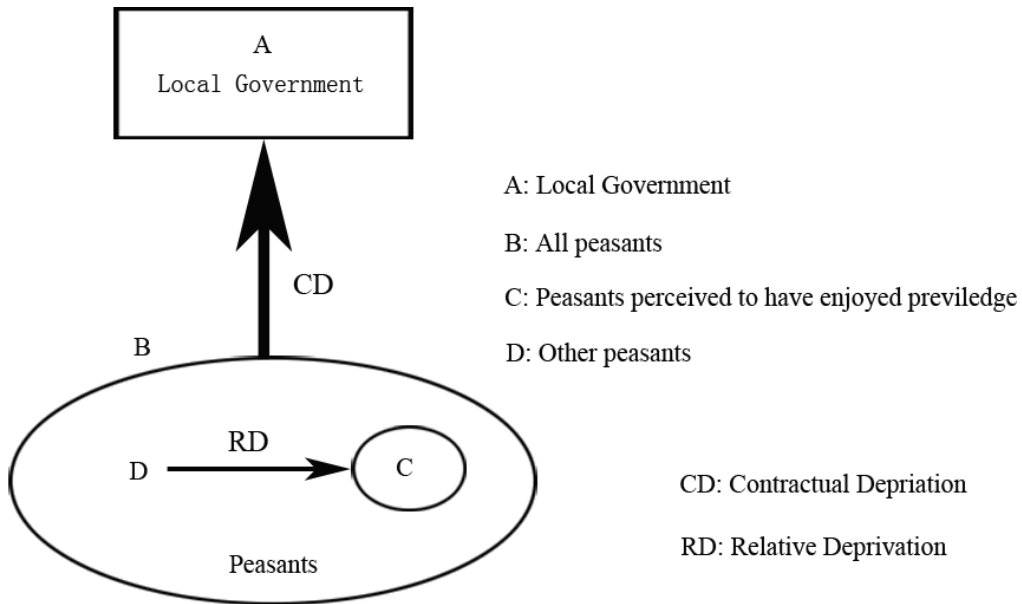


Figure 5.17 Deprivation model

Source: the author.

Table 5.14 Contractual deprivation caused by local government

Conflict issue	Contractual deprivation
House building	Local peasants were not allowed to build houses but local government did nothing on resettlement.
Ticket revenue distribution	Before the “vendor incident”, local government took all the ticket revenues.
Land expropriation	Local government did not compensate based on the law.
House demolition	Local peasants were given low compensation.
Vending rights	All peasants were banned from vending after losing farmland.
Village elections	The interference in the village elections caused the deprivation of local peasants’ basic political right.

Tyler and Lind (2002) note that people’s feelings and their behaviors are not only a simple reflection of the objective situation but instead people will interpret and judge

their experience against their internal standards. In other words, people often make a comparison before they form the life-world and/or make a decision. As with conflict, comparison is also a natural and inevitable part of human activity, and cannot be excluded from human life. From antiquity until today, people have been making comparisons in terms of their ethnic, religious, and cultural allegiances; material possessions; power and authority; and economic, social, and political positions (Landman, 2003, p.4). A result of this comparison is inequality and injustice, or relative deprivation.

Relative deprivation is widely considered to be an important explanatory vehicle in social movements (e.g., Abeles, 1976; Geschwender & Geschwender, 1973; Gurr, 1970; Morrison, 1971). Comparison is the central element of relative deprivation. It has two main categories, egoistic (or personal) deprivation and fraternalistic (or group) deprivation (Tyler & Lind, 2002). According to Tyler and Lind, their distinction is: the former refers to feelings of deprivation out of a comparison between individuals within the same group; the latter refers to feelings out of comparison between one group and another one. In this case study, the subject of relative deprivation or the comparison target is local peasants who are perceived to have enjoyed privilege in some senses, such as house building, and the object is the rest of the peasants. From the perspective of material, the subject did not really deprive the object of anything per se. Different from contractual deprivation, relative deprivation is felt through perception after comparison so it is perceived deprivation or comparative deprivation. Relative deprivation is psychological and virtual deprivation that belongs to the category of social consciousness. Only a part of the people were perceived to have enjoyed the privilege, so it has the features of particularity and being differential (Figure 5.17). According to the statement and analysis in section 5.2, comparison between individuals or between groups, appeared many times and stimulated local peasants to take action. Relative deprivation under comparative thinking is

particularly embodied in issues like house building, ticket revenue distribution, and entry restrictions (Table 5.15).

Table 5.15 Relative deprivation suffered by local peasants

Conflict issue	Relative deprivation	Category
House building	Under the current regulation made by the county government, local peasants cannot build new houses in Hongkeng due to heritage preservation and conservation. But, some did it because they had <i>guanxi</i> (connections) with government officials or they bribed them. Other peasants expressed strong discontent and anger, such as interviewee 27's "Mainland-Macao" view. Interviewee 6 even led me to have a look at a high "illegal" building.	Egoistic
Ticket revenue distribution	Many people mentioned Mount Wuyi and did a comparison between it and Hongkeng. Both Mount Wuyi and Hongkeng are located in Fujian Province and both of them enjoy the titles of world heritage and National 5A-rated tourist Attraction. Local peasants were angry with the big difference on distribution percentage between them.	Fraternalistic
Entry restrictions	Blocked outside by the security guards, interviewee 2 waited and observed near the entrance. He began to curse them when seeing other cars enter smoothly. A similar case happened to another peasant who waited there and entered following other people's cars and claimed to fight with the security guards if he was blocked in that condition.	Egoistic

Generally, the deprivation confronting Hongkeng peasants is a combination of contractual deprivation and relative deprivation. Contractual deprivation is the precondition of relative deprivation in this case study. For example, relative deprivation arising from house building is formed based on the comprehensive ban on it. This combination can be described as undifferentiated deprivation accompanied by differential deprivation. Contractual thinking and comparative thinking caused contractual deprivation and relative deprivation respectively. Both of these

contributed to local peasants' discontent and resentment which caused a series of conflicts. Contractual thinking (deprivation) is an issue of contract and relative thinking (deprivation) is an issue of fairness. The former needs to answer the question of resource distribution and the latter needs to resolve how to distribute. Facing these deprivations, how local villagers reacted is discussed in the following section.

5.4.4 Logic of peasant resistance

To defend their rights and interests, peasants used different forms to resist (Table 5.16).

Table 5.16 Different resistance forms used by local peasants

Conflict issue	Specific resistance form
House demolition	Petition; Traffic blockade; Refusing the compensation
Land expropriation	Petition; Holding bands in protest; Standing in front of an excavator to stop it working; Refusing to pay agricultural tax
House building	Petition; Beating gongs and holding bands in front of the most visited <i>tulou</i> ; Closing gates and refusing tourists
Vending rights	Traffic blockade; Running away when encountering investigation; Obstructing city inspectors' work
Ticket revenue distribution	Petition
Village elections	Petition

Entry restrictions	Burning a security booth secretly; Destroying telephone lines secretly; Beating a security guard in the night; Fight
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Rightful resistance does not include “violent acts” (O’Brien & Li, 2006, p. 3). Disguise, quietness, and anonymousness are typical characteristics of everyday forms of resistance. From Table 5.16, we can see that resistance in this case study includes both individual (e.g., destroying telephone lines) and collective (e.g., collective petition), both open (e.g., traffic blockades) and quiet (e.g., burning a security booth secretly), and both non-violent (e.g. closing gates) and violent (e.g., beating a security guard half dead) forms. Neither rightful resistance nor everyday forms of resistance can cover all of the above forms. For ease of analysis and comparison, a uniform classification standard covering all of them is necessary. Here, I divide peasant resistance of this study into two categories based on the parties or power local peasants rely on: public-power resistance and self-help resistance (Figure 5.18).

Public-power resistance refers to resistance carried out with legal channels which are stipulated clearly in laws, regulations, and central policies, and in accordance with legal requirements. In other words, in this resistance people turn to public power to maintain their rights and interests. Petitions and lawsuits are two common forms of this type. The administrative system and the judicial system are two representatives of public power. The “rightful” is emphasized in rightful resistance, and it originates from the inconsistency between beneficial policies of the central government and the wrongdoing of local government. Public-power resistance emphasizes the targets people turn to. In terms of the means used in resistance, there is similarity between public-power resistance and rightful resistance because “rightful resisters assert their claims largely through approved channels” (O’Brien & Li, 2006, p. 3).

Whether it is legal or not is not a criterion differentiating public-power resistance from rightful resistance. That the means is legal does not mean that rightful resisters have to turn to the representatives of public power. For example, to fight against a series of unlawful taxes and fees, the rightful resisters in Hengyang distributed photocopied central documents, aired these documents through loudspeakers, or broadcast them by employing propaganda vehicles on market days (O'Brien & Li, 2006, pp. 70-71). They even followed tax collectors in the course of tax collecting and persuaded peasants not to submit if the required taxes were inconsistent with central policies (p.75). An important aim of these acts is to alert the public to realize lower authorities' misconduct and to mobilize peasants to oppose their wrongdoing. Here, I classify these resistance forms mentioned above into the type of self-help resistance, though they are legal.

What is self-help resistance? Simply speaking, self-help resistance means that peasants do not turn to public power but rely on themselves to try to resolve problems, such as traffic blockades. Self-help resistance is often illegal, or at the very edge of legality. From different angles, it can be further classified into different sub types. Based on the number of participants, it falls into individual resistance and collective resistance. The former mainly refers to one person, one household, or very few people, such as the vendor crawling under a law enforcement vehicle to prevent her stuff being confiscated; but the latter involves more people, such as the traffic blockade in Hongkeng in 2008.

Based on the main aim of resistance, it may be classified into appeal-based resistance and venting-anger resistance, which is similar to Coser's realistic conflict and non-realistic conflict. Realistic conflict is a means toward status, power, or economic interests while non-realistic conflict is the need for tension release. A difference is that the two concepts coined here are discussed in the scope of self-help resistance. For

appeal-based resistance, peasants have clear specific appeals and they aim to resolve problems. For instance, the traffic blockade in Hongkeng in 2008 is for resolving the “vendor incident”, and beating gongs in front of Zhencheng Lou is for getting permission of building new houses. However, the latter one focuses on releasing anger instead of specific appeals. Burning a security booth, destroying telephone lines, and beating a security guard in the night belong to this type. Appeal-based resistance aims for solutions to problems and therefore, it is usually not so violent and will not cause much damage compared with venting-anger resistance.

Venting-anger resistance is for a release of anger and resentment, and therefore it probably causes damage on property or human beings. And if it is collective venting-anger resistance, the consequence may be very severe, such as the 6.27 riot in Zhaoxing (please see chapter six). Due to its scale of destruction, venting-anger resistance may produce wider influence and apply more pressure to the government compared with appeal-based resistance.

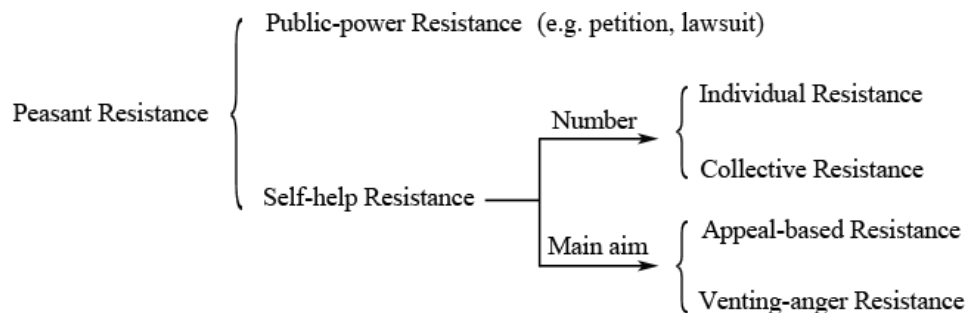


Figure 5.18 Classification of peasant resistance

Source: the author.

Here, the term of “venting-anger” is borrowed from J. R. Yu’s (2010a) “venting-anger incident” that is defined as a mass incident which most participants have no direct connection with and have no specific appeal in. It is more an expression of peasants’

dissatisfaction with the society. “Venting-anger incident” is described as a “mass” incident by J. R. Yu (2010a). I extend its range in this study so resistance involving a single person is also included, such as the incident of burning a security booth. Appeal-based resistance and venting-anger resistance cannot be isolated completely. A couple of resistance forms may appear in one issue, exerting more pressure on local government to increase the likelihood of success, which is similar to resistance elsewhere (Y. S. Cai, 2010, p. 12). For example, Hongkeng peasants went to the Longyan Prefectural Government to lodge a complaint concerning low compensation and knelt there. Petitioning is accepted by the law and belongs to public-power resistance, but kneeling down in front of the government entrance is not allowed and is suspected of violating rules or laws. Here, kneeling down is a supplemental means to petitioning.

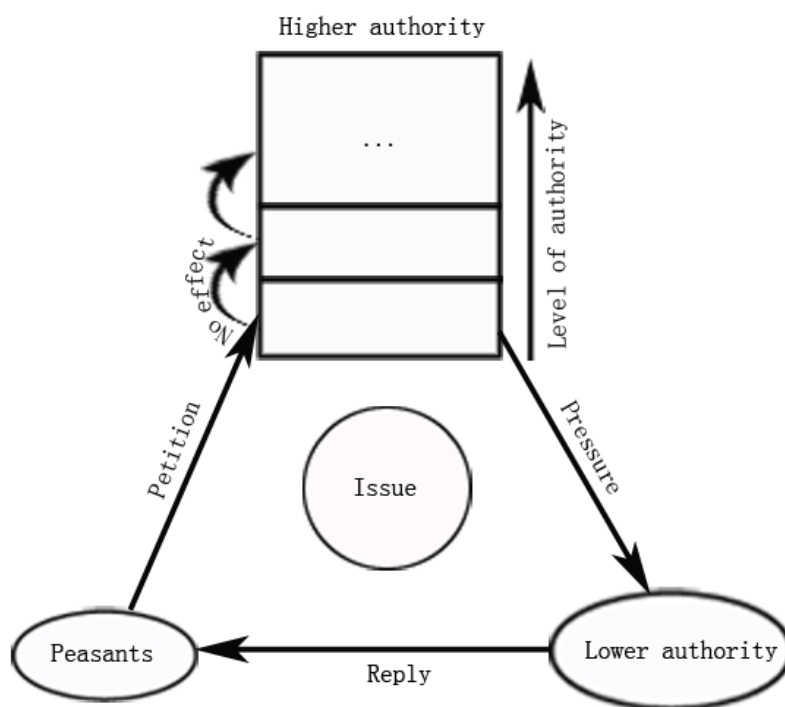


Figure 5.19 Petition process

Source: the author.

Petitioning is a form accepted by the law and it is not too risky, though some petitioners were found suppressed or suffered from political persecution according to J. R. Yu (2005b). Hence, it is commonly used by people, including Hongkeng villagers. Figure 5.19 shows basic procedures of petitions. Higher authorities are an important medium and peasants hope that they will apply pressure to lower authorities (relevant authorities) to resolve peasants' issues. The key to a successful petition is determined by whether the authority really intends to help peasants and applies enough pressure to do so. However, most problems are not resolved in the process of petition. J. R. Yu (2005b) notes that the petition system has many serious defects. For example, there are many petition departments, but none really wants to deal with petitioners' problems due to untidy management processes. In addition to Bureau of Letters and Visits at different levels, a professional organ dealing with petitions, all other important organs have their own petition offices, such as the People's Government, the People's Court, the People's Congress, and the Bureau of Public Security. There is no administrative hierarchy among these offices. In the process of petition, peasants often "sink into a Kafkaesque series of unending visits to government bureau after government bureau" (Minzner, 2006, p.104). A survey of 632 petitioners in Beijing shows that each of them visited six organs on average and a petitioner even visited eighteen ones (J. R. Yu, 2005b). In this case study, interviewee 18 also rushed about many departments in vain, including those in Yongding County, Longyan Prefecture, and Fuchou City (the Capital of Fujian Province). The department that accepted his petition did not really want to deal with his concerns and usually asked him to go to other departments, however the same process happened again in the other departments. According to a phone recording provided by interviewee 33, in terms of compensation for land expropriation the Fujian Bureau of

Land Resources admitted the wrongdoing of a lower authority, but did nothing. Interviewee 33 was asked to contact Yongding Bureau of Land and Resource which then asked him to contact a company²⁶ whose business includes urban demolition and land expropriation. The document Y. Z. Z [2011] 210 issued by Yongding County Government, stipulates that this company would be rewarded if it could finish land expropriation on time. Therefore, all departments knew the problem, but none really wanted to deal with it.

A top-down appointment system is implemented in China, which means that higher authorities have a decisive say on the promotion and punishment of lower officials (Landry, 2008, p. 117; Lieberthal, 2011, p. 19). Peasants believe the higher, the more authoritative (X. Chen, 2009, p. 455; L.J. Li, 2004; J. R. Yu, 2005b). The Hongkeng villagers' perception of the government also showed a similar result. But, even if they lodged complaints with higher authorities, their case would be returned to lower authorities. According to the *Petition Regulation*, the Bureau of Letters and Visits is only a half-way house whose job is to deliver peasants' issues to relevant authorities. The former vice provincial governor, Peiping Shen, once said to petitioners outright that no matter where they went to lodge a complaint, it would not work because it would be returned to him (local government) to deal with, and the central government also relied on him (local government) (Q. P. Wang, 2014). Interviewee 18 realized that no matter which level of authority he went to, his petition material would be returned to Yongding. He was very disappointed and finally gave up.

Figure 5.20 illustrates the process of self-help resistance. Self-help resistance in Hongkeng has included incidents such as traffic blockades, beating gongs in public,

²⁶ The full name of this company is “Yongdingxian guotu ziyuanju dichan gongsi”.

and burning a security booth. For appeal-based resistance, peasants have clear appeals and they aim for resolving their problems. A tactic of this type is to make an incident. The aim is to attract attention and apply pressure to relevant authorities. For example, in the house building issue, local peasants knew that some higher officials would visit their village, so they beat gongs and held bands in the most crowded place to pressure them. They went to the most crowded place because more people could know their grievance, and heavier pressure could be applied. The advantages are that: firstly, their “incident” might evolve into a serious one; secondly, if this protest activity happened in front of important leaders, local officials might be punished because maintaining social stability is an important task at each level of government. Take a recent incident as an example: in June 2016, a lot of people took to the streets to protest against the construction of an incineration plant in Xiantao, a prefecture of Hubei province. As a result, the local Party Secretary was removed from office later due to failing to deal with this protest activity in time (Sha, 2016). Sometimes though, the incident in Figure 5.20 is not made or organized intentionally, but is “borrowed” from another that naturally happened. The traffic blockade in Hongkeng in 2008 is an example which evolved from a vendor incident. After all, organizing a collective protest activity is not easy, and is full of uncertainty in rural China.

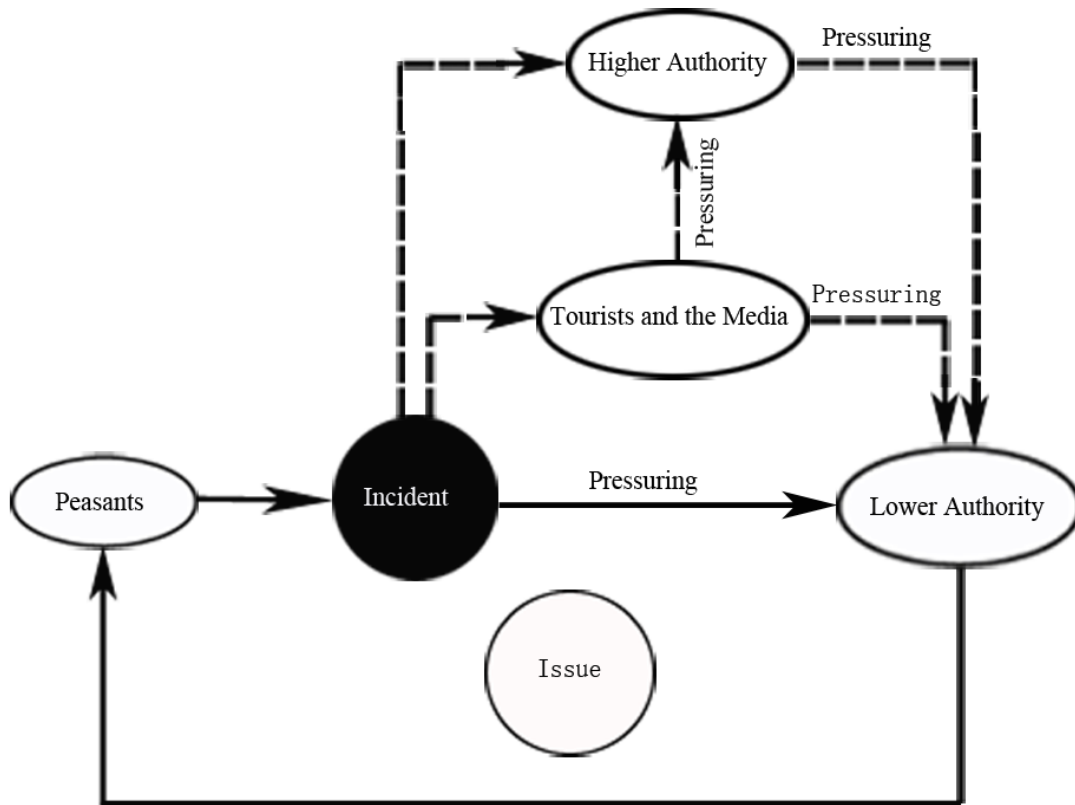


Figure 5.20 Self-help resistance (appeal-based resistance)

Source: the author.

In the case of a petition (public-power resistance), higher authorities are a mediating force but in self-help resistance, especially in appeal-based resistance, the “incident” itself is a mediator. Peasants try to attract the relevant authorities’ attention through staging incidents. On the one hand, the incident itself may cause direct pressure to local government. On the other hand, it can be spread more widely by tourists and the media, who can also apply pressure to local government. Fast communication tools, such as Tencent QQ, Wechat, and mobile phone, make this possible. If this influence is big enough, higher authorities will also give direct attention and apply pressure to lower authorities because of the need to maintain social stability. The aim of establishing the current petition system was to resolve problems, reduce possible incidents, and maintain social stability. The key is succeeding in getting help from higher authorities who will apply pressure to lower authorities. In contrast, peasants

may not need to go to some authorities directly in the process of self-help resistance. They can apply the required pressure to a relevant authority through making an “incident”, a sign of social instability. Compared with petitions, self-help resistance reduces the number of players, and is more direct and effective in theory. If its influence is big enough, it can succeed in pushing local government to give enough attention to peasants’ problems. For example, after the traffic blockade in 2008, local government promised to distribute the ticket revenues to Hongkeng peasants; and after the incident of beating gongs, some peasants were also allowed to build new houses. Self-help resistance can attract the government’ attention fast and push them to reply more rapidly, but it does not mean all peasants’ problems can be resolved this way. As to what kind of consequences peasants have to deal with after self-help resistance, a resolution or a punishment, this is associated with many factors, such as the scale and sensitivity of the protest, the extent of the rationality of an appeal, the pressure applied to the relevant authorities, the understanding of the protest by officials, and the personality of officials making decisions. Meanwhile, due to its feature of “illegality or close to illegality” or “social instability”, it is risky compared with public-power resistance. Therefore, it is hard to predict consequences in advance. Compared with appeal-based resistance, venting-anger resistance may have a bigger influence due to its destructiveness, as this more easily attracts the attention of higher authorities, and even the central government, such as the *Weng’an riot*²⁷ in Guizhou Province in 2008. Accordingly, the result is more likely to be a punishment. The comparison between public-power resistance (petition) and self-help resistance is shown in Table 5.17.

²⁷ In 2008, a girl was found dead in a river in Weng’an County, Guizhou Province. The local police drew a conclusion that she committed suicide after investigation, which was questioned by local people. A few days later, this incident evolved into a riot involving tens of thousands of people. Weng’an county government buildings, Weng’an county Party committee buildings, Weng’an public security bureau buildings, and dozens of cars were burned in this riot.

Table 5.17 Comparison between public-power resistance (petition) and self-help resistance

	Public-power resistance	Self-help resistance	
	Petition	Appeal-based resistance	Venting-anger resistance
Time	Much	Little	Little
Aim	Resolving problems	Resolving problems	Releasing anger
Tactic	Asking help from higher authorities	Making an incident	Causing destruction
Risk	Low	Middle	High
Result	Mostly no solution ^a	An acceptable solution, no solution, or a punishment	Usually punishment

Note. ^aThis analysis is based on a survey mentioned by Ling Zhao (2004a; 2004b).

Another important phenomenon found in Hongkeng is the use of some other tactics during resistance. In the conflict issue of house demolition, it was the elderly and women who knelt down and blocked the entrance. When talking about a vacant homestead, interviewee 2 said that if the government forced the expropriation of that land, he would ask the elderly, women, and children to go to the front. Interviewee 9 and his wife also mentioned that if there was another conflict, they would also mobilize old people of the village to do these things. The vulnerable group of peasants was used as a tool of resistance here, who played an important role in conflict. There are several possible explanations concerning this special phenomenon.

Firstly, from the perspective of the public, they are the most vulnerable group. This group is more easily able to get people's attention and elicit great sympathy when they are in a disadvantaged position or are injured. In other words, they have a natural moral advantage. The popularity of mobile phones and computers helps the vulnerable people greatly, making conflict events spread easily and fast. To avoid being videoed, the police and government staff often ban people videoing the conflict

scene, take their phones or cameras, delete the memory or destroy the equipment, and even beat the people videoing, including journalists (the Editorial Department of China Education Daily, 2016; D. M. Ma, 2016; X. H. Pan & Yang, 2016; Zeng, 2016).

Secondly, from the perspective of the police and the government, there are however a couple of considerations: (1) These people, especially the elderly are more easily injured, or might even die during direct physical conflicts or detention. It is the vulnerability of these people that may stop policemen or government staff taking the violent way (Interviewee 2; J. R. Yu, 2010b), because casualties are likely to invite intervention from higher authorities which would generate pressure to relevant authorities (Y. S. Cai, 2010, p. 12). (2) Hurting women, old people, and children is more likely to get condemned, and it may cause the escalation of a situation and trigger a more serious conflict (Interviewee 2). For example, a video that shows local government staff shocking women using an electric baton and beating a child during house demolition on April 30th 2016 spread on the Internet and caused public outrage (F. Jiang, 2016; X. F. Meng, 2016; Wickedonnaa, 2016; B. Yang, 2016). If similar incidents happen, government officials in charge might be punished (Interviewee 2; Takeuchi, 2014b). In China, maintaining social stability has always been a sensitive and important topic for local government. A series of Party or government documents, such as the *Accountability Regulations of the CPC*, stipulates clearly that relevant officials will be punished if serious influences are produced in society due to mass incidents. Meanwhile, maintaining social stability is also an important criterion for officials' promotion and bonus (Landry, 2008; S. Y. Zhang & McGhee, 2014). (3) Their vulnerability in terms of their physical condition determines that these people are less likely to cause severe destruction compared to men. Based on these considerations, the government may deal with issues concerning women and the elderly more carefully.

Thirdly, from the perspective of themselves, young men are usually pillars of families in rural areas and are responsible for earning money to take care of the whole family, and if they are taken by police the whole family might be in trouble economically (Interviewee 2). Based on the physical features of old people and women, sometimes, it is likely that they will stand at the forefront of conflict and play a vanguard role.

Hongkeng is not however a unique case; similar phenomena also appear in other areas of China (H. J. Dong, 2008; X. Dong, 2011, p. 25; H. L. Wang, 2011; J. R. Yu, 2010b). It happens not only in China but also in other countries (capitalist countries): the *Sanrizuka* conflict in Japan is a stark case. To construct the current Narita Airport, Japanese government expropriated land in *Sanrizuka* in the 1960s, triggering local villagers' strong dissatisfaction. A number of large scale protest movements broke out soon afterward and lasted for decades. *Hantai Dōmei*, the primary organization of villagers in the protest, was composed of five Corps and three of them were directly related to vulnerable people: Old People's Corps, Women's Corps, and Children's Corps (seven to sixteen years old) (Apter & Sawa, 1984, pp. 49, 85, 176). All these people participated in the conflict and played important roles. For example, women stood in front of men in confrontations with riot police and struck the first blows (p. 192); children, fitted out with helmets, were taught to march out to confront the police (p. 87). The aim of using these vulnerable people in this case was to attract public notice and seek public support.

A similar phenomenon was observed in Korea in 2017. To fight against the deployment of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system near their villages, many female residents in Seongju, including elderly people with walking frames, stood at the forefront of the fight (Cho & Lee, 2017). For example, elderly women blocked a road and stopped trucks loaded with equipment related to THAAD going any further though they were threatened by the police (Kim, 2017; "Residents

of Soseong-ri,” 2017). In these incidents, the vulnerable people played a certain role which was hard to be replaced by young men. It is the “vulnerability/weakness” of physical conditions to physical conflict that becomes the weapon of the vulnerable/weak group and makes them not so “vulnerable/weak” when confronting public power.

Kneeling down is another feature of a traffic blockade in Hongkeng. Kneeling down in front of officials should be understood in the context of Chinese culture (X. Chen, 2009, p. 458). In ancient China, when people had grievances, they usually beat the drum in front of *Yamen* (the government office in feudal China), and knelt down in front of government officials. According to interviewee 39, the behavior of Hongkeng villagers was like that of feudal China and connoted a similar meaning that they had grievances. Meanwhile, kneeling down to some extent may protect them from being injured. After all, hurting people who have given up their dignity is very immoral, and is easily condemned. The action of the Hongkeng villagers is not unique, and many similar cases can be observed in the media. For example, a female villager knelt in front of the former Premier’s motorcade due to land expropriation when he was on the way to an earthquake-stricken area (A. Li, 2012; C. Li, 2012). The use of the vulnerable people and the behavior of kneeling down are mercy cards, and can reduce the risk of being caught or injured. Both of these are tactics of peasant resistance, but also reflect their helplessness.

Reviewing the forms of resistance peasants used in the process of defending their rights and interests in Table 5.16, a strange phenomenon is found: peasants never used law to resolve these issues. There are a couple of explanations.

The first one is “limited legal knowledge”. In rural areas, most peasants are not well educated and do not have much knowledge about the law, which restricts them to

taking legal action when their rights are infringed (Interviewee 33). This is consistent with the finding of Lei Zhao and Deng (2007).

The second one is “perceived lack of judicial independence”. Many peasants do not trust law and think that China is a society ruled by man not by law (Interviewee 2, 16, and 37; Shu, 2008). The following two peasants’ words may represent a lot of people: “Courts are not useful. They will not care about (our grievances). They (the courts and the government) all breathe with the same nostril”, interviewee 43 said; and “Is the court more powerful or the government? It does not work (using law)”, interviewee 44 said. This finding is in line with the result of a survey of 1510 households in 1997 in which 92.7% report that China is not ruled by law, and power is above law (C. G. Wang, 1998, p. 127). From the above analysis, we know that local government is the most important conflicting party participating in most conflict issues. This means that local government should become the target if local peasants choose to use law to defend their rights and interests. Interviewee 18 tried to use law to resolve the conflict issues before his petitions in 2009 and 2014. He went to different law firms in Yongding County and Longyan Prefecture. However, no lawyer dared to accept his case due to its sensitive nature.

Hung (2004) notes that legal cases against the government are still hampered by interference from government officials and judicial corruption even though the *Administrative Litigation Law* was promulgated as early as 1989. Besides direct interference from the government, some courts also refuse to accept legal cases against the government because they do not want to offend it (Lei Zhao & Deng, 2007). According to statistics by Gechlik (2005), administrative cases just account for 1.4% of all first-instance cases heard by the courts in China (an average between 1991 and 2004). She also notes that judges are required to reject administrative cases by government officials and Party members, which is especially severe in lower

authorities. A survey of 632 petitioners in Beijing in 2004 suggests that 63.4% of them filed lawsuits but 42.9% were refused by the courts (J. R. Yu, 2005b). In the research of rightful resistance, O'Brien and Li (2006) note that township and county officials may "convince judicial authorities to conduct perfunctory investigations of highly credible charges" (p. 13), even if cases are heard. There are many media reports on officials interfering with the judiciary and affecting their just decisions (e.g., F. Chen, 2016; Lu, 2014; Nandu, 2015; Q. P. Wang, 2014). According to official statistics from the National Bureau of Letters and Visits, disagreement over court judgments is one of the top five fields of complaints in China (Y. J. Li & Wei, 2007), and even worse, if the government loses lawsuits, it may refuse to enforce the judgments (Guan & Li, 2017).

The third factor is "economic inability". Money is an important concern. If peasants want to sue the government in the courts, they need to brief a lawyer and that needs money. Therefore, many peasants do not take legal action (Lei Zhao & Deng, 2007; Interviewee 33).

Based on the above factors, it is understandable that local peasants rarely use law to resolve conflict issues. Compared with lawsuits, petitions and self-help resistance are thought to be easy, effective, and do not need to take much time and money. Though local peasants have used different forms of resistance in the past twenty years, no evidence shows that the collective resistance activities in Hongkeng have been carried out in an organized way. For example, when the "vendor incident" happened, local peasants came out and blocked the entrance voluntarily without organization. Interviewee 18 lodged complaints in 2009 and 2014 and the process lasted for a long time; but it is hard to say that he is a leader because he did not organize any specific collective resistance activities and relied more on individual behavior. Many peasants complained that local peasants are not united so they cannot defend their rights

effectively (Interviewee 1, 2, 5, and 27). Some advised that if old people and women sit near the entrance, local government had no way out (Interviewee 2). The leaders or organizers are particularly the targets of repression (J. R. Yu, 2004b) so it is easy to understand the lack of leaders during resistance incidents. For example, in one collective resistance activity in Mount Emei, another world heritage site, to avoid being regarded as “leaders” and being punished later, local peasants decided to negotiate with local government jointly in the form of a site meeting (S. L. Zhang, 2014).

Based on the above analysis, the usual conflict process and logic of peasant resistance are illustrated in Figure 5.21.

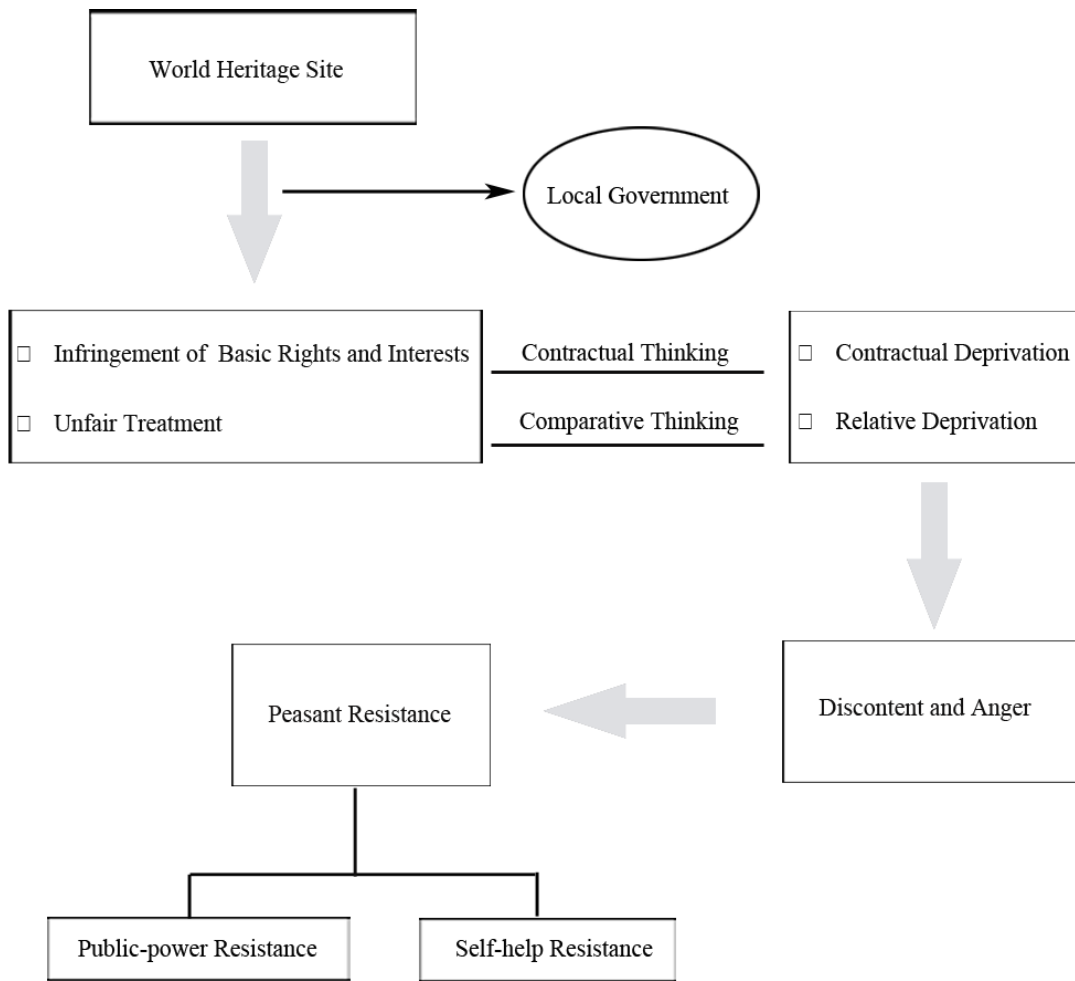


Figure 5.21 Conflict process and the logic of peasant resistance
Source: the author.

5.5 Conclusion

One of the important aims of the inscription of a property on the world heritage list by UNESCO is for its preservation and conservation. However, only the seven *tulou* buildings listed as world heritage have been given much attention in Hongkeng. Local people should be the principal beneficiary, but in practice their rights and interests are infringed severely.

Hongkeng began to develop tourism in the 1980s. Since the establishment of the Yongding Tourism Administration at the beginning of the 1990s, seven conflict issues have arisen: house demolition, land expropriation, house building, vending rights, ticket revenue distribution, village elections, and entry restrictions. These issues are not isolated. The application for the title of world heritage caused the birth of house demolition, land expropriation, and the prohibition of house building. The first two issues lasted until around 2010, and may appear again if local government continues to build large scale of infrastructure or commercial facilities. The issue of house building appeared at the beginning of the twenty-first century and it is worsening with the increasing need for housing. With the success of the world heritage application, a series of conflicts erupted around 2008. Land expropriation has made local peasants lose farmland. The vulnerable group, mainly the elderly and women, started to vend along the street. An incident in which a vendor was beaten triggered a traffic blockade and caused the distribution of the ticket revenues indirectly. The latter aggravated the competition of village elections and triggered further conflicts. Finally, the entry issue is more of an expression of dissatisfaction by local peasants with the above conflict issues.

The three issues in Hongkeng: house demolition, land expropriation, and village elections, are also common issues of rural China. The difference is that the common issues on a national scale happened during the process of urbanization, while the ones in Hongkeng occurred in the process of tourism development. Generally, these seven conflict issues can be classified into three categories: conflict based on economic interests, such as land expropriation, vending, and ticket revenue distribution; conflict based on basic social needs, including house demolition, house building, and entry restrictions; and conflict based on basic political rights, such as village elections. Among the three categories, conflict based on economic interests is more prominent because an important aim of the other categories is related to economic interests.

Most of the conflict issues refer to local peasants' basic rights and interests. Therefore, if the basic rights and interests are infringed seriously, a conflict is likely to happen. At different sites, the specific conflict issues may not be the same and the sequence of conflict issues may appear differently. The conflicting parties with local peasants include local government, the villagers' committee, and the *Tulou* Company, but local government is the most important party that has participated in all these conflict issues except the entry issue. Villagers' Committees are also an important party, but are often ignored by researchers. Though a villagers' committee is a self-governing organization, its normal function is often constrained by external and internal factors.

There are two main causes for the conflicts in the case of Hongkeng. One is that local peasants' basic rights and interests were infringed by local government. The other one is that local peasants were treated unfairly. All these caused contractual deprivation and relative deprivation under contractual thinking and comparative thinking. These feelings contributed to local peasants' discontent and resentment, which then resulted in conflict. Comparative thinking was embodied explicitly in this case study. From the perspective of local government, pursuing self-interest as much as possible is their important motivation. China's evaluation and promotion system for officials probably contributes to this motivation.

To defend their basic rights and interests, local peasants have used different forms of resistance. Two categories of resistance were discussed in this chapter: public-power resistance and self-help resistance. Based on the main aim, self-help resistance is further classified into appeal-based resistance and venting-anger resistance. Petitions are a representative of public-power resistance, and are also the most used resistance form by local peasants. Petitions are a form accepted by law and the central government and therefore, it is not risky in theory. Besides petitions, appeal-based resistance has also been used in Hongkeng, such as traffic blockades. Appeal-based

resistance is illegal or is on the edge of illegality, so it is not accepted by the government. Local peasants tried to attract relevant authorities' attention and applied pressure to them through making an "incident". The "incident" is a sign of possible social instability that each level of government has to control. The pressure exerted on local government is from several sources: from the incident itself, which might cause social instability, from tourists and the media, and from higher authorities. Compared with petitions, it is more likely to produce pressure to local government and have an immediate effect in theory. But it is risky compared with petitions due to its "illegality". So, the consequence might be a punishment instead of a constructive solution.

In appeal-based resistance, another interesting phenomenon is the use of vulnerable people as a tool for resistance. To reduce risk, the elderly, women, and children may be used as weapons of resistance and play a vanguard role. To ask these people to rush to the front seems immoral but it reflects peasants' helplessness. It is regarded as a tactic to lower risks after long-term struggle with local government. This tactic is not unique in Hongkeng but also appears in other areas of China and other countries. Concerning venting-anger resistance, only individual venting-anger resistance was found in Hongkeng. Meanwhile, this study also found several main reasons for the rare usage of law: limited legal knowledge, perceived lack of judicial independence, and inability to pay. After long years of struggle with the government, peasants have formed their own resistance logic and know which method may be more effective.

Among these seven issues, only the vending issue has been resolved. Land expropriation and house demolition are temporarily resolved and may appear again. If there is no improvement on the remaining issues, wider conflicts might occur in the future. The 2% ticket revenues, demolishing newly built house, and friction between local people and the *Tulou* Company will be possible fuses.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: SUPPLEMENTAL CASE STUDIES

6.1 Introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on three supplemental cases with different features: the villages of Likeng, Hongcun, and Zhaoxing. Likeng Village is a non-world heritage site in which resistance activities happen frequently according to media reports. Hongcun Village is a world cultural heritage site, and taking legal action is its typical feature that is rarely found at other sites. Zhaoxing Village, a non-world heritage site, is in an ethnic minority area, and almost all the peasants in the village are Dong people, one of China's fifty-five officially recognized minority groups. In 2015, a big riot happened in that village. This chapter aims to answer the following questions:

- (1) What are the major conflict issues at these sites?
- (2) Why do resistance activities happen frequently and last relatively long in Likeng?
- (3) Why do peasants in Hongcun choose to take legal action to defend their rights and interests? Do peasants at other sites use this strategy?
- (4) Why did a riot happen in Zhaoxing?

6.2 Case Study Two: Likeng, a Historical Village

6.2.1 Introduction to Likeng

Likeng Village is located in Qiukou Township, Wuyuan County in the northeast part of Jiangxi Province (Figure 6.1). It is famous for its unique *Hui* style architecture and a beautiful natural scene. In 2003, it was listed as a famous historical cultural village at the provincial level by Jiangxi Provincial Government (Xinhua net-Jiangxi, 2003). In September 2001, Jinniu Shiye Co., Ltd. (Jinniu Company), a private investor, signed a twenty-year contract with Likeng villagers, according to which, 19% of each year's ticket revenues would be distributed to them in the first ten years, and this percentage would rise to 21% in the second ten years (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011). However, due to distrust of the company and lack of understanding of what 19% meant, Likeng villagers required Jinniu Company to pay their rural tax fees for them instead of attaining 19% of the ticket revenues. Later on, these fees were abolished by the central government. Due to this factor and a series of other conflicts, local villagers blocked traffic for the first time in 2004. Then, Jinniu Company signed a new contract with them in 2004 in which the distribution plan returned to 19% again. This contract lasted for three years.

In 2007, however, local people did not believe the number of tourist arrivals publicized by Jinniu Company, and required to be allowed to supervise in the entrance. To argue for the right of supervision, they blocked traffic for the second time. The same year, Wuyuan County Government started its plan of integrating the main tourist spots of Wuyuan into one and asked Jinniu Company to quit the operation. Then, Wuyuan Tourism Co., Ltd. (Wuyuan Company) was established, which re-signed a three-year contract with Qiukou Township Government instead of the Likeng

villagers. This contract expired at the end of 2010, and another big traffic blockade happened in 2011 due to failure to agree on its redistribution plan.

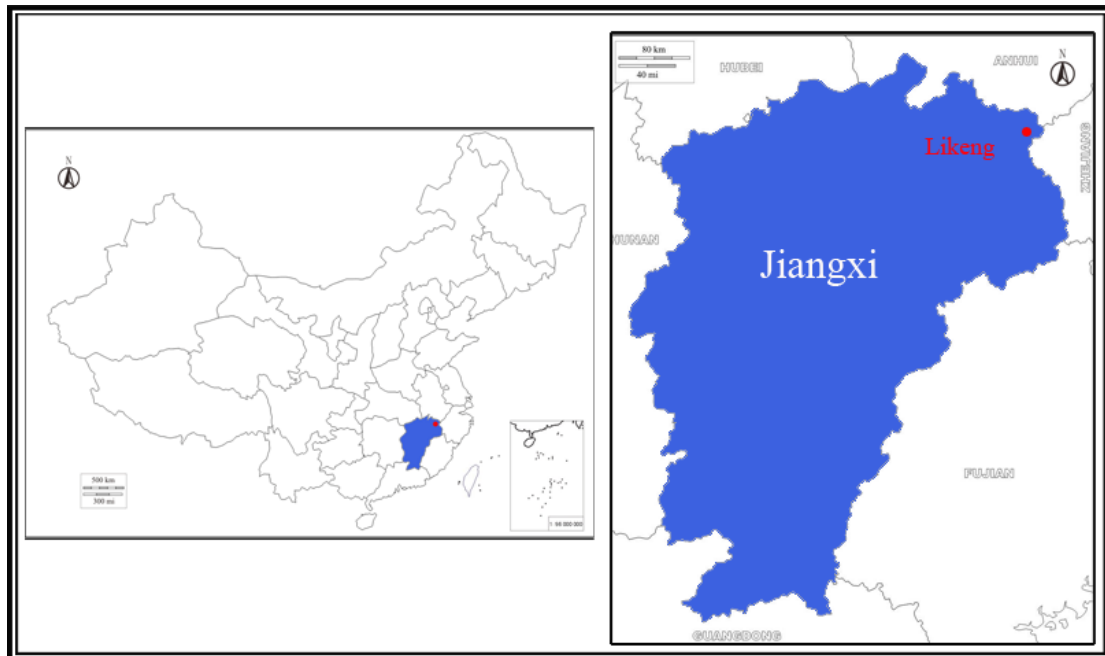


Figure 6.1 The location of Likeng in China

Source: adapted from China (n.d.), Jiangxi (n.d.), and National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation (n.d.).

6.2.2 *Conflict and resistance*

According to local villagers, major conflict issues in Likeng include vending, ticket revenue distribution, and house building.

6.2.2.1 Conflict issue: Vending rights

During my field study in Likeng in March 2016, an allocation of vending stands was going on by lot (Figure 6.2). In the past year, the vending area changed several times. Initially, the villagers vended along a parking lot. Then, that was banned and they were asked to move to a street near the parking lot (Figure 6.3). Later, they were

required to move to the place where the villagers were casting lots. Though some people expressed dissatisfaction with these arrangements, no physical fight had happened in the past several years between the villagers and relevant government agencies. Even so, this issue was relatively severe in the early years of tourism development. According to interviewee 54, his wife was detained due to a vending conflict with government staff, which made him very angry. This incident also turned him into an active participant in a series of resistance activities. Later on, a similar conflict happened (Interviewee 52 and 54). One villager was beaten and one old woman was scared to sickness. As a result, local people gathered and destroyed the doors of Jinniu Company out of anger, which caused the first traffic blockade. Table 6.1 is a summary of this issue.



Figure 6.2 The location of vending stands by lot

Source: taken by the author (March 2016).



Figure 6.3 Street vending in Likeng

Source: taken by the author (March 2016).

Table 6.1 Conflict issue: Vending rights

Conflict issue	Vending rights
Conflicting party	Peasants versus local government
Direct cause	Vendors were beaten by the local government staff.
Resistance form	Peasants destroyed Jinniu Company's facility.

6.2.2.2 Conflict issue: Ticket revenue distribution

Ticket revenue distribution is locally called “*rentoufei*”, and is an important issue. A couple of big resistance activities occurred because of this issue. The first one appeared in 2004, the second in 2007, and the latest one in 2011.

In 2001, the Jinniu Company signed a contract with Likeng villagers which stipulated that 19% of the ticket revenues would be distributed to them in the first ten years. They did not have a clear understanding of the idea of a percentage, and asked the company to pay their rural tax fees instead, including agricultural tax (*Nongye shui*), agricultural specialty tax (*Nongye techan shui*), animal slaughtering tax (*Tuzai shui*) and so on (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011; H. L. Wang, 2011). However, these taxes were abolished or reduced by the central government in 2003, which meant that the company did not need to pay these taxes in the future. Because any compensation for the abolishing of the taxes was not agreed, the villagers' dissatisfaction began to increase. This dissatisfaction turned into action following a "vendor incident" in which one villager was beaten and another old lady was scared to sickness. This vendor incident became a fuse for the first traffic blockade. One direct result was the damage to a facility of the Jinniu Company. Later, some villagers came to interviewee 54 for advice, and he suggested that they make the conflict bigger and turn its direction toward ticket revenue distribution (Interviewee 54). Likeng villagers blocked the entrance and did not allow tourists to enter the next day. This traffic blockade lasted for around one day and then local villagers organized themselves to lodge a complaint. They held banners with words like "Down with Ruhuang Ye" (the owner of Jinniu Company), and marched to Wuyuan County Government. They got a chance to negotiate with the Jinniu Company and the county government, in which interviewee 54 was a major negotiator representing the Likeng villagers. He thus led this resistance activity, and played an important role. The conflict situation ended with compensation of ¥50,000 (\$7,621.95) being paid, and a return of 19% distribution plan. Thus, in a similar way to Hongkeng, a vendor incident was the fuse of the traffic blockade.

Due to the distrust of the Jinniu Company, local villagers doubted the number of tourist arrivals publicized by the company (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011). They wanted to

count tourists themselves near the entrance every day, but this was rejected. A resistance activity aimed at getting this right of supervision started in 2007, three years after the first traffic blockade. This time they put in place a traffic blockade again, which lasted around 15 days (X. H. Zhao, 2011). To reduce the risk of getting arrested, a village meeting was held at the instigation of interviewee 54. The leaders of the villagers' groups, villagers' representatives, and Party members participated, and the decision to block traffic was made in the meeting (Interviewee 52, 53, and 54). Later, a second meeting was held when they heard that policemen would come and arrest them. According to interviewee 52 and 53, in the second meeting, the sequence of being caught and the compensation for these people were determined. Interviewee 53 volunteered to be the first one to be caught though that was not his real intention. He revealed that if other people were caught, he could think out a way to rescue them but if he, the leader, was caught, no one could help him.

However, in the meeting, no one wanted to be the first one, so he had to be. Hundreds of policemen came to the village. Some villagers were beaten and four were detained, not including interviewee 53 (Interviewee 52, 53, 54, and 61; H. L. Wang, 2011). Later, negotiation between local villagers and local government was held in which local villagers were asked to stop the traffic blockade activity (Interviewee 53). The released villagers told interviewee 53 that he was the real target of policemen, but they had failed to find enough evidence to suggest that he organized the activity. Though they paid the price for this resistance, they succeeded in winning the right of supervision (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011; Interviewee 52, 53, and 54). Then, the villagers organized a group to count the number of tourists entering each day in front of the entrance. After three months' supervision, they found that there was no difference on the number of individual tourists between them and the Jinniu Company, but group tourists were not counted by the company (Interviewee 52, 53, and 57).

The third traffic blockade happened in 2011. In 2007, Wuyuan County Government began to integrate main tourist spots into one, and established Wuyuan Company, in which the county government is the second largest investor. Jinniu Company at least tried to get an agreement with all villagers and signed a contract with all of them. However, the newly established company ignored the villagers and directly signed a three-year contract with the township government. Many villagers did not even know the existence of this contract, including the villagers' committee (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011).

This company has a strong government background. Firstly, the county government is the second investor of Wuyuan Company; secondly, the chief executive officer of the company then, Jian Ge, was the vice director of Wuyuan Tourism Administration (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011). Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the county government made the decision about ticket revenue distribution, or played a very important role in it. This condition is similar to that of Hongkeng, and shows that local villagers do not have a voice in negotiating with the company (government), or that they are not given a chance to participate in the negotiation. From 2011 on, the distribution of ticket revenues was suspended due to the expiry of the contract at the end of 2010, and since then, the villagers' representatives had negotiated with the company many times but there had been no agreement (H. L. Wang, 2011). Local villagers thought that the company and local government had been cheating them (Interviewee 52, 53, and 57). Clear evidence was found by interviewee 53 in one negotiation, who said that even if using the publicized number and calculation method provided by them, each peasant should receive up to ¥2,308 (\$351.83), and took a picture of the evidence before it was erased (Interviewee 52 and 53; H. L. Wang, 2011). This finding confirmed their guess that they had been cheated. However, the next day interviewee 53's son was stabbed at home (Interviewee 52, 53, and 54; H. L. Wang, 2011; X. H. Zhao, 2011), and interviewee 52's brother was threatened

(Interviewee 52). According to interviewee 52, a series of incidents made them very angry and another meeting was held in which the decision to mount the third traffic blockade was made.

On July 13th, 2011, the third traffic blockade started, but very soon Wuyuan Company also claimed to close this tourist spot temporarily. The closure lasted a couple of months. During this period, the county and township governments began to tear down the unapproved buildings of the village (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011).

In the process of resistance in 2011, interviewee 52 and 53 were two important organizers and played a key role. During this period, two petitions and one traffic blockade happened. The first petition, a collective petition, happened before the “stabbing incident” in the background that the old contract expired and the new contract did not come to an agreement. After several discussions, interviewee 52 and 53 decided to lodge a complaint with Jiangxi Provincial Bureau of Letters and Visits. They realized that their action would be blocked so they made a careful arrangement. Participants were selected by interviewee 52 based on the following criteria. Firstly, they must have a strong intention to serve villagers; secondly, the villagers’ representatives and villagers’ group leaders were given priority; thirdly, possible “traitors” and people expecting luxurious hotel and extravagant eating and drinking must be excluded. Then, he divided the petitioners into different groups. If the first group was stopped by local government, the second one must get ready to start off.

According to interviewee 52 and 53, the specific process was as follows. The first day interviewee 53 set out individually. He was found in a hotel in Nanchang, capital of Jiangxi Province, and was brought back to a local hotel. The second day, the first group started and was also blocked, which was in line with their expectation. The second group soon set out again. Interviewee 53 being watched by the local

government staff slipped out from the hotel that night, and drove one villager to Nanchang and returned quickly. The third day, both the second group and the villager arrived and succeeded in submitting their petition material. The second petition, an individual petition, was triggered by the “stabbing incident”. On his way to petitioning, interviewee 53 was brought back and was asked to stay in a local hotel arranged by local government. The “stabbing incident” ended with an agreement of compensation according to him. Again, in a similar way to Hongkeng, during the period of the traffic blockade, many women and the elderly participated in this activity (H. L. Wang, 2011). Table 6.2 illustrates this issue briefly.

Table 6.2 Conflict issue: Ticket revenue distribution

Conflict issue	Ticket revenue distribution
Conflicting party	Peasants versus the county and township governments and tourism companies
Direct cause	The actual reduction of the distribution due to the abolishment of taxes; The false data provided by the company and local government
Resistance form	Traffic blockade; Petition

6.2.2.3 Conflict issue: House building

Traditional *Hui* style construction is an important attraction of Likeng (Figure 6.4). To maintain its authenticity and attract tourists, new construction or reconstruction is restricted firmly. In reality, many people built or are planning to build new houses. There are three causes for this issue.



Figure 6.4 Hui style buildings in Likeng

Source: taken by the author (March 2016).

The first cause is “the need for housing”. Some people complained that their current houses were too small for their big families (Interviewee 60 and 62); some said that when their relatives came, they had no extra rooms for them (Interviewee 55).

The second cause is “economic motivation”. With tourism development, more and more tourists came to this village. Motivated by economic interests, many villagers tried to expand their business, which caused a couple of unauthorized construction types, such as tearing down the old ones and building new ones, building new ones on vacant land, and reconstructing the old ones. Many of them are used for tourism businesses, such as hostels, restaurants, and tourist souvenir shops. To stop this happening, local government removed these unauthorized buildings. Interviewee 52’s

house has been demolished six times but he never stopped rebuilding (Interviewee 52; Y. F. Yu, 2011). One room of the first floor was rented out and the second and third floors are used as hostels. Actually, he was offered vacant land as a replacement for the old one by the local government but he refused because, compared with the arranged location, his current house could bring more income (Interviewee 52).

In recent years, local government has started to deduct their ticket revenue distribution instead of tearing down their houses. Some people expressed the view that they would build a new house to run a hostel even if their share of ticket revenues would be deducted (Interviewee 55 and 56). Another example of the economic motivation was expressed by interviewee 53. To add one more storey to the original building, he constructed this storey outside, installed it under cover of darkness and finished it in one night. His practice was also followed by other villagers. More than ninety households were involved in unauthorized buildings based on official statistics as at August 2011, accounting for about one fourth of all households in Likeng (X. H. Zhao, 2011). This number shows the severity of this issue but it is hard to verify whether all these illegal buildings are used for tourism business because there is little information.

The third cause is “unfair treatment”. According to the Likeng villagers, some people were not allowed to build new houses but others were allowed; some people’s ticket revenues were deducted due to unapproved buildings but others did not experience this. Therefore, many people were angry at local government and their acts.

During the process of tearing down unapproved buildings, many conflicts happened. Self-immolation and petitions are two important forms of resistance in this issue. Interviewee 52 is an example of self-help resistance. He participated in many resistance activities and played an important role. An important cause stimulating him

to be an active leader was house demolition. Until now, his house has been demolished six times. One demolition happened in around 2007 or 2008 according to him, in which he was in despair because he could do nothing. As a result, he picked up a stone and hit it onto his own head to injure himself. He was sent to the hospital and a person was arranged to take care of him by local government. On the same night, his house was rebuilt with other people's help while he was in the hospital. Several days later, he sneaked out from the hospital and bought petrol when hearing that his house would be demolished again. He watered himself with petrol, opened the fuel tank cap of his motorbike, and threatened to burn himself and bomb his motor bike facing the demolition team, which made the local officials suspend that demolition. After that, he also tested how to bomb a jar filled with petrol to resist future possible demolition. Dissatisfied with the decision of deducting their ticket revenues, local villagers also petitioned a couple of times, but this did not work.

Before 2011, local government disregarded the local villagers' applications for house building. Instead of taking effective measures to resolve their concerns, they tried to tear down any unapproved construction (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011). A series of conflicts made local government realize the severity of the issue and a quota system was implemented later. This means that a certain number of households are allowed to build each year. However, local villagers thought that the evaluation process was unfair. In the past two years, a new round of house building has started and there are more than sixty unapproved buildings now (Interviewee 52 and 53). It seems that local government is losing their control on this issue.

Table 6.3 Conflict issue: House building

Conflict issue	House building
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus the county and township governments
Direct cause	The need for housing; Economic motivation; Perceived unfair treatment
Resistance form	Self-immolation; Petition

6.2.2.4 Other issues

In addition to the above issues, there are others, such as entry restrictions, land expropriation, and village corruption. According to interviewee 55, her son-in-law came to visit her, but was stopped by a security guard, resulting in conflict between her and the security guard. With the problem of land expropriation, two incidents were mentioned by Likeng villagers. One was forest land expropriation due to the building of a high-speed rail line. The villagers' committee took the compensation instead of distributing it to the villagers who then petitioned government. The other one was farmland expropriation due to the building of a parking lot. Interviewee 52 was threatened over disagreement about the compensation standards for these actions. He even prepared such tools as a knife and a hoe one night to deal with possible physical conflict. There is only one case of physical conflict over entry found, so it is hard to prove that this outcome was common in previous years. A high-speed rail line crosses Likeng, part of the Beijing-Fuzhou high-speed railway. A piece of land in Likeng was expropriated for this project, which caused conflict over the distribution of land compensation between the villagers and the villagers' committee. However, the decision to construct the line passing Likeng was based on many considerations, including geological conditions, so it is hard to say if the decision is related to tourism, and if so, to what extent. Concerning the villagers' committee, several cadres were sentenced in the past because of corruption. However, it is hard to judge to what

extent these instances of village corruption are related to tourism due to limited information. Since this study focuses on conflict related to tourism, these issues are listed as “other issues” rather than major issues resulting in conflict in this study.

6.2.3 Comparison

Generally, major conflict issues in the process of tourism development in Likeng include vending, ticket revenue distribution, and house building. In addition, other issues, such as entry restrictions, land expropriation, and village corruption, were mentioned although their relationship with tourism is not apparent. All these issues also appeared in Hongkeng. Local government (the county government and the township government) was the most important party in conflict situations. In a similar fashion to Hongkeng, a “vendor incident” caused a traffic blockade. The traffic blockade in Hongkeng promoted the distribution of the ticket revenues indirectly, and the traffic blockade in Likeng caused a change in the distribution plan. In both cases, a vendor incident was a fuse. This shows that the villagers in both Hongkeng and Likeng were dissatisfied with ticket revenue distribution before the incidents.

Besides the need for housing, another important cause of conflict, economic motivation, is found in Likeng, and its importance may have exceeded the Hongkeng equivalent. For example, even when local officials provided a piece of land to interviewee 52, he refused to move out. When finishing building his new and big house, one room was rented out, and the second and third floor were used as a hostel; to add one more storey, interviewee 53 finished its construction outside, and installed that facility at night. Despite the deductions from their ticket revenue distribution then, many villagers have built new houses, reconstructed their old houses, or are planning to build new ones to cater for tourism. Usually they have applied to local government for house building permits, but were not approved. Local officials ignored their

concerns, and tried to use administrative orders to suppress their requests instead of taking effective measures. In this respect, the conflict situations in Likeng are similar to those in Hongkeng.

However, relatively clear organizers appear in Likeng (Interviewee 52, 53, and 54), though they only appear in conflicts as temporary organizers or leaders, and are different from those of labor unions in western countries. Interviewee 54 played an important role in the first traffic blockade which caused a change in the ticket revenue distribution plan. Interviewee 53 led the second traffic blockade and interviewee 52 was a key person in the third traffic blockade. After the “stabbing incident”, interviewee 53 was busy with this issue, and did not take part in the third traffic blockade. Before the third traffic blockade, the three of them participated in a petition plan and implemented it successfully.

Another finding is that bad experience can help to promote peasants to turn into active participants in resistance activities. For example, it was the demolition of his newly built house that pushed interviewee 52 to the front of resistance, and the incident in which his wife was detained made interviewee 53 become active in the subsequent resistance activities. Which people tend to be peasant organizers or leaders of rural protest and what features do they have? It seems that there is no consistent answer (O’Brien & Li, 2006, p. 135). Some studies show that male (O’Brien & Li, 1995, p. 768; O’Brien & Li, 2006, p. 136; S. K. Zhao, n.d.), demobilized soldiers (O’Brien & Li, 1995, p. 768; O’Brien & Li, 2006, p. 136; J. R. Yu, 2010a, p. 67), and current or former village cadres (O’Brien & Li, 2006, p. 136; J. R. Yu, 2010a, p. 67) are more likely to become activists in rural China. J. R. Yu (2010a) found that these people are more educated compared with ordinary peasants, but a survey by O’Brien and Li (2006, p. 136) shows that education is not a significant predictor. In Likeng, the three active resisters were all male. None of them were villagers’ committee members, but

one of them was the leader of a villagers' group. In addition, a study by O'Brien and Li (2006, p. 136) indicates that people who were once punished by the government, are more likely to lead a protest, which this study also found in the case of Likeng.

These three participated in almost all of the important resistance activities of Likeng. Due to the appearance of organizers, resistance in Likeng is therefore different to that of Hongkeng, and has the following features.

Firstly, compared with Hongkeng, these resistance activities were well organized. Interviewee 53 said he would consider carefully before each activity. This well-organized nature of the conflict response is seen in the following aspects. Important decisions were made by the village meetings instead of some individuals; a factor that also could reduce the risk of arrest as in the traffic blockades of 2007 and 2011. In terms of petitioning in 2011, a strict selection of participants was carried out. To avoid being blocked by local government, several batches of people were sent out, and the whole process was consistent with their plans and expectations. To avoid being noticed by police, phones were banned and participants were only allowed to stay in small hostels without registering personal information. In the traffic blockade of 2007, compensation to people who would be caught was considered in advance. Four villagers were detained in that resistance activity, and three of them were released very soon, except one who had once committed a crime. Each of them was given ¥3,000 (\$457.32), which was collected from the villagers (Interviewee 53).

Secondly, these resistance activities lasted a relatively long time. This was particularly obvious in the second traffic blockade, and in the ticket supervision saga in 2007. The former lasted around 15 days, and the latter lasted around three months. The third traffic blockade did not last very long because the company suspended tourism operations actively soon after the villagers' action.

Thirdly, they try not to violate the law. Though interviewee 53 was an important organizer and participated in many activities, he said that he did not agree with traffic blockades. He did it because most people agreed to adopt this form. Before covering himself with petrol, interviewee 52 consulted with other people whether it was illegal or not because he worried he would be caught if it failed. During the interview with interviewee 53, he consulted with me about several questions concerning law on hearing that I had a lawyer friend. The traffic blockade in 2007 was regarded as illegal by local government on the excuse that it happened outside of the village. Therefore, they moved inside for the traffic blockade in 2011.

In Likeng, both public-power resistance and self-help resistance appeared, especially in the forms of petitioning and blocking traffic. To argue for the ticket revenue distribution, Likeng villagers blocked the entrance three times, and lodged complaints with relevant authorities. The former action belongs to appeal-based self-help resistance, and the latter is a representative of public-power resistance. Facing unfair treatment on house building, local villagers petitioned many times. In addition, other resistance forms, such as self-immolation, were used. To stop his house being demolished, a villager threatened to burn himself and bomb his motorbike. The damage on Jinniu Company's property was an example of venting-anger resistance. In a similar way to Hongkeng, several resistance forms were used together in one issue in Likeng. In 2004, the villagers destroyed a facility of the Jinniu Company, blocked traffic, and then petitioned continuously. In 2011, they petitioned and blocked traffic.

In chapter five, public-power resistance (petition) and self-help resistance (appeal-based resistance) were compared. Compared with petitions, appeal-based resistance is fast, effective, but risky. The second traffic blockade is an example of this risk in which four villagers were detained. Compared with Hongkeng, traffic blockades were used more in Likeng.

Traffic blockades in this study have some differences with the traffic blockades and entrance (gate) blockades in their usual senses that occur when people have conflicts with state authorities. General traffic blockades happen on ordinary roads and usually do not target specific groups²⁸. General entrance blockades refer to blocking entrances to Party and government organs to disturb their normal operation. All of them aim to exert pressure on the government, but the pressure from general traffic blockades is usually greater. General traffic blockades are very disruptive, especially when they occur on important roads, such as highways, because many vehicles can be stopped in a short time, and this can affect normal social and economic activities seriously (X. Chen, 2009, p. 461). The direct results of traffic blockades in tourist villages are the departure of tourists and a reduction of ticket revenues for tourist companies. Compared with general traffic blockades and entrance blockades, traffic blockades in scenic spots can last longer (e.g., Likeng) and are less disruptive.

In a similar way to Hongkeng, using law to defend their rights and interests was also ignored in Likeng. Villagers in Likeng had a similar explanation to the Hongkeng people: it is costly in time and money (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011; Interviewee 54), and they did not trust the courts, for example, “in China, power overshadows law and the courts are of no use”, interviewee 52 said.

Like Hongkeng, comparative thinking is also reflected in Likeng. An example given by interviewee 53 can be used to illustrate this explicitly: peasant A wanted to build a new house but was not allowed by local government but he still built one; later, the newly built one was torn down, his wife was detained and his child was beaten. He then sold the land to peasant B who quickly built a new house successfully, and

²⁸ Sometimes people only target officials' cars for appealing complaints, which is different from the general traffic blockade in its usual sense also.

opened a hostel. The same land but different results made interviewee 53 very angry. “Why could he build but not me²⁹? Both of us are living under the red flag”, he said.

Comparative thinking is also embodied in the distribution of ticket revenues. Local villagers with unapproved buildings did not receive such distributions. However, in reality, this distribution was not deducted fairly. Interviewee 62 led me to have a look at his house and his neighbor’s. He complained that both of them had made similar changes in building structure to run a business. However, his investment was deducted from ticket revenues, but his neighbor’s was not. He went to the township government and questioned a government official. He was told that the other person had *guanxi* (connections), and if he also had had these, his would not have been deducted either. After hearing this, he was very angry and petitioned several times. In front of interviewee 54, interviewee 53 said directly that interviewee 54 built a new house but his money was not deducted because he has *guanxi* (connections). Similar cases also happened to other villagers. Thus, comparative thinking resulted in local discontent which contributed to conflict.

6.2.4 Summary

House building and ticket revenue distribution are the main conflict issues facing Likeng currently. The vending issue was also severe in the early years of tourism development. In addition, entry restrictions, land expropriation, and village corruption appeared in this village although their relationship with tourism is not apparent. All these conflict issues also appeared in Hongkeng village. Local government is the main source of conflict. As with Hongkeng, a “vendor incident” caused the change in the

²⁹ Here, “me” does not mean interview 53 but peasant A. Interviewee 53 expressed his anger from the angle of peasant A.

ticket revenue distribution in Likeng. Economic motivation and the need for housing are two direct causes pushing local peasants to build or reconstruct houses. Unfair treatment, another important factor, is like a catalyst, stimulating them to take action. Economic motivation may have exceeded the need for housing and become the most important cause. Lack of scientific planning, ignorance on local peasants' appeals, and possible corruption made the issues unresolved. As a result, the trend of house building seems out of control and there are over 60 unapproved buildings today. Against house demolition extreme resistance forms were used, such as self-immolation and the test of bombing, which are serious warning signals. Afterward, local government stopped demolition and replaced it with a deduction system within their ticket revenue distribution, which relieved the tension between the parties to some extent. No demolition of newly built or renovated houses means that local peasants at least have an opportunity to satisfy their economic motivations and housing needs. Despite ticket revenue deductions, local people still built new houses and this trend is still going on, which shows they may have benefited much or they think they would benefit much in the future. Meanwhile, the villagers whose money was deducted due to unauthorized buildings are not giving up this amount of money and expect to get it back. With the gradual accumulation of the money in the coffers of the county, what kind of attitude they would have and what kind of action they would take is hard to say. It is a possible source of conflict.

Both public-power resistance and self-help resistance appeared in Likeng. Major resistance forms include petitions, traffic blockades, damage, and self-immolation. But in a similar way to Hongkeng, law is not local peasants' option. Appeal-based resistance such as traffic blockades appeared frequently, which was related to the appearance of organizers or leaders. The resistance activities have the following features: well-organized, long lasting, and trying not to violate law. Their own experience is an important factor to push them to become active participants.

Comparative thinking was obvious among the peasants and contributed to the conflicts in Likeng.

6.3 Case Study Three: Hongcun, a World Heritage Site

6.3.1 Introduction to Hongcun

Hongcun is a traditional village, located in Yi County, Anhui Province (Figure 6.5). It was established in 1131, and now has a history of more than 800 years. The structures include 137 ancient buildings, which date back as early as the 14th century (the Ministry of Construction & the National Administration of Cultural Heritage, 2000). It is well known for its landscape, layout, architectural style, construction techniques, and decoration, which all retain the original features of Anhui villages of the Ming and Qing dynasties (“Ancient Villages,” n.d.). In December 2000, Hongcun was inscribed on the world heritage list at the 24th session of the world heritage committee, based on the following three criteria: it illustrates graphically a type of human settlement created during a feudal period and based on a flourishing trading economy; it reflects the socio-economic structure of a long-lived settled period of Chinese history; and it well preserves the appearance of traditional non-urban settlements, which to a large extent have disappeared in the 20th century (UNESCO, 2001). Currently, there is a population of 1680 villagers (Interviewee 65).

Chengzhi Tang, an architectural masterpiece, was built in 1855 (W. D. Meng, 2010). It is a well preserved large residential building with an area of 2100 square meters, 60 rooms, and 136 pillars. Its unique wood carving art gives it the title of “civil imperial palace” (F. Wang, Shuang, & Tong, 1997). It was nationalized after land reform (H. S. Liu, 2004). In 1986, Chengzhi Tang and a few other buildings were used by the local

tourism administration to develop tourism, and this period lasted until 1996 (Interviewee 65; H. S. Liu, 2004). During this period, Hongcun villagers got no benefit from the sale of tickets (Zhai, 2002). With local villagers' strong request, they were allowed to develop tourism by themselves in 1997 (Interviewee 65; Zhai, 2002). Without informing the villagers and getting their agreement, Yi County Government signed a contract with Beijing Zhongkun Investment Group Co., Ltd. (Zhongkun Company), whose subsidiary, Jingyi Tourism Development Co., Ltd. (Jingyi Company), was established in 1998 and has been running Hongcun's tourism since then (Interviewee 65; H. S. Liu, 2004; Zhai, 2002).

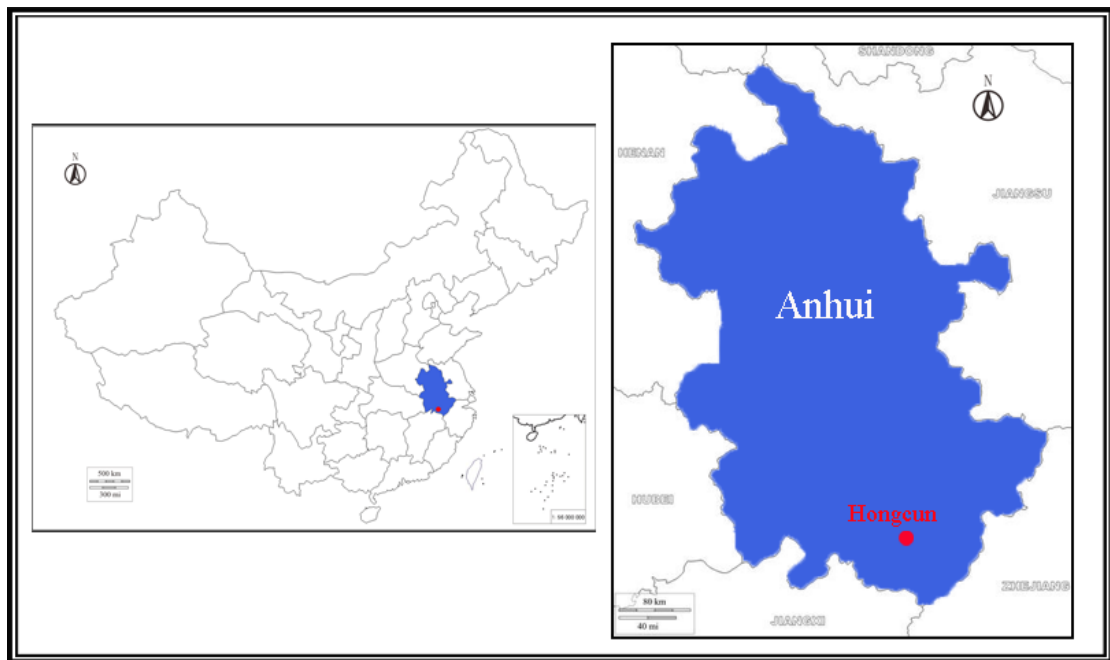


Figure 6.5 The location of Hongcun in China

Source: adapted from China (n.d.), Anhui (n.d.), and National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation (n.d.).

6.3.2 Conflict and resistance

6.3.2.1 Conflict issue: Tourism management rights and vending rights

According to interviewee 65, the villagers' committee head of Hongcun, the process of struggling for tourism management rights was tough. In 1996, ZX (a villager) came to her and wanted to develop Hongcun's tourism. The villagers' committee thought it a good idea. Then, local villagers began to raise money and established a village company in which ZX was the general manager. However, ZX refused to distribute ticket revenue to people at the end of 1997, and also refused to publicize relevant accounts. In contrast, ZX travelled several times and built the best building in Hongcun at the time. The villagers were dissatisfied with his behavior. When the village company was still running, Yi County Government signed a thirty-year contract with Zhongkun Company without informing the villagers. In the contract, it stipulated that each year a minimum bonus of ¥170,000 (\$2,591.46) and 5% of ticket revenues would be distributed to Hongcun villagers. The listed world heritage is the villagers' private property so they were discontented with the unilateral decision made by Yi County Government. To recapture the tourism management rights, they began to resist through a couple of ways in the following years, such as petitions and legal action.

Petitions were first used. Differently from Hongkeng and Likeng, the heads of Hongdong and Hongxi (later the two villages merged into Hongcun) participated in the petition activities. They lodged a complaint with Yi County Government and Huangshan Prefectural Government. However, these activities did not work.

Afterward, some people turned to the law to defend their rights. Two lawsuits were filed, which lasted as long as three years (1998 to 2000³⁰). Interviewee 66 was an important participant. According to him, ZW and ZV (Hongcun villagers) came to him one day and advised him to take legal action. He thought that it was too difficult for three people to finish it and then, they called another five people to take part. In the following three years, they had a lot of discussions on what to do and how to do it. Firstly, they sued Zhen Yang, the former Party secretary of Yi County, in the courts and lost. Then, they sued Jingyi Company in the courts and lost again. Though they lost the two lawsuits, the process brought some changes. The Jingyi Company revised the contract, and advanced the distribution percentage to local villagers from a mix of ¥170,000 (\$2,591.46) and 5% of ticket revenues to 8%.

Besides petitions and lawsuits, Hongcun people also got help from the media in this period. In 2000, a journalist wrote an article “Hongcun nongmin de lianming kongsu” (Joint appeal of Hongcun peasants) that exposed the contradictions for the first time (H. S. Liu, 2004). However, the Yi County Government took back the newspaper circulated in Yi County (H. S. Liu, 2004). In 2002, the problems in Hongcun were reproted again by a journalist from *Nanfang zhoumo*. Table 6.4 is a brief summary of this issue.

³⁰ According to H. S. Liu’s (2004, pp. 62-63) master thesis, the villagers’ lawsuits were not accepted by the Intermediate People’s Court of Huangshan Prefecture and the Higher People’s Court of Anhui Province. However, the interviewees told me that they filed two lawsuits. Interviewee 66 said he participated in the trials and provided details (verbally), and interviewee 68 said he listened to the proceedings. Here, the interviewees’ words are adopted, and this part is based on my interviews.

Table 6.4 Conflict issue: Tourism management rights

Conflict issue	Tourism management rights
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus local government and Jingyi Company
Direct cause	Local government deprived local peasants of their rights to develop their tourism resource; Low ticket revenue distribution percentage
Resistance form	Petition; Law; The media

In addition, a serious vending conflict happened many years ago. According to interviewee 63 and 65, a government official was stabbed by a vendor. Due to dissatisfaction with local government' management and arrangements on vending, fights often happen in daily life even today.

6.3.2.2 Other issues

Hongcun is a world heritage site and there are strict restrictions on house building. According to interviewee 65, she never signed an application for housing building in vacant land after 2003. But there are still many new buildings being built according to my observation. About this issue, there are three causes: unfair treatment, economic motivation, and the need for improving living conditions. Interviewee 65 explained that many buildings were built by outside businessmen (outsiders) who had *guanxi* (connections) with government officials, which made local villagers angry. Local villagers were not allowed to build, but outsiders could. Some people thought there might be corruption between local officials and the outsiders (Interviewee 68). Interviewee 64 wanted to build a two-storey building and run a hostel. She built one storey but was warned that if she continued building, it would be demolished. She was very angry about the inconsistency of the government acts because her neighbor finished a two-storey building in 2013, which was used as a hostel. She questioned a government official but he replied that this situation happened before his term and had

nothing to do with him. Pointing at a new building, 50 meters away from her house, her husband asked why the township government could build a two-storey building but not us (Figure 6.6). Some incidents happened during house demolition. For example, an old lady fainted and was sent to the hospital when part of her newly built house was torn down (Interviewee 63, 64, and 68). There were also some people who built houses to improve their living conditions, such as interviewee 68. However, no evidence shows that serious physical conflict has happened due to house building. One explanation is that local government had once resettled two batches of villagers who needed housing badly. To some extent, this alleviated the problem.



Figure 6.6 A two-storey concrete building built by the township government

Source: taken by the author (March 2016).

Though there is no evidence that serious physical conflict happened in Hongcun due to entry restrictions, it brought much inconvenience to local people (Interviewee 65 and 68; H. S. Liu, 2004). A villager complained that she was sick and her son's friends came to visit her but the company only permitted a few but not all his friends to enter.

There is a rule that if your friends or relatives come, you have to inform the company three hours in advance. Another villager complained that the security guards were informed in advance but sometimes visitors still encountered difficulty in entering.

6.3.3 Comparison

Tourism management rights and vending rights are two main conflict producing issues facing Hongcun. The former did not appear in Hongkeng. Serious vending conflict happened many years ago and has been defused, although local peasants still have complaints on this issue. In the early years of tourism development, the villagers wanted to manage their tourism resources by themselves but their right was removed by local government, which signed a contract with a company without their agreement. To control tourism development, they petitioned a couple of times but this did not work. Then, some villagers sued the Party secretary of Yi County and Jingyi Company. Though they lost the lawsuits, Jingyi Company advanced the percentage of ticket revenue distribution. From the previous analysis, we know that money and lawyers are factors restraining peasants from taking legal action. According to interviewee 66, money was not an issue for them though they spent much money on the two lawsuits. He explained that he opened the first public toilet in Hongcun, and he was the first one to earn money through writing words on bamboo. Meanwhile, his wife could earn money through drawing a picture on bamboo. He revealed that he earned enough money to run the two lawsuits. He also succeeded in employing lawyers. In the second lawsuit against Jingyi Company, a media outlet *Nanfang zhoumo* helped them with that.

Though the peasants took legal action to defend their rights, there are two things which need to be given attention. First, the initial lawsuit was not against Yi County Government or Yi County Committee of the CPC (Party Committee of Yi County),

but its Party secretary, Zhen Yang. In their eyes, the Party secretary did not represent the county government or the county Party committee. About this point, interviewee 66 repeated several times that it was a lawsuit against an individual. Why didn't they sue the county government or the county Party committee instead of its leader? He explained that that they took legal action under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, and they did not mean to be against local government. To prove this, they sent copies of case materials to all important Party and government organs of Yi County, such as the Yi County Government, the Party Committee of Yi County, the People's Congress of Yi County, and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference of Yi County. In his words, initiators of lawsuits might be regarded as *heihuo* (bad guys) and would *douzhezou* (be punished) if they did not inform these organs in advance.

Why did the Party secretary become the defendant? According to interviewee 66, it was he who introduced Jingyi Company to Hongcun. From the above analysis, we can see that these people were scared to sue the county government, which is consistent with a popular saying in rural areas "*min bu he guan dou*" (common people do not try to fight with officials). The result of this study is also consistent with the finding by Gechlik (2005) that people dare not sue because they are scared of retaliation from the government.

The second aspect that needs attention is the motivation of the eight villagers. According to interviewee 65, four of them had connections with the previous village company. ZU worked as a security guard in the previous village company; both interviewee 66 and ZT's daughters were tour guides; and ZS's sister was an accountant of the village company. All these people were fired with the establishment of Jingyi Company. ZX was the general manager of the village company but lost trust among Hongcun people. According to interviewee 65, ZX once reported to the county

government and hoped that the village company could be taken over by a new investor. He also made a contract with the county government and Jingyi Company in which he was promised a position in the new company. Though ZX was given a position, he was fired later. Interviewee 65 thought that ZX also had played an important role in the lawsuits. According to the above facts, the real aim of lawsuits is therefore doubtful, that is, it is more likely to have been egocentric.

Comparative thinking is embodied clearly in the issue of house building. Why could outsiders build new houses? Why could the township government build a new building? Why could some villagers build new buildings but not others? Compared with Hongkeng and Likeng, the building issue seems not very serious. One possible reason is that in 2006 and 2008, local government helped the villagers who needed housing badly, which in turn helped to alleviate this issue.

6.3.4 Summary

Tourism management rights and vending rights are two main conflict issues facing Hongcun, especially the former, in which local peasants used different resistance forms and spent much time and effort. Tourism management rights are local peasants' basic right and they have the right to decide how to develop tourism. To some extent, tourism management rights can determine the distribution of ticket revenues, so it has a direct influence on Hongcun villagers' economic interest. The vending issue was relatively severe in the early years of tourism development but it has been defused recently. In addition, local peasants expressed discontent with the house building issue and the entry issue. Unfair treatment and economic motivation are two causes for the house building issue. As with Hongkeng, local government is the most important party in such conflicts. However, unlike the other sites, Hongcun people used law to defend their rights and interests. Though legal action was taken, the target was not

local government. One important reason is that they were afraid of retaliation.

6.4 Case Study Four: Zhaoxing, an Ethnic Minority Village

6.4.1 Introduction to Zhaoxing

Zhaoxing Village is in Liping County, Southeastern Guizhou Province (Figure 6.7). It was first established in the Song Dynasty, and has a history of about 1000 years. Surrounded by mountains, Zhaoxing sits at the bottom of a basin with a river going through it. Enjoying the reputation of the largest Dong village in Liping (H. Liu, 2013), it has a population of around 4000, and almost all (98%) of the population is from the Dong (Kam) minority (Cornet, 2015), one of the official ethnic minorities. Lu is the official surname for each Dong person, but everyone also has a private original surname. The villagers with the same private surname usually belong to one clan, called *dou*. Two or three “dou” make up of a team, called *tuan*. Zhaoxing is composed of five *tuans* Ren, Yi, Li, Zhi, and Xin, named after the five Confucian virtues of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity.

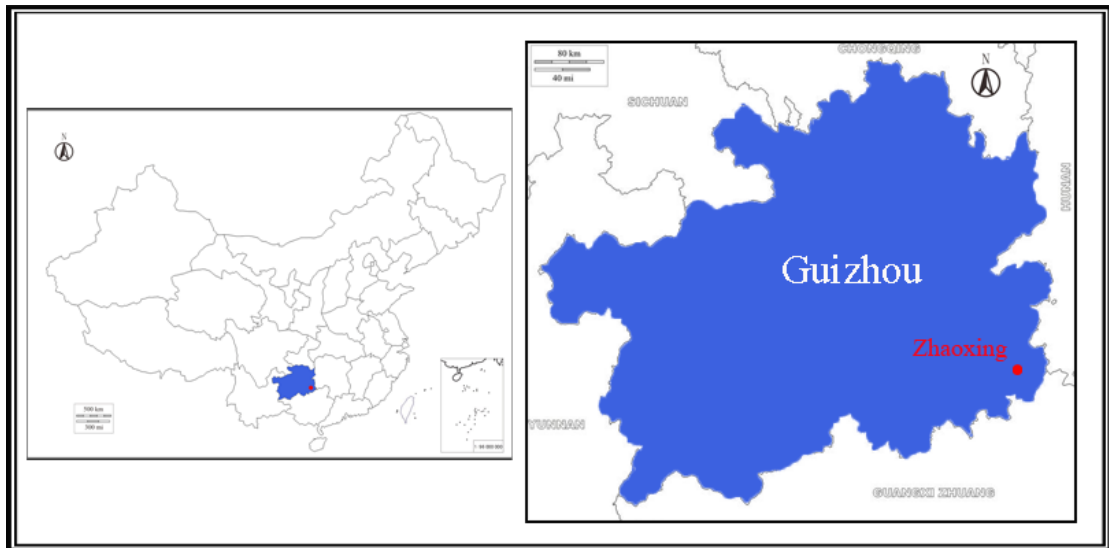


Figure 6.7 The location of Zhaoxing in China

Source: adapted from China (n.d.), Guizhou (n.d.), and National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation (n.d.).

Zhaoxing is famed for three treasures of Dong traditional culture: drum towers, wind and rain bridges, and Kam Grand Choirs (Y. Y. Li, 2007). The drum tower is a place of daily gathering or conference for the villagers. Every day, some villagers sit under the tower with a fireplace in the centre, resting, talking, or playing chess (Figure 6.8). There are five drum towers, five wind-rain bridges, and five stages corresponding to the five *tuans*. The original drum towers were destroyed during the *Cultural Revolution* (Osakes, 1997), and rebuilt in the 1980s. Kam Grand Choirs, a unique form of polyphonic choir singing comprising a musical genre, is also an important tourism attraction, and was inscribed by UNESCO on the list of world intangible cultural heritage in 2009 (Ingram, 2012). Along the river are Dong minority's traditional *ganlan* style residential buildings. In 2005, it was chosen as one of the six most beautiful villages in China by the *National Geography of China*; in 2007, it was listed as one of the most attractive places by the famous magazine, *National Geographic*, in its *Traveler* edition (Cornet, 2009).



Figure 6.8 Local villagers resting in a Drum tower

Source: taken by the author (March 2016).

Although it has a high reputation, this developed very slowly due to its isolated geographic location and bad traffic conditions in the 1980s and 1990s. This situation did not change until the 21st century with the involvement of outsiders who run hostels, restaurants and so on (Cornet, 2015). In 2003, a company named Guiyang Shiji fenghua Tourism Investment Co., Ltd. (Shiji fenghua) began to invest and develop Zhaoxing's tourism. About 28,000 tourists visited Zhaoxing in 2004, and the number rose to 42,000 in 2005 and 65,000 in 2006 (Cornet, 2009, p. 200). In 2014, Zhaoxing Tourism Development Co., Ltd. (Zhaoxing Company), a county-owned enterprise, took over the business from Shiji fenghua.

6.4.2 Conflict and resistance

6.4.2.1 Conflict issue: House building

The biggest conflict issue in Zhaoxing is house building. The riot on June 27, 2015 was triggered by the government demolishing houses that were being built.

According to Zhaoxing villagers, on June 27, 2015, local government demolished two houses under construction, and conflict happened. The demolition and the following incident in which a female villager was beaten triggered local people's anger (Interviewee 69, 72, and 76). Soon, more and more villagers joined the group of complainers and a riot erupted that day. This protest was not organized and villagers came and participated automatically (Interviewee 69, 72, 73, 74, and 75). According to interviewee 72, not only villagers in Zhaoxing participated but also people from nearby villages such as Tang'an and Guima whose houses were torn down in the process of tourism development also came and joined the resistance. A large number of policemen came that day, and dozens of police cars were overturned and destroyed by local villagers (Interviewee 72).

After one night's conflict, several negotiations were carried out in the following days between the villagers' representatives and government officials, in which they hoped that the government would not catch and punish the villagers because the government also did something wrong and should take responsibility for that (Interviewee 70, 76, and 77). In fact, local government officials did not punish people who participated in the destruction until about two months later (Interviewee 69). To show their discontent with the government breaking their promise, the following Lusheng festival in October 2015, one of the most influential festivals of the Dong minority, was canceled by local villagers (Interviewee 70). Granted that Zhaoxing is different

from the other three sites because it is an ethnic minority village, what in fact caused the house building issue? This is analyzed from three aspects.

6.4.2.2 The need for housing

Firstly, Zhaoxing is located in a basin, surrounded by mountains. A prominent issue facing this village is limited land but a large population. As with other sites, villagers have a strong will to live in modern houses. Specifically, some old houses are in danger of collapse and are not appropriate to live in; they are often too small for a big family; and some people want to improve their living conditions. As with the Fujian *Tulou*, the Dong people's traditional wooden *ganlan* buildings have disadvantages, and cannot meet modern people's needs. For example, modern toilets cannot be installed in the old houses; the wooden floor is not water-proof and water can leak to the first floor from the second floor because of cracks. One villager complained (Interviewee 75). "Why can you live in a brick building while we have to live in this kind of house?" They have the right to improve their living conditions, but this right has been taken from them in the context of preserving the original appearance of the village and developing tourism.

6.4.2.3 Economic motivation

Another important cause for conflict is the incentive of economic interest. More and more outsiders flooded into Zhaoxing and rented local villagers' houses to run hostels, restaurants, or souvenir shops. According to interviewee 70, a restaurant owner, more than half of the businessmen are outsiders. Local people are glad to rent out their houses because they do not have the experience and knowledge run a business and cannot compete with outsiders (Interviewee 69). Motivated by economic interest, many villagers want to build big houses. Interviewee 72 rented his own house out at a

high price [over ¥100,000 (\$15,243.9) per year], and rented another cheaper one for his family. Now, he is building another one and plans to rent it out.



Figure 6.9 Houses being built in Zhaoxing
Source: taken by the author (March-April 2016).

Table 6.5 shows the average per capital disposable income (PCDI) of rural people in Guizhou Province. From the table, we can see that the price of renting out a house is much higher than the average income. On the profit, interviewee 72 went on a trip in

Hainan in 2015, a southern province of China, and it was his first time to take a plane in his life. He planned to travel to Sichuang Province in 2016. Interviewee 69 built a three-storey building and rented it out to an outsider to run a hostel, and he finished another unapproved one by taking the opportunity of the riot. After the riot, Zhaoxing villagers realized that local officials would not dare to tear down their houses in a short time, and many of them started construction. When I visited this village at the end of March 2016, it was like a big construction site and many houses were being rapidly built (Figure 6.9). And many people had put up rental advertisements when the houses are still under construction, as shown in Figure 6.9.

Table 6.5 Per capital disposable income (PCDI) of rural residents in Guizhou Province

Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
PCDI (¥)	7,387 ^a	6,671 ^b	5,434 ^c	4,753 ^d	4,145 ^e
PCDI (\$)	1,126.07	1,016.92	767.38	724.54	631.86

Note. ^aThe data in 2015 is cited from Guizhou Provincial Bureau of Statistics (2016). ^bThe data in 2014 is cited from Guizhou Provincial Bureau of Statistics (2015). ^cThe data in 2013 is cited from Guizhou Provincial Bureau of Statistics (2014). ^dThe data in 2012 is cited from Guizhou Provincial Bureau of Statistics (2013). ^eThe data in 2011 is cited from Guizhou Provincial Bureau of Statistics (2012).

6.4.2.4 Unfair treatment

According to local villagers, they applied to local government for house building approval but there was no reply even after one or two years, as in Hongcun and Likeng. Local people were not allowed to build new houses but local government did. Instead of resolving the housing issue, local government expropriated a piece of land from Zhaoxing and built commercial facilities, which made local villagers angry (Interviewee 71 and 75). On this point, the narrative is similar to that of Hongkeng. As early as 2003, local people expressed discontent with an oversized building built by

Shiji fenghua, the Zhaoxing VIP hotel, which was thought to be a violation of a contract signed by Zhaoxing, the tourism company, and the county government. For this, the villagers sent petition letters to higher authorities (Cornet, 2015). Table 6.6 is a summary of this issue.

Table 6.6 Conflict issue: House building

Conflict issue	House building
Conflicting party	Local peasants versus local government
Direct cause	The need for housing; Economic motivation; Perceived unfair treatment
Resistance form	Riot; Petition

Other issues Zhaoxing villagers are dissatisfied with include entry restrictions and land expropriation. Local people were not allowed to enter with tricycles except at noon or in the evening. Tricycles are very important transportation vehicles in daily life for local people, such as the transportation of farm tools and grains. However, the regulation on entry brought a lot of inconvenience to local people (Interviewee 69 and 71). In addition, though local people did not want their land to be expropriated, they had no choice in the matter (Interviewee 75).

6.4.3 Comparison

6.4.3.1 Ethnicity and inequality

In the chapter about tourism impacts on local communities, we saw that unequal distribution of economic benefits between local people and outsiders may happen during tourism development. In an area or a country with diverse ethnic groups, many researchers note that the ethnic majority is usually in an advantageous position, and

becomes a dominant group which exploits ethnic minority groups in the process of tourism development (Wood, 1997, p. 16). Here, I want to further discuss this topic by using three cases distributed in different countries: Tibet in China, San Cristobal in Mexico, and Ban Suay in Thailand.

There are fifty-six official ethnic groups in China, with the Han Chinese the biggest. Tibet is in southwestern China, at an average altitude of over 4000 meters. Due to its high altitude and its extreme natural environment, such as thin air, low temperatures, and complex geological structures, access to this area has been very difficult. Tibet is the last province-level entity to have a railway in Mainland China. The Qinghai-Tibet railway, opened to traffic in 2006, is the first railway connecting Tibet to other provinces. This railway provides much convenience for people travelling to Tibet, and has helped to promote its tourism development.

However, with the massive growth of tourism in Tibet, Y. C. Zhu and Blachford (2012, p. 728) note that newly created employment opportunities are often filled by Han and other non-Tibetans although 90.48% of the population in Tibet is Tibetan (Tibet Bureau of Statistics, 2011). To explain this, based on a study in San Cristobal, an isolated and high-altitude region in Mexico, van den Berghe (1992, p. 236) notes that a tripartite division of labor is formed in the process of ethnic tourism: tourists-middlemen-tourees. The ethnic majority plays a role of middlemen, occupying the upstream markets, and “selling” ethnic minorities to tourists, while the ethnic minorities are tourees and in a subordinate position (Wood, 1997, p. 16; van den Berghe, 1992). The middlemen monopolize hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, bus rentals, and stores, while the ethnic minorities often work on low-wage jobs, such as vendors and craft workers (van den Berghe, 1992, pp. 241-243). Importantly, these different roles in the tourism system (food chain) determine the unequal revenue distributions. Middlemen generally are at the top of the tourism system (food chain)

and always gain the most profit while the tourees only get a little. This is further illustrated by Ban Suay village, a highland minority village located in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand. Michaud (1997, p. 144) finds that only 2.3% of tourist expenditures is received by local ethnic minority villagers, and as high as 97.7% flows to the ethnic majority (middlemen). For the purposes of the present study, analysis of the above phenomenon is carried out from three aspects: the scholars and villagers, other ethnic minorities and foreigners, and the ethnic majority.

The first aspect is the views of the scholars and villagers. These three cases have a common feature in that all of them are in geographically isolated areas with poor accessibility and economic backwardness. van den Berghe (1992, p. 237) notes that tourees often appear in underdeveloped countries, or the economically and politically marginal areas of developed countries. Together with a series of other case studies (e.g., Altman, 1989, p. 471; Davis, 2006, p. 22; Davis, 2007, p. 3; Simons, 2000, p. 422; H. Wang, Yang, Chen, Yang, & Li, 2010; L. Yang & Wall, 2009, pp. 564, 568), the researchers of the three case studies admit that knowledge (including business experience and language skills), and capital are main factors restraining ethnic minorities from developing tourism business, which leads to the domination of ethnic majorities or non-locals.

Take language skills as an example. Language skills are regard as an important form of human capital (Chiswick & Miller, 2003). Several studies have shown the positive effects of language proficiency in generating earnings (Bleakley & Chin, 2004; Chiswick & Miller, 1995; Chiswick & Miller, 2003). Studies in China find a similar result. Based on a survey on internal migrants in China's urban labor market, Gao and Smyth (2011) note that the coefficient between Mandarin proficiency and economic returns is statistically significant for females, and that a possible explanation is that female migrants are more likely to work on jobs which need greater contact with

urban people. Tourism is a service industry so direct and frequent contact with tourists from all directions is necessary. To some extent, language skills are an important index of the level of service. Therefore, language skills or Mandarin proficiency is particularly important in tourism. In Zhaoxing, local peasants speak their own language in daily life and many people cannot speak Mandarin clearly and fluently, especially old people. Like other tourist villages in ethnic minority areas, such as Xishuangbanna (Davis, 2006, p. 22), language skills are thus a factor restraining local people from participating in tourism. In addition, villagers in Zhaoxing expressed the similar opinion that they do not know how to do business and cannot compete with outsiders (Interviewee 69 and 70). Rather than doing tourism business on their own, Zhaoxing villagers like renting their houses to outsiders.

The second aspect is the fact of entry of other ethnic minorities and foreigners. Aside from the ethnic majority, we can find many cases in which other ethnic minorities and foreigners migrate to some ethnic minority areas to do tourism business although their number is small. A few examples located in different ethnic minority areas of the world are shown here: Tibet and Xinjiang in China, Bali in Indonesia, and Lao Chai in Vietnam. Tibet and Xinjiang are the only two provinces in China where the population of ethnic minorities exceeds Han Chinese. As tourism booms in Tibet, many job opportunities are created, which are not only occupied by the Han but also by the Hui (Y. C. Zhu & Blachford, 2012, pp. 728-729), another ethnic minority in China.

Besides the ethnic minorities of China, foreigners also come to Tibet to do business. Though there were protests against their entry in the name of cultural invasion, KFC and InterContinental still started their business in Tibet. KFC, an American fast-food giant, opened its first restaurant in 2016 ("Tibet's First KFC," 2016) and the InterContinental Hotels Group, one of the biggest hotel companies in the world, built a hotel in Lhasa in 2014 ("InterContinental," 2014). In three Tuvan (an ethnic

minority) villages of Xinjiang, China, family hosting businesses are dominated by Kazas and Mongols, two other ethnic minorities of China (H. Wang et al., 2010). In Bali, Indonesia, one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, the tourism industry is dominated by foreign investment (Giap et al., 2015, p. 58). In Lao Chai, a commune with five villages in Vietnam, a local restaurant was invested by a New Zealander (Yotsumoto et al., 2015, p. 111).

From the above analysis, we can see that the migration of ethnic majorities or foreigners to ethnic tourism areas is a market-driven result. In other words, knowledge and capital play an important role in tourism operation in the current market economy system. Compared to ethnic minorities, there are many more people with capital and business knowledge in the ethnic majority, or foreigner's groups. Therefore, it is easy to understand that ethnic tourism is often dominated by the ethnic majority in the market economy. Although this phenomenon appears in many areas, we should be careful when analyzing it. For example, in a study on ethnic tourism in Xishuangbanna, China, L. Yang, Wall and Smith (2008, p. 759) note that:

Since the 1980s, the government has formulated a series of preferential policies for Han tourism developers. Tax exemptions of three to eight years have been offered for those investing in businesses and developing facilities, along with low land-use fees and extensions of tax exemption for projects undertaken in underdeveloped minority areas (Ge, 1995).

The aim of these policies is of course to attract investment and they do not distinguish Han people, foreigners, or ethnic minorities overly (Ge, 1995, pp. 220-221), although more investors might be Han people. So, using "Han tourism developers" to replace "all people" in the context of discussing tensions in ethnic tourism it is easy to make people form a misconception about national prejudice or that the government is

discriminating against ethnic minorities deliberately.

The third consideration is the situation within ethnic majorities themselves. The flow of capital and knowledge is not unique in ethnic minority areas, but is also common in ethnic majority areas. Compared with urban citizens, rural people are usually not well educated and are disadvantaged in doing business. Therefore, rural sites with abundant tourism attractions are easily “invaded” by outsiders; Hongcun is an example. Though Hongcun is in eastern China and are composed of Han Chinese, very few local people were employed by the tourism company. In addition, local government and the company took away much of the ticket revenue (Ying & Zhou, 2007, p. 102). At the same time, many outsiders rent local people’s houses or build new houses to do business (Interviewee 67 and 68). Though the *Tulou* Company is operated by Han Chinese, few Hongkeng villagers take positions of middle and top management, and the staff employed by the company is usually engaged in low-wage work, such as cleaners, scenic tour car drivers, and tour guides (X. L. Chen 2011; Interviewee 33). Therefore, there is no obvious difference between ethnic minority areas and ethnic majority areas in this aspect. Pursuing profits is an important or the most important aim of businessmen, but rural people are usually less educated and lack managerial knowledge, which is an important reason why few local villagers work as managers in a tourism company.

Though many businesses are dominated by outsiders in Zhaoxing, local people can benefit through continuous contact with them. For example, interviewee 70, running a hostel in Zhaoxing, visited outsiders’ hotels and learned how to decorate his own. Compared with outsiders, local people may not have much connection with travel agencies, which restricted their businesses in the past. However, the popularity of mobile phones and computers makes online bookings or telephone bookings easy and convenient, reducing the difficulty in opening hostels and dependence on travel

agencies, because local people can target the increasing number of solo tourists.

6.4.3.2 Ethnicity and power

In chapter three, I described China's land occupancy system. Land in rural China is generally collective land, and individual villagers only have its usage right rather than its ownership. According to a notice issued by the General Office of the State Council in 1999 (No. 39)³¹, urban people cannot buy rural people's houses or build houses on rural collective land. It means that if outsiders want to do business in ethnic villages, they have to rent local villagers' houses. From the case of Zhaoxing, we can see that many people rent their houses to outsiders at market-oriented prices. With the continuous increase of tourists in Zhaoxing in recent years, more and more outsiders have come to this ethnic village, and local people benefit from renting out their houses. For example, after renting out his house, interviewee 72 took a plane (the first time in his life) to Hainan as a tourist.

Thus, although local people are powerless compared with the government and big enterprises, they have a big say in front of individual outsiders. In other words, at least they can decide whether to rent out their houses or not and negotiate with outsiders about the rent. Sometimes local people are even more powerful than these individual outsiders. The old town of Lijiang is a striking example (Yunnan Province, China). It was recognized as a world cultural heritage site in 1997. In the past ten years, it has been a hot tourist spot. The influx of tourists attracts a large number of outside businessmen and investment, which pushes up house rentals year by year. On the lure of higher rent, local people frequently break contracts signed with outsiders. To force

³¹ The full text of this notice is available on the website of http://www.mlr.gov.cn/zwgk/flfg/tdglflfg/200412/t20041227_633701.htm

outsiders to quit or to increase rent, locals use many ways to harass or threaten them, affecting their normal operation. A famous one is the “dung splashing incident”. A landlord splashed dung on the gate of a hostel to disturb the renter’s tourism business (Y. Yang, Yang, & Chen, 2014). According to the director of Lijiang Hostel Chamber of Commerce, the default rate of local people on house renting may exceed 80%, and more than one hundred similar cases were heard by a local court in 2013 (W. C. Wang, 2015; Y. Yang, Yang, & Chen, 2014). Confronting frequent breach of contract, 223 outside businessmen sent a petition letter to the local government in 2014 and requested the latter to intervene (W. C. Wang, 2015). Due to a series of disputes on house renting, some outsiders gave up their businesses and chose to flee from Lijiang (W. C. Wang, 2015).

During the period of my field study, many Zhaoxing villagers were building new houses. Some of them are even as high as six stories. This means that “capital” is not a big problem for local people. Local villagers are owners of these houses, which is different from the case of San Cristobal, where hostels and restaurants are usually owned by the ethnic majority. However, although local villagers are owners, many of them do not participate in tourism operations directly, and only play the role of “landlord” due to their lack of business knowledge. In addition, due to the popularity of computers and mobile phones, the villagers can get rid of the traditional “middlemen”, travel agencies, and contact tourists directly. Strictly speaking, Zhaoxing villagers are neither pure “tourees” nor van den Berghe’s “middlemen”.

6.4.3.3 Difference between Cornet’s interpretation and my findings

6.4.3.3.1 Issues found by Cornet

In her paper “Tourism development and resistance in China” published in the journal

of *Annals of Tourism Research* (Volume 52), Cornet (2015) explored conflict events and local peasants' resistance behavior in a case study of Zhaoxing. Between 2003 and 2013, local tourism was operated by a company named Shiji fenghua whose management are Han Chinese. During this period, a couple of incidents, big and small, happened. Cornet interprets these conflict events using concepts such as ethnicity, agency, and resistance. She notes that local peasants use rightful resistance and everyday politics to express their agency; but in doing this they side with local authorities of the same ethnicity, and are against Han high officials and the Han-run tourism company.

Thus, according to Cornet, ethnicity plays an important role in the conflict of Zhaoxing. She notes that ethnicity is an important component in her study that shapes "the interaction between villagers and higher-levels of government (mainly Han)", and plays a role in tourism development; "not only as the source of attraction but also as part of the agency villagers express" (p. 32). The Han-run private tourism company, under the direct control of the higher-level of Guizhou Provincial Government, is above local Dong leaders and imposes its views on the village as "a Han-controlled outside force" (pp. 39, 41). This Han-run company controls village affairs involving land expropriation, an oversized building, and the relocation of a school and the township government office (pp. 36-37). The cultural and historical division between Han and non-Han is thus exacerbated by the development of ethnic tourism in Zhaoxing (p. 32). In addition, she notes that the Dong people "reaffirmed their distinctiveness from the Han" by "directing resentment toward a Han-managed company" (p. 41), and in contrast to higher authorities, the local and township "governments" side with the villagers because their leaders are non-Han (pp. 29, 39). This section analyzes the incidents mentioned in her paper.

(1) Contract signing and benefit distribution. In 2003, Shijie fenghua signed a 50-year

contract with the Liping County Government and Zhaoxing Village, in which Zhaoxing Village can get a certain percentage of distribution of taxes³² collected from hotels, restaurants, and other businesses. Some villagers did not agree with the percentage and it was adjusted a little higher afterward. Even so, they still thought they were forced to sign. In terms of contracts between local people and other stakeholders concerning benefit distribution, Zhaoxing is not unique and much worse cases happen in Han majority areas, where villagers and villagers' committees are often bypassed and ignored completely by local government. In other words, they even do not get a chance to sign a contract. In Likeng, a tourism company signed a three-year contract with the local township government without the agreement of the villagers in 2007 (Geng, Hu, & Luo, 2011). Three years later, during the negotiation with local government and the tourism company on the new contract, the son of a negotiator of local villagers was stabbed (H. L. Wang, 2011; X. H. Zhao, 2011). Similar things happened in Hongcun (H. S. Liu, 2004; M. L. Zhai, 2002): the Yi County Government bypassed local villagers and directly signed a contract with a tourism company. Although Hongcun villagers lodged complaints and filed legal cases, this did not work. In Hongkeng, the distribution of ticket revenues to villagers was won over through a collective protest in the form of blocking traffic (X. L. Chen, 2011). From these examples, we can see a common fact that villages have no voice in tourism development, be it an ethnic majority village or an ethnic minority village.

Uneven benefit distribution has been an important issue during tourism development and an important cause of conflict (J. J. Yang, Ryan, & Zhang, 2013b, p. 85). Ticket mode was implemented in Zhaoxing in 2014. According to local people, *Zhailao* and the village cadres participated in the negotiation on the distribution of ticket revenues

³² Here, it is tax revenue rather than ticket revenue because Zhaoxing began to sell tickets in 2014.

with local government, and 20% of the ticket revenues were decided to distribute to Zhaoxing villagers (Interviewee 77). This percentage is higher than the other three villages in Han areas, among which it is 8% in Hongcun (H. S. Liu, 2004, p. 63), 19-21% in Likeng (H. L. Wang, 2011; X. H. Zhao, 2011), and 8% in Hongkeng (X. L. Chen, 2011; Qu, 2011). Compared to tourist villages in Han areas in regard to benefit distribution, discrimination is not found in Zhaoxing and their villagers even enjoy a better distribution result. Based on the above analysis, I did not find a strong connection between ethnicity and conflict in Zhaoxing.

(2) Land expropriation and an oversized building. According to the 50-year contract, no party can construct brick and oversized buildings in Zhaoxing to “maintain the purity of the ethnic village” (Cornet, 2015, p. 36). However, Shiji fenghua violated this contract. It expropriated a piece of farmland and constructed an oversized hotel on it which made Zhaoxing villagers angry enough to send a petition letter to a higher authority. To support her opinion, Cornet cited the example of Xishuangbanna in which a Han company built modern buildings but local Dai people were prohibited from doing so.

Firstly, the decision of land expropriation was made by local government instead of the company that did not have the authority. To attract investment, providing a piece of land by the local government is understandable, which will be further discussed. Secondly, much worse incidents happened in other tourist villages. To build infrastructure and tourist facilities, several rounds of large scale land expropriation happened in Hongkeng; from the 1990s to around 2010. In the process of land expropriation, a series of conflicts happened. Local people even stood in front of an excavator and tried to stop their farmland being expropriated. Though the Yongding County Government realized that Hongkeng villagers needed land to build houses (The State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China, 2008), it expropriated a large

piece of land on which a large commercial real estate development was established, but ignored local people's need.

Building an oversized building is in violation of the contract signed with Zhaoxing villagers, which is not fair for them. Being treated unfairly due to house building did not only occur in Zhaoxing and Xishuangbanna but also other villages in Han areas, including Hongcun, Likeng, and Hongkeng. Based on these case studies, three types of unfairness were found. The first type is that some villagers built houses but other villagers were not allowed, such as in Hongkeng and Likeng; the second one is that local villagers were not approved to build houses but outside businessmen (including tourism companies) were, such as in Hongcun, which is similar to what happened in Zhaoxing and Xishuangbanna; and the last one is that local government built new buildings but local people were not allowed to, such as in Hongcun. Unfair treatment made local people disappointed and angry. As with Zhaoxing, villagers in other villages lodged complaints, such as in Likeng. In addition, similar conditions happened in other Han areas, such as in Mount Eemi (X. D. Li, Wei, & Lei, 2014). In fact, only the government has the authority to approve house building in China. Shiji fenghua's act shows that this building was permitted by local government, and that this was unfair to local villagers who were not allowed to build new houses. The key to this problem lies in local government. Therefore, house building is common issue in tourist villages and the role of ethnicity in this issue is not very obvious.

(3) Moving a school out. In 2006, there were plans to move the school in the village to outside. Local villagers opposed this project and sent a petition letter to the county authorities, in which they claimed that they would not cooperate in tourism development and drive the company out. Firstly, the decision of moving the school outside was made by local government officials instead of the company that did not have the authority. Secondly, the specific reason for the relocation of the school is

unknown. Was it due to its “modernity” mentioned by Cornet (2015, p. 40)? Was there any exchange of interests between local government and the tourism company behind the decision? From the petition letter translated by Cornet, it can be seen that Zhaoxing villagers just wanted to use the tourism company as a means of pressuring local government. Instead of restricting their interests to tourism companies, tourists were often used by local villagers to pressure local government in other cases. A common way is blocking roads to tourist destinations and stopping tourists from entering. This has happened in many tourist villages in Han areas, such as Hongcun (M. L. Zhai, 2002), Likeng (H. L. Wang, 2011; X. H. Zhao, 2011), Hongkeng (X. L. Chen, 2011), and Mount Emei (X. D. Li, Wei, & Lei, 2014; S. L. Zhang, 2014).

(4) Authenticity of the Dong culture. Cornet mentioned three events to interpret the issue of cultural authenticity. An antique store owner pointed out that the costumes worn by the company’s performance team were not made of Dong cloth. To express his dissatisfaction, he refused to lend his antiques to the company. Similar to the owner of the antique store, the head of the cultural bureau of the local township government was also discontented, and tried to revive the other performance team made up of Zhaoxing villagers. Due to his recriminations, all the villagers performing in Shiji fenghua left the company together with low income. The company had to hire workers from a nearby county. Disagreeing with the inauthenticity of Dong culture presentations, local villagers resisted overtly and quietly. From these examples, we can see that they want to maintain their ethnic characteristics.

Here, I want to further interpret these actions. Different from these people’s behavior, I saw a more obvious opposite phenomenon. To pursue a comfortable life and earn more money, many people constructed brick and concrete buildings although their exteriors are wrapped with wood. The height of the newly built buildings is also beyond the original ones and the height set by local government (here, I do not mean

that they do not have the right of pursuing modern life). Some people even built more than one big modern house and many of these buildings were rented out for tourism business (please see 6.4.2.3). These examples show that their behavior contradicts their petition on the company' oversized building which says “ ... they (the company) expropriated farming fields to build high buildings which seriously affected the whole image of Zhaoxing as a Dong village” (Cornet, 2015, p. 36).

In her third example based on her interview in May 2009, Cornet notes that all the Zhaoxing villager performers left the company due to their disagreement with authenticity and low wages, which is inconsistent with other research results. H. Y. Wen's (2009) interview in July 2009 shows that there are twenty performers in the company who are from Zhaoxing village and other areas (p. 37). This number declined to thirteen people in 2010; among them nine being Zhaoxing villagers and four being from the other performing team (p. 40). H. Y. Wen's research also shows that most interviewed Zhaoxing villagers prefer the “adjusted” performance, view it more professional, and recommend tourists to watch the company's performance (p. 49). Here, the data from Cornet and H. Y. Wen is not consistent so more research is needed.

The presence of an “inauthentic” Dong culture cited by Cornet is related to the ethnic factor. However, one more thing needs to be considered, and that is that the “inauthenticity” of culture is already common given the huge influence of culture commodification. For the sake of attracting tourists, suiting their taste, and reducing costs, many indigenous cultures have been changed in reality. The loss of cultural authenticity due to tourism development is a global issue, and happens in ethnic minority areas, Han Chinese areas, and other countries in the world, as discussed in the literature review section. Losing cultural authenticity or destroying the original culture is a loss. It is an issue of cultural authenticity versus cultural commodification,

and an issue of cultural protection and economic development. Similar cases can be found in tourist villages in Han areas. For example, the traditional performance of “dragon dance” was popular in Hongkeng, but fewer villagers are interested in it nowadays. Meanwhile, the dragon is not made by hand with traditional materials of bamboo any more but produced in factories.

(5) Expulsion of the tourism company. Cornet notes that the company was expelled by Zhaoxing villagers. Terms like “expelled” (p. 29) and “eviction” (p. 40) were used. Based on Cornet’s paper and my field study, it can be seen that local villagers were dissatisfied with this company. However, the link between this dissatisfaction and ethnicity seems weak. And there is no evidence to suggest that it is the local villagers who played an important role in the company’s departure. It is common that local villagers are not satisfied with tourism companies, and conflict also often happens between them. In Hongkeng, the telephone lines of the local tourism company were destroyed, a security booth was burned (X. L. Chen, 2011), and a security guard was beaten half to death. In Likeng, the facilities of a tourism company were destroyed by villagers. In Hongcun, physical fights between local people and the tourism company often happened as well (M. L. Zhai, 2002). Instead of local villagers, local government has the power to make a company quit its tourism operation. In the case of Likeng, the Wuyuan County Government started a project of integrating local tourism companies into a big corporation in 2007. In this process, a couple of private companies were forced to sell their companies in spite of their refusal in the beginning (H. L. Wang, 2011; Y. F. Yu, 2011).

(6) Pressuring local government. A petition letter cited by Cornet states that Shiji fenghua forced the township government to move out from their original administrative building and changed it into a hotel. In Cornet’s words, it is a “symbolic power shift” (p. 36) between the township government and the tourism

company. However, firstly, to attract investment it is common for a government to offer preferential policies, such as land and tax policies. For example, to attract foreign investment, foreign-invested enterprises in China enjoy super-national treatment. The Corporate Tax rate was 33% for domestic companies, but it was only 15% for foreign companies before 2008. If this building is appropriate as a hotel, the behavior of the township government is therefore understandable. Secondly, there is not enough information on how the township government negotiated with the company on the use of this building. Even if this private company pressured the township government to move out, explaining it from the angle of “power of capital” may be more appropriate. In other words, I do not see a strong connection between this issue and ethnicity. Based on Cornet’s translation of the petition letter, no words relating to ethnicity were used or emphasized by the villagers. During my interviews, local villagers also expressed their dissatisfaction with this company, but did not point to ethnicity problems (Please see section 6.4.3.3.2).

(7) Ethnic identities of the local “government officials”. In her Abstract, Cornet states that “villagers sided with local authorities of their own ethnic group to resist Han-led higher levels of government” (p. 29). A typical example given by Cornet is that “local members of government decided to help and support them by signing the petitions and expressing grievances to higher level officials” (p. 40). Here, one point concerning China’s political system needs to be clarified because Cornet confuses “villagers’ committee” with “government”. There are five levels of government in China: the central government, provincial-level governments, prefectural-level governments, county-level governments, and township-level governments. The latter four levels are called local government. However, a villagers’ committee is a self-governing organization and does not belong to any level of government according to the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committee*. Therefore, members of villagers’ committees are not government staff. The “vice leader” (Cornet, 2010, p. 136) of a

township government is not the head/director of a villagers' committee either.

Thus, although villagers' committees are often intervened by local government and village Party branches (O'Brien & Han, 2009), it is not appropriate to equate the "villagers' committee" with "government". As a result, it is difficult to distinguish the acts of local government from that of the Zhaoxing villagers' committee in Cornet's paper. The "local members of government" mentioned in the example above should be the village committee members according to her description of petitions in the text (please see p. 37). Self-governance promised by the *Organic Law of the Villagers' Committee* is conceived as democratic election, decision making, self-management, and supervision (O'Brien & Han, 2009). The members of the villagers' committee themselves are Zhaoxing villagers. Furthermore, they are elected by Zhaoxing villagers, and maintaining local villagers' rights and interests is their duty. In Hongcun, the village committee members once led villagers to lodge a complaint with higher authorities concerning tourism development. This question will be further discussed in the section of 6.4.3.3.2.

(8) The deposit for building a house. In Zhaoxing, to make sure that the villagers follow the regulations when building or renovating traditional style houses, they were asked to submit a deposit of ¥2,000 (\$304.88) as a guarantee. However, it was rarely given back according to the Zhaoxing villagers. But here Zhaoxing is not unique; similar things also happened in Han areas, such as Hongkeng and Nanping. According to a document from Yongding County Government, local villagers need to submit a deposit of ¥100 (\$15.24) per square meter. A villager in Hongkeng submitted the deposit when building his current house, and did not expect to get the money back (Interviewee 45). In Nanping, a deposit of ¥30,000 (\$4573.17) is required to build a new house (J. J. Han & Zhang, 2011).

Cornet points out that local villagers might not be clear about, and often do not care who enunciated the regulations and policies, be it the company or the government, and the tourism company is only an easy target for them to express their dissatisfaction, and to exert pressure to the government to seek fairness or argue for benefits.

6.4.3.3.2 Information from my field study

To further clarify the relationship between conflict and ethnicity, the following three questions were asked in my field study:

Q1: What do you think of Shiji fenghua? If you are not satisfied with the company, is it because the manager belongs to Han people?

Q2: Was the 6.27 riot related to ethnicity?

Q3: What is your opinion on the ethnicity of the local government leaders, such as Han, Dong, or others?

A total of 9 villagers were interviewed³³, including ordinary people in different *tuans*, the people whose house was demolished, *Zhailao*³⁴, and a former village cadre. Referring to Question one, four people were asked and three of them expressed dissatisfaction (Table 6.7). But their dissatisfaction is related to the few benefits brought to Zhaoxing villagers by the company. The exception thought that the

³³ The three questions were asked with other questions. Not all the three questions were referred to during the interviews due to some reasons, such as time limits.

³⁴ *Zhailao* are elected villagers' representatives, but are different from the official villagers' representatives. The term of *Zhailao* is not fixed, and can be one year, two years, or more years. The official villagers' representatives are elected every three years according to the *Organic Law of the Villager' Committees*.

company created some jobs. Three other people also said that they did not mind the ethnicity of the general manager of the company, when answering other questions.

Table 6.7 Local villagers' answers to Question one

Number	Answer
1	(Dissatisfaction with Shiji fenghua) is not related to Han group but due to the few benefits it brought to us.
2	We do not have any ethnic prejudice. (Dissatisfaction with Shijie fenghua) is not related to ethnicity and the main reason is that we did not benefit from the company.
3	It did not bring benefits to us so we are not satisfied. It has nothing to do with the ethnicity of the general manager.
4	In my opinion, this company did ok because it created jobs. Houses along the street were rented out. Hotels and restaurants were built.

About Question two, seven villagers were asked and they attributed the riot to local government, including the one whose house was demolished on June 27 (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8 Local villagers' answers to Question two

Number	Answer
1	It is related to the government and has nothing to do with individuals or Han group. It (the government) crossed the line and beat people.
2	There is no ethnic conflict at all (in Zhaoxing). It has nothing to do with ethnicity. The main responsibility lies in the government.
3	It has nothing to do with Han group and is related to the demolition and beating people by the government.
4	It has nothing to do with ethnicity but was triggered by popular indignation accumulated in the past years.
5	It is related to house demolition and has nothing to do with Han or Dong group.

Note. Number 5 includes three people who were interviewed together and expressed the same opinion.

Concerning Question three, eight villagers were asked and all of them stated clearly that there was no ethnic prejudice and did not mind who was the leader of local government (Table 6.9).

Table 6.9 Local villagers' answers to Question three

Number	Answer
1	Dissatisfaction with the government has nothing to do with the ethnicity of the government leaders. It is related to the government that did not do its job well and did not resolve problems.
2	Dissatisfaction with the government has nothing to do with the ethnicity of the leaders of local government.
3	Both Han and Dong people are working in the government. It has nothing to do with ethnicity.
4	Both Han and Dong are the same. As long as they serve people, who is the leader has nothing to do with me. If you do well, people will follow you. No matter who is the leader, Han, Dong, or Miao, it is the same and there is no ethnic conflict.
5	I have no problem with the ethnicity of the leaders.
6	I have no problem with the ethnicity of the leaders. No matter which ethnic group, I have no ethnic prejudice and no personal bias.

Note. Number 4 includes three people who were interviewed together and expressed the same opinion.

From the above analysis of the incidents mentioned by Cornet, it can be seen that there are no obvious differences between Zhaoxing and other sites. Indeed, all these incidents happened in other non-ethnic minority areas, and the situation was even worse at other sites. According to the comparison with other sites, the causal analysis of conflict in chapter five and the above answers, it can be concluded that the conflict in Zhaoxing may be related to ethnicity but the connection is not strong based on current research.

6.4.3.4 An analysis of ticket revenue distribution and the riot

In fact, the 6.27 riot was the result of public grievance accumulated in previous years. The demolition on June 27 was only a fuse. Local villagers have not been satisfied with local government for a long time, such as house building, entry restrictions, and land expropriation. Not only Zhaoxing but also nearby villages participated in the riot. For example, villagers from Tang'an and Guima whose houses were demolished also joined in the riot (Interviewee 72).

Ticket revenue distribution is a common issue at other sites but it does not appear in Zhaoxing. Visiting Zhaoxing was free of charge before 2014 so it is understandable that there was no conflict on ticket revenue distribution. Ticket mode has been implemented in Zhaoxing Since 2014. The ticket revenues of 2014 were distributed and each person got less than ¥200 (\$30.49). The revenue for 2015 had not been distributed when I did field study in the village in March-April 2016, and local people were dissatisfied (Interviewee 70). If this situation often happens and the distribution amount is still little in the future, it may become a conflict issue like at other sites.

Local villagers lodged complaints on the house building issue. But the most violent resistance was the riot in 2015. Riots are an important form of venting-anger resistance. Zhaoxing villagers had no clear appeal, and they just wanted to lease their accumulated anger. It was not organized, and happened suddenly due to a “demolition and beating incident” when local government demolished local people’s newly built house. It did not last long. During the riot, many police cars were overturned and destroyed. One or two months later, policemen came again and caught the villagers who participated in the destruction in the riot. Local people thought that local government broke its promise and cancelled the following Lusheng festival in protest.

Nevertheless, a direct result of the riot was that some previous appeals were met. In other words, conflict brought some change. For example, a new road was built and local people could drive their tricycles on it; and another parking lot was built and they could park their vehicles nearby. The most important influence might be related to house building. Due to this riot, many local officials were dismissed (Interviewee 70). Issues concerning social stability and officials' evaluation have been discussed in the previous chapters. It is not surprised that some officials were punished. After the riot, the villagers realized that local government would not dare to tear down their houses in the short term. Therefore, large scale house building started, and many villagers did not want to miss this opportunity (Figure 6.9). Interviewee 76 is a *Zhailao* and his new-built house is regarded as too high. Instead of tearing down the part exceeding the regulated height directly, government staff came to persuade him to tear it down by himself. It seems that local government is losing its control on house building, as in Likeng.

Comparative thinking is also obvious in Zhaoxing, especially in the issue of house building. The tourism company violated the contract with local villagers and built an oversized building. Then, a petition letter was sent to Beijing. After the 6.27 riot, more and more people joined the group of house builders. After seeing other people building without approval and punishment, interviewee 70 added one more storey based on his original building. He explained that he was not worried about this being demolished because he was not the only one, and if the unapproved ones were required to be demolished, all should be done equally. Interviewee 75 wondered that why other people could live in brick buildings but not Zhaoxing villagers.

6.4.4 Summary

House building is the most important conflict issue facing Zhaoxing. The need for

housing, economic motivation, and unfair treatment are three main reasons for this issue. The dissatisfaction with entry restrictions and land expropriation was also expressed by local villagers. Local people sent petition letters to higher authorities, but the most violent resistance was the 6.27 riot. The “demolition and beating incident” is only a fuse for this riot though; the real cause is the public grievances accumulated in the past years. In this, local government is the most important conflict inducing party. The connection between conflict and ethnicity is not strong, however, venting-anger resistance is risky and the detention of dozens of local villagers after the riot supports this.

6.5 Comparison among the Four Tourist Villages

Table 6.10 gives a comparison of issues between the above four tourist villages. Most major conflict issues in the supplemental cases appeared in the main case, Hongkeng. The exception is the issue of tourism management rights in Hongcun. House building, ticket revenue distribution, and vending are three common issues among these sites. These issues often appear at other tourist sites (X. Dong, 2011). The most important party in these conflicts is local government, including county governments and township governments. The specific causes have been analyzed in chapter five.

Table 6.10 Comparison among the four tourist villages

	Hongkeng	Likeng	Hongcun	Zhaoxing
Location	Fujian	Jiangxi	Anhui	Guizhou
World heritage	YES	NO	YES	NO
Ethnic minority	NO	NO	NO	YES
Population	2992	1180	1680	About 4000
Main conflict issues	House building; Ticket revenue distribution; Vending rights; Entry restrictions; Land expropriation; House demolition; Village elections	House building; Ticket revenue distribution; Vending rights	Vending rights; Tourism management rights	House building
Other issues		Entry restrictions; Land expropriation; village corruption	Entry restrictions; House building	Entry restrictions; Land expropriation
Main Conflicting parties	Peasants versus local government	Peasants versus local government	Peasants versus local government	Peasants versus local government
Main causes	Infringement of peasants' basic rights and interests; unfair treatment	Infringement of peasants' basic rights and interests; Economic motivation; Unfair treatment	Infringement of peasants' basic rights and interests; Economic motivation; Unfair treatment	Infringement of peasants' basic rights and interests; Economic motivation; Unfair treatment
Main resistance forms	Petition; Traffic blockade	Petition; Traffic blockade	Petition; Law	Petition; Riot

Note. An issue is categorized as “other issues” in this study if it is just an isolated incident and does not cause much influence or it is hard to judge whether it is related to tourism or not based on current information. The number of Likeng’s population (2016) is from interviewee 53 because of no official data.

As with the issues in Hongkeng, tourism management rights are also a local villagers' basic right. Tourism operation in a tourist village belongs to village affairs. Owning a decisive say on this right is a sign of self-governance. Meanwhile, owning the right provides villagers with a likelihood of attaining more economic benefits though it is hard to achieve due to two major restrictive factors. The first one is village democracy. From previous discussions, we know that the process of village democracy is tough. Without village democracy, it is hard to achieve fair economic distribution among villagers. The second factor is management knowledge. Most villagers are not well-educated and they do not have much knowledge concerning management, which constrains them in developing tourism efficiently on their own. To further illustrate the two factors, a brief comparative analysis between Xidi and Hongcun is carried out here. Xidi is an example of self-management. Both Xidi and Hongcun are in Yi County and have similar tourism resources. In 2000, they applied for the title of world heritage as a whole and were listed as world heritage at the same time.

According to X. M. Zhang (2006), Xidi tourism had been managed by Xidi villagers since 1986. They even established a village company in 1993. To be accurate, it was the village elites, such as the villagers' committee and the village Party branch, who had the biggest say on its running. Xidi villagers had requested the company to publicize the accounts, which was just ignored by the company in the name of trade secrets (X. M. Zhang, 2006). For this, they petitioned several times. Since 2004, both the total ticket revenues and per capita ticket revenue distribution in Hongcun have exceeded Xidi (Z. H. Liu, 2013). In 2013, the tourism management rights of Xidi were transferred to a county-owned enterprise, a sign of the failure of the self-management mode. X. M. Zhang (2006) summaries the disadvantages of the village company, including outdated management system, ill management, limited ability of managers and so on. These disadvantages, plus the lack of village democracy, make it difficult for the villagers to run tourism well by themselves. It

should also be noted that Hongcun tourism was also run by a village company for a short period. Similarly, the company refused to publicize accounts and made the villagers angry. It lasted for only one year. In Hongkeng, the villagers also expressed the similar opinion that it would be worse if tourism was run by the villagers' committee (Interviewee 9).

Among the four sites, Zhaoxing is the only one which has no vending issue. In fact, there are few people vending along the street targeting tourists in Zhaoxing. There are vegetable markets in the village but they mainly target residents. A possible explanation is that local people have not realized this business opportunity.

The entry of outsiders made Zhaoxing villagers realize that they could earn money through tourism. Instead of doing business by themselves though, many of them built houses, and rented them to outsiders due to their lack of business knowledge, which is different to the situation in Hongkeng and Likeng. In Likeng, every day, you can see many villagers waiting in the fork heading to the entrance to grab tourists (Figure 6.10³⁵), a situation that is not found in Zhaoxing. One possible interpretation is that the outsiders in Zhaoxing have more channels to sell their rooms, such as cooperating with travel agencies, so they do not need to follow the Likeng villagers' "clumsy" approach of wait-follow-inquiry. There are not many outsiders in Hongkeng presently and a similar scene in Likeng can also be seen in Hongkeng. A difference is that Hongkeng villagers in the entrance mainly provide tour guide services.

³⁵ There are two groups of people. Group one is mainly composed of males who are responsible for observing cars from one direction. Group two is made up of females who are responsible for the other direction. People in group one take turns in following cars to the parking lot and ask them if they need accommodation service (wait-follow-inquiry). The parking lot (entrance) is about 150 meters away from their current location. Group two adopts the principle of "first see, first serve". If it is hard to determine who sees first, "rock-paper-scissors" will be taken.



Group one

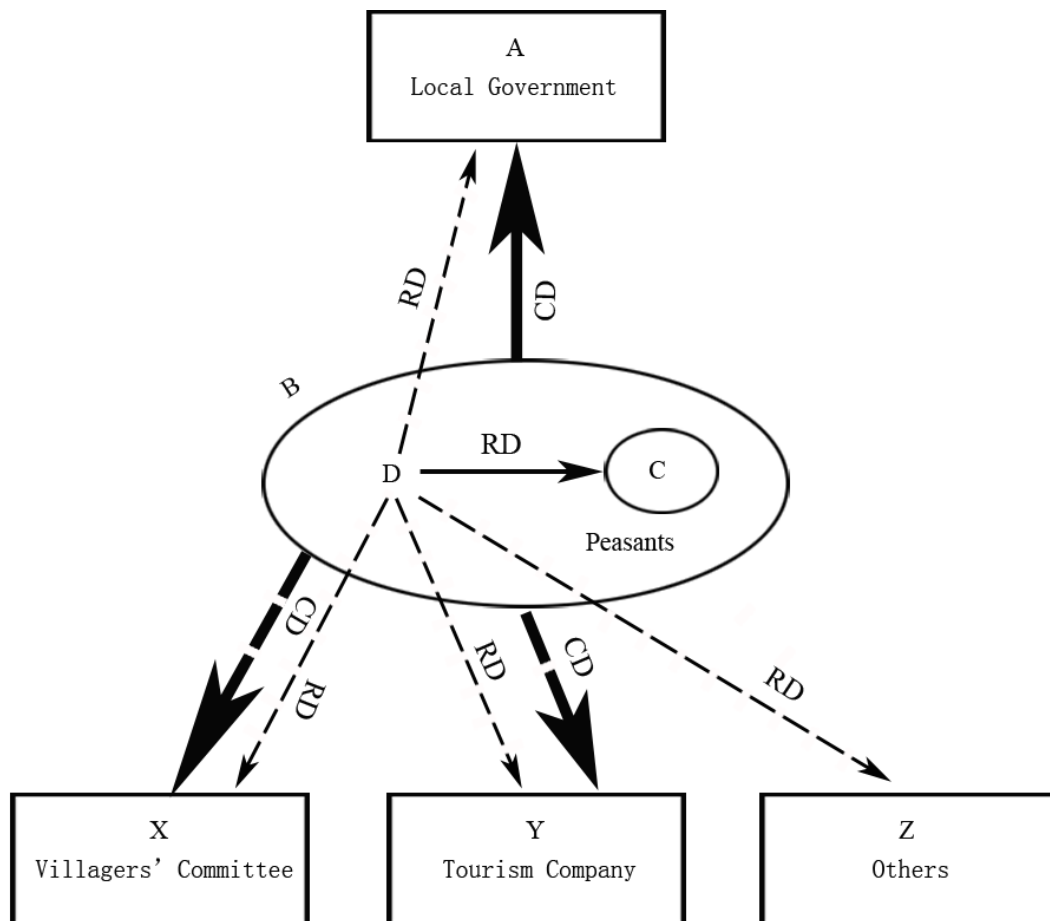


Group two

Figure 6.10 Two groups of villagers grabbing tourists

Source: taken by the author (March 2016).

In a similar way to Hongkeng, contractual thinking and comparative thinking are apparent in these three supplemental cases. Based on the previous analysis, the deprivation model proposed in chapter five is revised (Figure 6.11).



B: All peasants

C: Peasants perceived to have enjoyed privileged

D: Other peasants

CD: Contractual Deprivation

RD: Relative Deprivation

Figure 6.11 Deprivation model (revised version)

Source: the author.

The contractual and relative deprivation between the peasants and local government in Hongkeng was discussed previously and is not repeated here. In Likeng, the tourism company and local government had been viewed as cheating the villagers and refusing to publicize the real number of tourist arrivals (CD: Peasants versus Tourism Company and Local government). In Xidi, since its establishment, the village company had been operated by the villagers' committee which has refused to

publicize the company accounts in the name of protecting trade secrets. The village company belongs to the villagers' communal property so they have the right to know its operation, but have been deprived of by the villagers' committee (CD: Peasants versus Villagers' Committee and Tourism Company). In Hongcun, the villagers complained that the township government, and some peasants and outsiders built new buildings, which was viewed as unfair (RD: Peasants versus Local government, Peasants perceived to have enjoyed privilege and Others). In Zhaoxing, Shiji fenghua violated the contract signed with the villagers and built an oversized building, and some villagers lodged a complaint with higher authorities (RD: Peasants versus Tourism Company). In addition, local government, the most important conflicting party, does not allow local peasants to build houses and does not resolve this issue either, which is a severe contractual deprivation. Compared with A, X, Y, and Z, deprivation perception of C by B is very common among these sites. Therefore, these two relations are marked with solid lines and the rest in dotted lines in Figure 6.11. Contractual thinking and comparative thinking work together and cause the contractual deprivation and relative deprivation respectively. The discontent and anger from both deprivations contribute to conflict, such as the 6.27 riot in Zhaoxing.

From Table 6.10, we can find two common causes which contribute to conflict. One is that villagers' basic rights and interests were infringed; the other one is that they were treated unfairly. Compared with Hongkeng, another important cause on the rest of the three sites is economic motivation or to earn more money, which is particularly obvious in the issue of house building in Likeng and Zhaoxing. To earn more money, tearing down old buildings and building big ones may not be reasonable in places being famed for traditional residences. Firstly, it may destroy the settings and influence the integrity and authenticity of cultural heritage. Secondly, this change may influence tourists' experience and cause a decline in tourist arrivals in the long run. Thirdly, it is not fair for people who do not build or have no ability to build new

houses because they may bear both economic loss due to the decline of tourists and emotional loss because of the lack of cultural integrity. The large scale of construction of “alien” (L. Yang, Wall, & Smith, 2008, p. 762) buildings is the exploitation of public interest. If the situation continues without effective management, it will cause the “tragedy of the commons” in tourism and cultural heritage, which is inconsistent with the principle of sustainable tourism development and cultural conservation. Actually, this tragedy has already happened in tourist villages. Some ethnic minority villages in Xishuangbanna which were popular tourist attractions are not visited by tourists, due to modern buildings (Z. Wang, 2008; L. Yang & Wall, 2014, p. 120). But restraining local people’s “unreasonable” economic motivation causes the loss of opportunities of earning more money. Borrowing an economics term, “opportunity cost”, the loss of opportunities here is called opportunity deprivation. Here, the meaning of opportunity deprivation is the same as opportunity cost. To be consistent with contractual deprivation and relative deprivation, opportunity deprivation is adopted.

There also exists comparative thinking in this deprivation, and opportunity deprivation also belongs to relative deprivation to some extent. Compared with doing nothing or other jobs, building new houses can make them earn more. However, comparative thinking here is different from the above, and belongs to self-comparison because house builders do not compare with other people but with themselves. To distinguish this from the above deprivation, the term opportunity deprivation is used. This deprivation can also cause people’s discontent although this act is not reasonable and acceptable to some extent. Direct economic benefit may not be the only reason for making a change in heritage because other reasons can also contribute to it. Dresden Elbe Valley, an ex-world-heritage-site in Germany, is an example. To improve local traffic, a bridge was built across the valley, and is thought to have impacted heritage integrity. However, the decision was made based on democratic

voting.

The issue of building new houses to earn money is serious in Likeng and Zhaoxing. If there is no improvement in this issue, similar condition might happen in Hongkeng although the likelihood is lower. Firstly, Hongkeng enjoys the titles of world heritage and 5A-rated Tourism Attraction, so the regulations on house building are stricter and the punishment is severer. Secondly, the lifestyle of Hongkeng people is different from the other three sites. Each *tulou* is a small community which is made up of many families. Even if one family wants to tear it down without local government's permission, this family has to get the permission of other families, which increases the difficulty. If the issue of house building cannot be resolved, the villagers living in small *tulous* far away from the core zone might make the first move in the future. Here, one point needs to be mentioned: although both the cause of villagers' basic rights and interests being infringed and the cause of economic motivation contain economic elements, there is difference. The economic element in the former one mainly refers to economic compensation, such as in issues of land expropriation, house demolition, and ticket revenue distribution, while the latter refers to earning more money through tourism³⁶.

In terms of resistance, petitions were widely used by local villagers and have appeared at each site (Table 6.10). Law should have been the most useful and helpful form to defend rights and interests, but in reality this approach is commonly abandoned due to its ineffectiveness and cost concern at the four sites. The advantages of petitions and disadvantages of lawsuits were analyzed in chapter five. In addition, there is much difference concerning resistance among different sites. In Likeng, the villagers

³⁶ Here, I do not doubt that some people may have strong economic motivation in Hongkeng, such as in the issue of vending rights.

destroyed a corporate facility. In Hongcun, the villagers sued the tourism company and a Party official, and in Zhaoxing a big riot occurred. Traffic blockades were used three times in Likeng. Compared with the traffic blockade in Hongkeng in 2008 and the riot in Zhaoxing, traffic blockades in Likeng lasted longer, especially the second one. Its frequent use and long life are related to the appearance of organizers or leaders, which is a distinct feature that distinguishes Likeng from other sites. In addition, in a similar fashion to Hongkeng, the vulnerable group was used as a weapon in Likeng during these traffic blockades. The aim of traffic blockages is to exert pressure on the government through blocking tourists. Tourists are not their real target but a tool. Compared with public-power resistance, self-help resistance is risky, especially collective venting-anger resistance, which is verified in Likeng and Zhaoxing. In the second traffic blockade in Likeng, several peasants were detained and after the riot in Zhaoxing, dozens of peasants were detained.

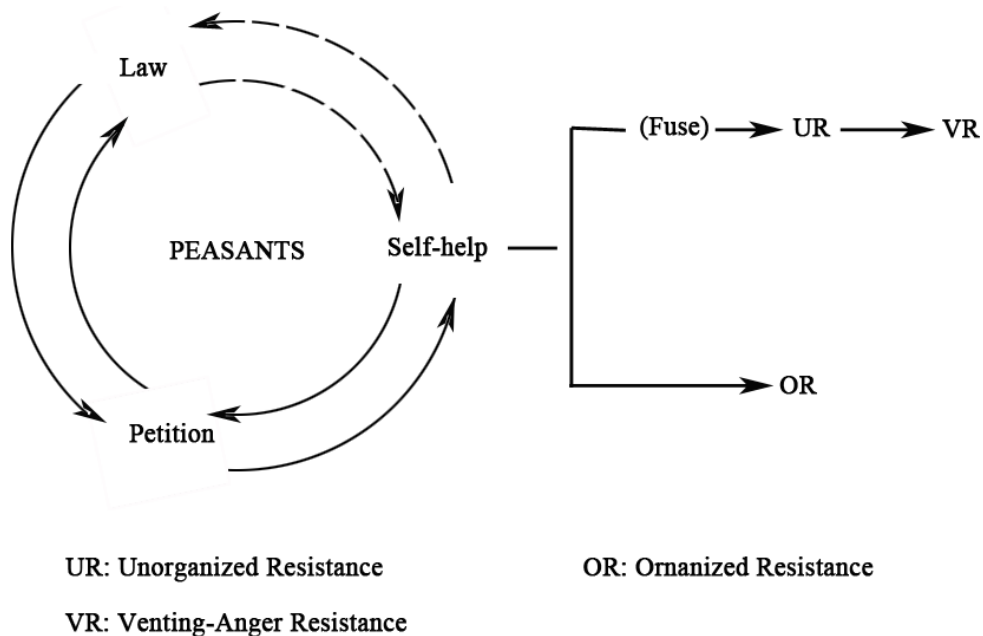


Figure 6.12 Resistance process

Source: the author.

A couple of resistance forms may be used in any one issue, and may start from any direction. Figure 6.12 illustrates this resistance process. In Hongkeng, a villager planned to use the law but failed to find a lawyer, and then lodged complaints with higher authorities. In Likeng, local villagers petitioned first and then blocked the entrance in 2011. In Hongcun, local villagers petitioned first and then turned to law. Though there was no example of starting with law and then turning to self-help resistance and vice versa among the four sites, this might happen in the future. Therefore, dotted lines are used in Figure 6.12.

A fuse usually appears before collective resistance, such as the “vendor incident” before the damage on Jiuniu Company’s facility. The fuse promotes the happening of the latter. The function of a fuse is particularly obvious for spontaneous unorganized resistance and the time interval between them is short, such as the “vendor incident” and the first traffic blockade in Likeng, the “demolition and beating incident” and the riot in Zhaoxing. Both the fuse and the collective resistance happened in the same day. However, organized resistance may not happen shortly after the fuse is lit. For example, the third traffic blockade in Likeng was due to disagreement on the distribution of ticket revenues. The former contract signed between the company and the local government expired at the end of 2010; the “stabbing incident” happened on June 25th, 2011; and the third traffic blockade happened on July 13th, 2011. If the “stabbing incident” is the fuse of the third traffic blockade, it is not as obvious as in Hongkeng and Zhaoxing because there is an 18-day interval between them. This means that unorganized resistance may rely more on a fuse. The existence of organizers reduces the dependency on fuses, and the choice of resistance time is more flexible. However, the appearance of organizers is not common because they encounter difficulties from different sides and there exist certain risks. On the one hand, authorities at high levels acknowledge that most appeals are legal or at least reasonable (O’Brien & Li, 2006, p. 33). On the other hand, the organizers are often

thought to have ulterior motives (The Research Office of the Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission of the CPC, 2001), and are expected to be jailed (O'Brien & Li, 2006, p. 33). Therefore, some leaders publicly deny organizing any activity but admit it privately (O'Brien & Li, 2006). In addition, the difficulty may come from outsiders, such as gangsters. After a negotiation as a villagers' representative, interviewee 53's son was stabbed, and he was told not to get involved in the succeeding negotiation. Similarly, interviewee 52's brother was also threatened after the same negotiation. The difficulty of the appearance of active organizers creates an opening that promotes spontaneous collective resistance. From the example of Likeng, we can see that the organizers tried not to violate the law. Trying to behave in the framework of the law and limiting the behavior of participants are a self-protection approach. Therefore, organized resistance may not cause a serious result. On the contrary, it may reduce the likelihood of evolving into venting-anger resistance from ordinary appeal-based resistance. For spontaneous unorganized resistance, due to the lack of the ability of limiting participants, the likelihood of evolving into venting-anger resistance might increase, such as the riot in Zhaoxing.

Infringement of peasants' basic needs, economic motivation, and unfair treatment are three factors leading to conflict. Villagers' behavior may be caused by one or more factors. In Hongkong, infringement of basic needs is a main cause of conflict, such as house building. Some behavior is the result of more factors. For example, interviewee 55 in Likeng said they would build a house due to two considerations, improving living quality and running a hostel. Sometimes, even if it is the same act implemented by the same person, the cause may be different in different periods. Interviewee 52 is an example. For him, improving living conditions may have been an important reason for tearing down the old house and building a new one. However, adding one more storey when seeing many other people build houses is an overt economic behavior. Interviewee 70 in Zhaoxing is another example, in which one more storey was added

to the newly built house after the riot. Due to the difficulty in probing people's real aims accurately, it is not easy to judge which factor plays a more important role. Unfair treatment is like a catalyst which strengthens people's dissatisfaction and may stimulate people to take action to satisfy their basic and/or economic needs. For example, villagers in Likeng petitioned a couple of times against the unfair treatment on ticket revenue deduction; interviewee 64 questioned a government official about being treated differently from her neighbor. Conflict is more likely to happen in tourist villages where the three factors exist together and are severe.

6.6 Conclusion

Based on the findings in the supplemental case studies, conflict process and logic of peasant resistance is revised (Figure 6.13).

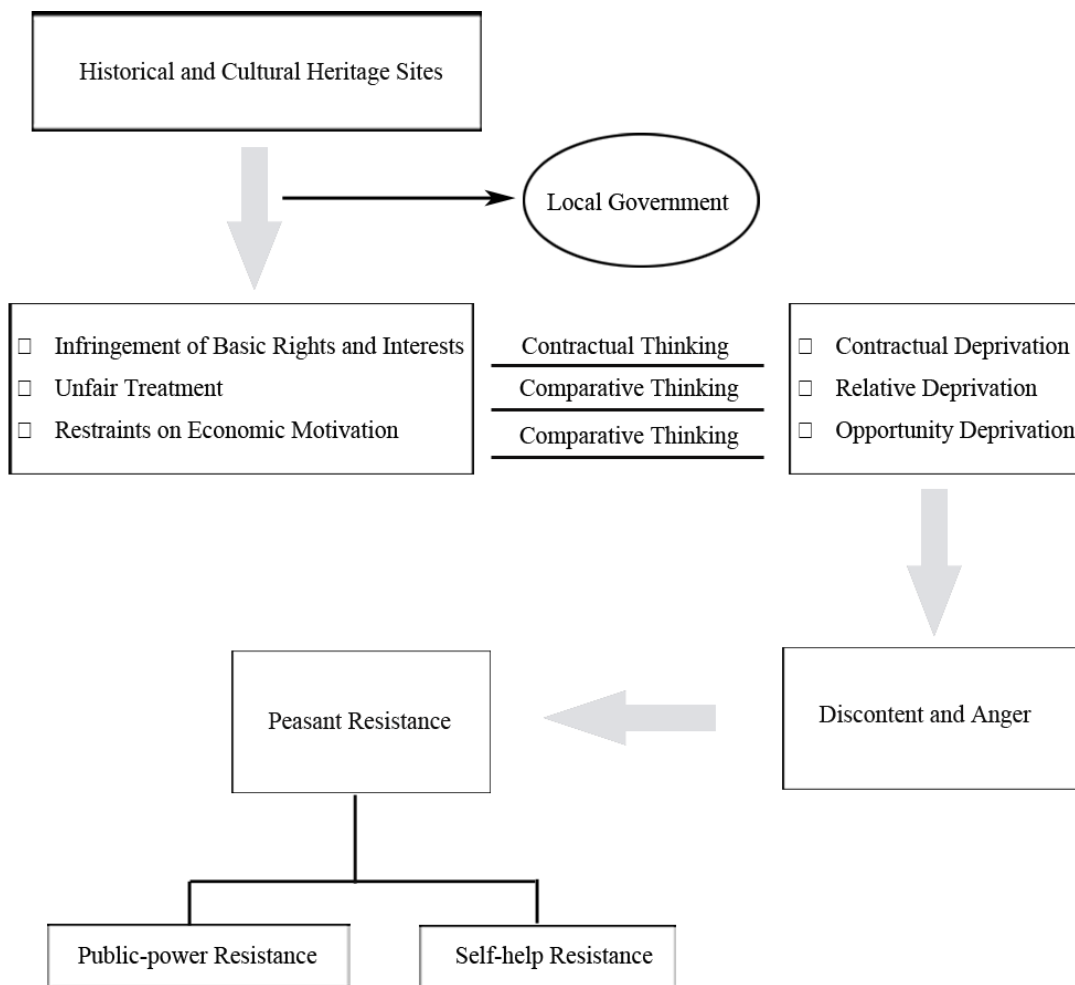


Figure 6.13 Conflict process and the logic of peasant resistance
Source: the author.

Major conflict issues in supplemental cases include house building, tourism revenue distribution, vending rights, and tourism management rights. Most of the conflict issues are found in Hongkeng. The exception is in tourism management rights in Hongcun, which are an important supplement. Local tourism resources are the peasants' private property, and they have the right to decide how to develop them according to the law. However, this is denied by local government. The most important conflict inducing party is therefore local government, who is involved in most conflict issues.

There are three primary causes contributing to these conflicts. The first one is that peasants' basic rights and interests are infringed by local government. The second one is that peasants are not treated equally. These are the two main causes of the conflicts in Hongkeng. The last one is economic motivation, which is not obvious in Hongkeng but is an important component on the rest of the three sites. A conflict may be triggered by one or more causes. Unfair treatment is an important catalyst which can stimulate conflict.

Both public-power resistance and self-help resistance appeared in the three additional case studies. Petitions are a common resistance form which was widely used by all the sites. Traffic blockades appeared frequently in Likeng and lasted a relatively long time. It is related to the appearance of organizers or leaders, which is an important feature of resistance in Likeng. The formation of organizers or leaders is related to their bad experience of struggling with local government. Collective resistance activities in Likeng have several characteristics. Firstly, they are well organized; secondly, these resistance activities last a relatively long time; and thirdly, the organizers or leaders try to limit their activities within the framework of the law. Law was rarely used at these three sites except in Hongcun when struggling for tourism management rights. Though the legal system was used in Hongcun, local peasants dared not to sue the county government directly. So "dare not" is another reason that peasants did not use law to defend their rights and interests. In addition, time consumption is a reason that people preferred petitions to law. In Zhaoxing, a big riot happened due to long-term accumulated grievances. From the conflict issues, the conflicting parties, and the peasants' opinions, it can be seen that ethnicity was not closely connected with the 6.27 riot and other conflict issues. It is the accumulated grievances that caused the conflict. Similarly, contractual thinking and comparative thinking are common at all the sites. The discontent and anger derived from this also contributed to the conflicts described.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

In rural China, tourism development is often accompanied by conflict. Some peasants even said with sadness that their life would be better without tourism (X. L. Chen, 2011). To defend their rights and interests, different forms of resistance were adopted by peasants, including violent ones. Though some scholars mentioned this phenomenon, it has not been investigated in depth. This study aims to explore this complex phenomenon in rural China. To achieve this, five research questions were raised:

- (1) What issues cause conflict and are there any commonalities/connections among them?
- (2) Who are the major parties in the conflicts and what roles do they play?
- (3) Why does conflict happen?
- (4) What strategies do local peasants choose to defend their rights and interests?
- (5) How do they choose these resistance strategies?

To answer these questions, a case-oriented comparative research method was adopted in this study. Four different cases were selected, including one major and three supplemental cases. In this study, Hongkeng in Fujian Province was selected as the main case, and Likeng in Jiangxi Province, Hongcun in Anhui Province, and Zhaoxing in Guizhou Province were selected as supplemental cases. The detailed discussion on selection rationale is in the chapter on research methodology.

Based on the detailed description and analysis on conflict phenomenon in the previous chapters, this chapter concludes this study. Firstly, the primary findings of this study are summarized. Then, the principles for recommendations and the specific recommendations themselves are provided. This is followed by a discussion of the theoretical and practical contributions of this study. Subsequently, the limitations of the study are discussed. Finally, future research directions are suggested.

7.2 Summary of Primary Findings

7.2.1 Conflict issues

At the four research sites eight specific conflict issues have been identified: house demolition, land expropriation, house building, vending rights, tourism management rights, ticket revenue distribution, village elections, and entry restrictions. Almost all the major conflict issues and other issues in the supplemental cases were found in the main case, and the most common issues among these sites include house building, ticket revenue distribution, and vending rights. Some issues in these tourist villages are also important conflict issues throughout rural China, such as land expropriation, house demolition, and village elections. A big difference lies in their direct causes. The former is caused by tourism development and the application for honorable titles such as world heritage, while the latter happens as the background to urbanization. Two types of house demolition were found in this study: one was conducted by local government and the other one was carried out by local peasants themselves. The former demolition was for the world heritage application and tourism development, which is particularly obvious in the main case of Hongkeng. The latter was included and discussed in the issue of house building and its aim is to build big and new modern houses to satisfy social and economic needs.

These issues are not isolated and independent but connected by causal relationships. For example, in the main case study of Hongkeng, the application for world heritage was associated with house demolition closely; the application to be a 5A-rated Tourist Attraction and the construction of tourist facilities and infrastructure caused land expropriation; the issue of vending rights can be a direct result of land expropriation; a vendor incident triggered a traffic blockade that resulted in the distribution of ticket revenues; and the distribution of ticket revenues aggravated the competition of village elections.

The conflict issues at the four sites have common features. A house is a peasants' basic means of livelihood; farmland is a peasants' basic means of production and a security guarantee; vending is a direct result of the loss of this guarantee for vulnerable people in particular; similarly, the control of tourism management rights and fair village elections are direct signs of self-governance and the foundation of fair economic distribution; and the distribution of ticket revenues is a basic compensation for using local people's private property. The importance of these issues indicates that they are the most likely sources of conflict. Generally, these conflict issues can be classified into three main categories: (1) conflict based on economic interests, including land expropriation, ticket revenue distribution, vending rights, and tourism management rights; (2) conflict based on basic social needs, including house demolition, house building, and entry restrictions; and (3) conflict based on basic political rights, such as village elections. Conflict in the latter two categories is also related to economic interests to some extent.

7.2.2 Parties to the conflicts

The parties involved in these forms of conflict with peasants include local government, villagers' committees, and tourism companies, among whom the most important one is

local government because they participated in almost all the issues, and played a key role in a series of serious conflicts. Here, local government refers to county governments and township governments. County governments are the initiator of many of the conflicts, and play a more important role in them. Township governments, as subordinates, follow orders and finish tasks assigned by county governments. The reason why local government becomes the most important party in such conflicts can be understood from two aspects.

Objectively, only local government has the authority and power to conduct and finish relevant work concerning these issues compared to other parties. In terms of house demolition and land expropriation, it is local government that makes decisions and implements programs. According to China's laws, only the government has the authority to change the type of land from collective land to state-owned land. In other words, local government monopolizes the land market. It is also local government that sets specific compensation standards that are thought to be low and unfair by local peasants. Concerning house building, only the government has the authority to approve peasant applications for house building. In this study, we found that local government did not allow local peasants to build new houses but they did not take effective measures to resolve the housing problem either.

About vending, it is local government that issues orders to ban vending by landless peasants. For the distribution of ticket revenues, it is local government that bypassed local peasants outright and made decisions on distribution. Villagers' committees are self-governing organizations, but local government interferes with their normal function. Local government not only has the authority but also has the power to deal with the issues in their favor because they have manpower, material, and financial resources and can influence judicial processes. Even if the policies they set or the decisions they make contradict laws or are not reasonable, they are often still implemented. The imbalance

of power between local government and peasants provides a strong backing for this behavior of the former.

Subjectively, local government is *homo economicus* who try to pursue the most self-interest, which is embodied explicitly in the following aspects. In the issue of house demolition, local peasants were forced to move out with low compensation. In the issue of land expropriation, local government expropriated peasants' farmland with low compensation. The actual amount of compensation paid to the villagers is not only against the relevant law but also contradicts with documents issued by local government themselves. To attract more tourists, local government did not allow local peasants to vend along the street in the name of beautification to attract tourists. The aim of applying for world heritage is to protect *tulou*, but local government demolished buildings having hundreds of years of history, and one of them was replaced with a hotel. To develop tourism, local government built a modern tourism road against the original heritage protection plan. Instead of resettling peasants with urgent housing needs, local government expropriate large pieces of land and build the large commercial centers on them. Local government uses peasants' private property to earn money but refuse to share with or just gave little to local peasants. To control tourism management rights or the usage of ticket revenues, local government interferes with village affairs or village elections. All these examples show that the real aim of local government is not heritage protection and benefiting local people but benefiting themselves. This may be related to China's official evaluation system, or simply to corruption.

Villagers' Committees are an important party in conflict situations, but are often ignored by researchers. Villagers' Committees are elected by villagers and should defend their rights and interests positively. However, these committees find it hard to be independent, and are often influenced by external and internal factors (please see

Figure 5.16). Local government and the law are two important external factors in this situation. Villagers' committees are often required to finish a lot of unpopular and tough tasks demanded or ordered by local government under the policy of "stick and carrot". If work is done on time, rewards will be given, or if not punishment, such as dismissal, might be implemented. Due to flaws in the current laws, villagers' committee members find it hard to maintain their rights once they are infringed by local government, which is another limitation to their normal function. In addition, the real aim of personal gain also limits their independence and fairness because many members want to seize illicit economic interests through villagers' committees. Besides the independence of villagers' committees, village democracy may be impacted by outside forces, such as the gangsters in Likeng. All these factors show that maintaining local peasants' rights and interests and achieving complete village democracy and self-governance is often difficult in practice.

7.2.3 Causes of conflict

The reason why local government participates in these conflicts is summarized in section 7.2.2. From the perspective of peasants, there are three main causes: the first is infringement of peasants' basic rights and interests; the second is unfair treatment; and the third is economic motivation.

Infringement of basic rights and interests is an important cause of conflict. These issues involve peasants' basic economic, social, and political rights and interests. Many of them belong to peasants' "butter and bread" issues. The importance of these issues means that conflict might happen if they are being infringed seriously. Local peasants have the right to own these "butter and bread", and local government has the duty to help peasants attain them based on their contractual thinking. However, in reality local government considers more their own interests and often ignores people's basic needs

and rights, which causes contractual deprivation based on contractual thinking and triggers people's strong dissatisfaction. Although this cause contains an economic element, it is different from the following cause of economic motivation because the former mainly refers to economic compensation while the latter refers to earning money through tourism.

Unfair treatment appears in many issues in the four case studies and is an important catalyst of conflict. Unfair treatment is closely related to peasants' comparative thinking. Without taking effective measures to resolve the current conflict issues, unfair treatment from local government further worsens the situation, causing relative deprivation and triggering people's anger.

Economic motivation is embodied most obviously in the supplemental cases. In Likeng, more than sixty buildings were torn down or reconstructed for tourism business without official permission. To build big houses, different tactics and resistance forms including extreme ones were adopted. For example, to build a big house, a peasant threatened to burn himself and most of his newly built house is being used for tourism business. In Zhaoxing, some peasants have built more than one building and rented them out; instead of living in his own newly built house, a peasant rented it out and rented a cheaper one for his family. Comparative thinking is contained in their behavior. Compared with doing nothing or other jobs, building big houses means that they may earn more money. This comparison belongs to self-comparison, and its corresponding deprivation is also self-deprivation. This deprivation is due to the loss of opportunities, so it is called opportunity deprivation. Although this deprivation is reasonable and acceptable because it can help to protect the integrity and authenticity of heritage, it can also trigger local people's discontent.

Contractual thinking causes peasants' contractual deprivation, a physical and real

deprivation, which has the features of universality and no differentiation. Comparative thinking caused peasants' relative deprivation, a psychological and virtual deprivation, which has the feature of particularity and differentiation. Local government is the most important subject of contractual deprivation. Though local government is not the direct cause of relative deprivation, their unfair behavior is. In addition, villagers' committees and tourism companies are also subjects of contractual deprivation and relative deprivation (please see Figure 5.17 and Figure 6.11). Being constrained to earn money through building houses caused opportunity deprivation. The combined condition of contractual deprivation, relative deprivation, and opportunity deprivation triggered peasants' anger and caused conflict.

7.2.4 Peasant resistance

To defend their rights and interests, peasants use different forms and tactics to resist. To have a clear understanding of their logic of resistance, this study divided peasant resistance into two categories based on the parties or power peasants rely on: public-power resistance and self-help resistance (please see Figure 5.18). In the process of public-power resistance, peasants rely on Party and government organs (including judicial authorities) to maintain their rights and interests, while they mainly turn to themselves in self-help resistance. Petitions and lawsuits are two important forms of public-power resistance. Traffic blockades are an often-used form of self-help resistance in this study, in which tourists are often victims and used as a bargaining chip to exert pressure on local government by local peasants. According to the main aim of resistance, self-help resistance is classified into appeal-based resistance and venting-anger resistance. Based on the number of participants, it is divided into individual resistance and collective resistance.

In this study, petitions were shown to be the most used resistance form in many issues

at all the sites. Though petitions are the most used ones, different resistance forms may be adopted together in one issue, and resistance might not start from petitioning but other forms such as blocking traffic. In the process of traffic blockades, local peasants do not intend to hurt tourists but want to use them as a tool to pressure local government. Another interesting finding is that many relatively big collective resistance activities in this study, such as traffic blockades, are triggered by a small incident but their aim is not restricted to the solution of the small one; the solution often targets other appeals. In other words, a large collective resistance activity needs a fuse, and this fuse is an opportunity to resolve other more important concerns. For example, both the traffic blockade in Hongkeng in 2008 and the first traffic blockade in Likeng were triggered by the fuse of “vendor incident”, but their appeal soon turned to distribution of ticket revenues. This shows that local peasants were not satisfied with this issue of ticket revenue distribution for a long time, but they had no effective channels to express their appeal and resolve it. To expect peasants to organize collective resistance activities actively should not be thought of as high because this is full of uncertainty. The difficulty in conducting organized resistance makes peasants turn to less risky unorganized resistance. However, the lack of organizers makes the occurrence of unorganized resistance strongly rely on a fuse. Meanwhile, due to the lack of limitation on the behavior of participants, the result of unorganized collective resistance is hard to predict, and the likelihood of evolving into a venting-anger resistance increases. Being different from everyday forms of resistance, self-help resistance is open and noisy. In some conditions, peasants even expect it to happen. The aim of self-help resistance is to attract relevant or higher authorities’ attention and apply pressure to lower authorities through some incidents. The pressure to lower authorities may come from a couple of channels, such as higher authorities and the media.

Maintaining society’s stability has been a very important task for the government at

each level, and local government expects to reduce possible unstable factors as soon as possible. The appearance of organizers or leaders in this study did not create an unstable situation, and they tried not to violate law. Trying not to violate the law is not only a way of protecting themselves, but also may avoid the situation evolving into a venting-anger incident from an ordinary appeal-based resistance activity. Their own bad experience in the process of tourism development is an important cause of pushing them to transform into active organizers or leaders. In addition, we found that the appearance of organizers made some resistance activities last a relatively long time.

Law should have been the most important channel for resolving these issues. However, it was rarely used at these sites except in Hongcun. And, even though it was used in Hongcun, the target was not local government due to the worry of retaliation. Generally, there are five reasons why local peasants rarely use law to defend their rights and interests: limited legal knowledge, perceived lack of judicial independence, economic inability, lengthy lawsuits, and the worry of retaliation.

In addition, vulnerable people, including the elderly and women, were found to have been used as a resistance tool in self-help resistance in this study. There are a couple of reasons. From the perspective of the public, this group is more easily to get people's attention and elicit great sympathy when they are in a disadvantaged position. From the perspective of the police and the government: these people, especially the elderly, are more easily injured or even die during direct physical conflicts or detention; hurting women, old people, and children makes it more easy to get condemned, and may cause the escalation of a situation; and the vulnerability in physical condition determines that these people are less likely to cause severe destruction compared to men. From the perspective of themselves, young men are usually pillars of families in rural areas and are responsible for earning money to take care of the whole family, and if they are taken by police, the whole family might be in trouble economically.

Based on the above considerations, the vulnerable group sometimes stands at the forefront of conflict and plays a vanguard role. This phenomenon is not unique and appears in other areas of China, and it can also be observed in other countries.

Generally, the logic of peasant resistance is formed in the background of and is compatible to the current top-down official appointment system and the requirement of maintaining social stability. The process of conflict and peasant resistance is shown in Figure 6.13.

7.2.5 Conflict and ethnicity

There was no strong connection between conflict in Zhaoxing and ethnicity. Firstly, there is not much difference in conflict issues between Zhaoxing and other sites. The issues appearing in Zhaoxing also happened at other sites. While house building is the most serious issue in Zhaoxing, and is an important issue at other sites as well, Zhaoxing began to sell tourists tickets in 2014. Though the actual money distributed to each peasant is little, village cadres and *Zhailao* (unofficial villagers' representatives) participated in the discussion of its distribution. The distribution percentage is as high as 20%, which is higher than the other three non-ethnic minority sites. Secondly, the most important conflict is with local government, which is the same as other sites. Thirdly, the dissatisfaction with the previous tourism company is due to the little benefit brought to local peasants. Fourthly, local people do not care about the ethnicity of local government officials. Fifthly, the recent riot is due to accumulated grievance. All these show that conflict is weakly related to ethnicity in Zhaoxing.

7.2.6 Heritage protection and development

Heritage preservation and conservation without benefiting local peasants is producing a

lose-lose result. Peasants in many areas of China are still living a tough life. However, they have a strong will to improve their life, which is their right. High-quality tourist attractions provide a good opportunity to them. From previous analysis, we know that economic motivation is an important cause of conflict. If local government fails to put in place proper arrangements or to create jobs for them, they may try to benefit economically at the cost of heritage protection when economic opportunities (influx of tourists) come. Hongkeng and Zhaoxing are two typical examples. Large scale house demolition (or reconstruction) and building was carried out and extreme resistance forms were used by local peasants in the two villages. A direct result is the destruction of the original heritage. Therefore, emphasizing the importance of heritage protection but ignoring local people's economic needs is not sustainable, and may cause an uncontrollable situation and a lose-lose result.

7.3 Recommendations

As Rummel (1976) notes, conflict is a clash of powers and a process of balancing powers. Local government is the most important party to conflict in these issues. Local government is homo economicus and have the authority and power to pursue benefits. Therefore, the key to solve these issues is to limit local government power and restrict their unlawful and selfish acts. Villagers' committees are limited by local government so village democracy is hard to achieve, and this should be changed. Emphasizing heritage protection but ignoring local people's economic needs is not sustainable, and needs to be improved. Corresponding to causes of conflict and the power of parties to conflict, recommendations arising from this study are proposed based on four principles and targeting four parties: legislative bodies, the Supreme Court, local government, and honor-conferment parties.

7.3.1 Principle one: limiting local government power and boosting the power of villagers' committees

This is a key among the four principles. It has two aims. One is to limit the local government role of homo economicus. The other one is to reduce their interference in and influence on villagers' committees, and make them play their normal role. This can be achieved through setting or revising relevant institutions, such as laws and regulations. Specific recommendations based on this principle are as follows:

(1) Fair compensation for land expropriation. In the name of economic development or public interest, though the understanding of public interest is controversial, land expropriation not only happens in China but also in many other countries, such as in the *Sanrizuka* conflict in Japan. Land expropriation is not only an issue in the field of tourism but a common issue in China. A prominent dissatisfaction from Chinese peasants is the low compensation received. The current stipulation on land compensation (article 47 in the *Land Administration Law*) is based on its original usage instead of the market principle, which deprives peasants of the right of enjoying benefits from land appreciation in the process of land usage transformation. Therefore, it is not reasonable and unfair for peasants. Changing the current compensation principle to a market principle should be a fair way to achieve peasant's desires. In 2012, the revision concerning the compensation standard was submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. However, it was not passed due to much controversy³⁷ (Y. J. Jiang & Ge, 2015). In addition, to avoid being distorted in practice by local government, more detailed stipulation should be given, such as a rigorously defined land expropriation process.

³⁷ The specific content of "controversy" is not discussed in the article by Y. J. Jiang & Ge (2015).

(2) Clarify the “suspension” for villagers’ committee members, and formalize local government acts. To prevent local government playing edge ball concerning the dismissal of villagers’ committee members, it is necessary for the Supreme Court to issue a clear judicial interpretation as soon as possible on the “suspension” of villagers’ committee members made by local government to limit local government influence on villagers’ committees. As early as 2007, the Supreme Court has listed this in its research plan (Lei Zhao & Deng, 2007). However, it has not been issued for some unknown reason. In addition, another suggestion is to revise relevant articles of the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committees* to clarify the definition of “suspension”.

(3) Provide peasants with a channel of appeal through legal action when being dismissed or suspended by the government. Relevant articles concerning this should be added to the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committees* or the *Administrative Litigation Law*. In reality, it can be seen that many dismissed villagers’ committee members have tried to file a lawsuit, but the courts have often refused to accept this kind of case (G. M. Huang & He, 2002). The aim of this recommendation is to push courts to accept these cases.

(4) Clarify electoral qualifications. According to the *Constitution of the People’s Republic of China* and the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committees*, each villager over eighteen years old has active suffrage and passive suffrage as long as they are not deprived of political rights. Deprivation of political rights is an accessory punishment of the *Criminal Law of the People’s Republic of China*. Based on this law, only people committing a crime may be deprived of political rights. According to Article 14 of the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committees*, the village electoral committee has the authority to screen for the electoral qualification of villagers and decide if they are eligible. However, this article does not stipulate what happens if they refuse to accept the decision made by village electoral committees. Compared with village elections,

clearer stipulation concerning this issue is given in the election for people's congress in the *Electoral Law of the People's Republic of China for the National People's Congress and Local People's Congresses (2015 Amendment)*³⁸ (*Electoral Law for People's Congress*):

Article 28 Anyone who has an objection to the roll of voters may appeal to the electoral committee within five days after its announcement. The electoral committee shall make a decision on the appeal within three days. If the appellant refuses to accept this decision, he/she may, five days prior to the election day, file a lawsuit to the people's court and the people's court shall make a judgment before the election day. The judgment of the people's court shall be final.

In the *Electoral Law for People's Congress*, the court is introduced, which can help to protect the right of voters and ensure the fairness. However, this law only applies to the election to the people's congress and does not include village elections. About the screening of electoral qualification, the *Civil Procedure Law of China (2012 Amendment)*³⁹ does have a relevant stipulation:

Article 181 Any citizen who has an objection to the decision on his/her appeal concerning voting qualification made by the electoral committee may file a lawsuit to the basic people's court located in the electoral district five days prior to the election day.

However, different judges have a different understanding of this article. As a result,

³⁸ The full text of this law is available on the website of http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/xinwen/2015-08/31/content_1945577.htm

³⁹ The full text of this law is available on the website of http://www.spp.gov.cn/sscx/201502/t20150217_91465.shtml

different judgments were made facing in similar cases in reality, a considerable cause of confusion. Some judges think this article applies to village elections. For example, in a case concerning electoral qualification in Lunan Village, Pingnan County, Fujian Province, a villager sued the village electoral committee in 2003, and the judge cited this article and decided in his favor (“Wu Shaohui,” 2003). However, other judges think that this article does not apply to village elections. For example, in a case in Jiangxing Village, Wuyi County, Zhejiang Province, two villagers were deprived of voting qualifications. They filed a lawsuit, but the court refused to accept this giving the reason that this article does not apply to village elections (D. M. Yu, Lü, & Hu, 2008). In Article 181 of the *Civil Procedure Law of China*, there is a term “xuanqu” (electoral district), which only appears in the *Electoral Law for People’s Congress* when there is clear divide among electoral districts, but this term is not included in the *Organic Law of the Villagers’ Committees* and there is no division of electoral districts in a village election either. This may be a reason why Article 181 is thought not to apply to village elections by some judges. Sixty deputies to National People’s Congress once submitted a proposal to revise this article and apply it to village elections as well (Xie, 2008). However, it has not been revised for some unknown reason.

These recommendations can limit the power of local government and reduce their interference in villagers’ committees. In other words, it can weaken local government’s stick policy, empower villagers’ committees, and promote their independence. It can increase the possibility that villagers’ committees refuse to carry out the unpopular tasks of infringing upon peasant rights, and really try to maintain villagers’ rights and interests in these issues in the future, such as land expropriation, house demolition, and ticket revenue distribution. However, from the previous analysis, we know that villagers’ committees may also be affected by the “carrot” policy of local government and their internal illicit economic motivation. Therefore, it is necessary to limit

villagers' committees' unreasonable acts by empowering peasants, which is principle two.

7.3.2 Principle two: limiting villagers' committee powers

While freeing villagers' committees from local government, it is necessary to limit their power to empower ordinary villagers. Here, one recommendation is proposed to comply with this principle. It is to formalize and detail relevant articles on the recall of villagers' committee members. Basic principles concerning village elections and recall are stipulated in the *Organic Law of the Villagers' Committees* and specific measures for its implementation are authorized to the standing committees of the people's congresses at the provincial level. However, the specific measures formulated at the provincial level do allow for detailed stipulation on elections but lack detailed procedures of recall, such as the *Rules on Villagers' Committee Elections in Fujian Province*, which increases the difficulty of villagers in recalling villagers' committee members and leaves room for local government to interfere in village affairs. This recommendation can empower villagers and increase their voice when dealing with conflict issues.

7.3.3 Principle three: considering peasants' economic motivation and basic needs fully and making scientific arrangements in advance

Basic needs and economic motivation are important causes of conflict. If they mix together, the consequence will be severe and it may cause the "tragedy of the commons" in tourism and cultural heritage. Vending rights in Hongkeng and house building in Likeng and Zhaoxing illustrate this problem implicitly. Firstly, as decision makers, local government officials should realize that peasants' basic needs and economic motivations cannot be made to disappear by administrative orders.

Restraining them is not a solution but a delay, which may worsen the situation and cause serious consequences. Secondly, based on this understanding, local government should make scientific tourism development plans for the long run in advance, such as zoning proper areas for vending; resettling peasants who need houses before the influx of tourists; and creating jobs for local people. In addition, to sustain property as living units instead of museums, appropriate installation of modern equipment such as an air conditioner is necessary while protecting outstanding heritage values. On the one hand, this can satisfy local people's need for living modern life, which will help to avoid local people moving out. On the other hand, it may also relieve the intense housing need.

In addition, local government should help local villagers enhance their competitiveness and participate in tourism more easily and confidently in a market economy. "Capital" is not a big problem any longer for many villagers who plan to open a tourism business. Business knowledge, including language, communication, service skills, and decoration style, is a weakness of local people, especially in ethnic minority areas. To avoid being dominated by outsiders, to keep more tourism revenues in host communities, to reduce dependence on outsiders, and to enhance the competitiveness, local people, ethnic minorities particularly, should transform their role from pure landlords to direct tourism participants. Therefore, conducting relevant training to help them master basic business knowledge is necessary. In this regard, local government should play an important role, such as cooperating with universities or relevant organizations to provide assistance.

7.3.4 Principle four: undertaking responsibility while conferring honor

From the analysis in the previous chapters, we know that a couple of conflict issues are related closely to the application for the title of world heritage item. The aim of world heritage is to protect property with outstanding universal value. However, if the

achievement of this title is based on infringing local peasants' basic rights and interests, it is against the spirit of benefiting local people. Firstly, local people have the right of living a modern life. Secondly, without the sincere participation and cooperation of local peasants, world heritage will be inauthentic and its integrity will be questioned, heritage protection may not be implemented smoothly, and successful sustainable tourism development will be hard to achieve. To avoid conflict happening at world heritage sites, it is necessary for the conferment party, the UNESCO world heritage center (committee), to take effective measures. For example, descriptions of effective protection of local people's rights and interests relating to the world heritage application should be mandatory in the contents of nomination document, especially in the aspects of land expropriation, house demolition, and resettlement. In addition, some serious issues in this study are also related to the title of 5A-rated Tourist Attraction, therefore, it is necessary for its conferment party, the National Tourism Administration, to add relevant contents into its current evaluation criteria to maintain local people's lawful rights and interests.

7.4 Contributions

In the literature review, three major theoretical orientations of conflict were introduced: Marxian, Parsonian, and Coser's conflict theories. While Marx viewed conflict as a necessary and positive process for social transformation, Parsons viewed it as a negative phenomenon that disrupts existing social order. Like Marx, Coser acknowledges the positive aspect of conflict but it is at a micro level not at a macro level. Thus, his theory of conflict anticipates a positive change within the existing social system. My study is closer to Coser's perspective among these major perspectives. While conflict in rural China has the aspect of instability in locality, it mainly aims for economic and social benefits, and pursues fairness and justice. Also,

this study shows that conflict has a positive aspect by revealing peasants' extraction of a concession from local government through resistance.

In the study of peasant resistance, everyday forms of resistance and rightful resistance are two important categories that have strong explanatory power. Scott has been an important scholar who introduced the idea of everyday forms of resistance. Unlike open confrontation such as a riot, this confrontation is anonymous, disguised, and quiet, a way to work the system to the minimum disadvantage. Beneath the surface of compliance, peasants use many disturbing tactics such as foot dragging, pilfering, and sabotage. He claims that everyday forms of resistance are common in socialist countries because it is possible without leadership and coordination, and few other options of opposition are left to peasants in such system. However, in my study of peasant resistance in China, I show the existence and prevalence of overt forms of resistance without obvious leadership and coordination. Both everyday forms of peasant resistance and rightful resistance cannot cover all the aspects of peasant resistance of this study though. Thus, a classification based on the parties or power local peasants rely on was adopted, which divides resistance into two categories: public-power resistance and self-help resistance. This classification helped in the explanation of resistance in tourism development in rural China.

Generally, research on conflict and resistance in China is difficult due to its complexity and sensitivity. It is the same in the field of tourism and there has been little literature on this topic. The findings in this study not only contribute to the domain of tourism but also other fields, such as sociology and political science.

For tourism research, this study shows a complete picture and constructs a clear framework of the conflict process and peasant resistance through case-oriented comparative study, which helps to attain reliable and complete conclusions compared

with a single case study. This study clarifies the relationships among parties to the conflicts observed, identifies the most important conflicting party to a conflict, and explores peasant thinking and deprivation. This study can help scholars observe what happens in the process of tourism development in rural China in a holistic perspective, which has not been done before. At the same time, the discussion on ethnicity in this study might through some light on the material being contemplated by other scholars investigating ethnic tourism.

In addition to the tourism literature, this study makes contributions to the fields of sociology and political science. China's political system is different from many other countries. The choice of resistance strategy and its logic have their own features. Based on everyday forms of resistance and rightful resistance, this study reclassified resistance and gave much attention to the logic of peasant resistance, specifically that of self-help resistance and public-power resistance (petition). Villagers' committees are self-governing organizations at the grass root level. They should have maintained villagers' rights and interests. However, in reality there are many factors blocking the achievement of village democracy, even though direct election has been implemented in villages for many years. Based on the results of other studies, this study analyzed the dilemma facing villagers' committees from both internal and external aspects. Though the findings of this study are based on the experience of four tourist villages, they can also help scholars in other fields to gain good insight into rural China.

In practice, the picture of conflict process and peasant resistance shown in this study can help policy makers, especially government officials, understand the current situation clearly, and make scientific decisions in the future. Meanwhile, the problems exposed in the process of application for honorable titles may give some enlightenment to the honor-conferment parties, promoting them to more actively consider local people's rights and interests, and set more scientific evaluation criteria.

7.5 Limitations

Due to the sensitivity of this research topic, some people did not want to accept my invitation to interview. For example, some materials involving conflict issues were not available because of the non-cooperation of a villagers' committee head. Therefore, it is hard to know exactly the role that the villagers' committee played in the distribution of ticket revenues in 2008 in Hongkeng. Also, some conflicts happened many years ago and some documents are lost, such as materials concerning the lawsuits in Hongcun, which made it difficult for this study difficult to give further details. This study explored the relations among different conflicting parties with local peasants. However, due to limited information, the specific role that tourism companies play in the process of conflict, and their relationship with the government are not discussed in detail in this dissertation, which is also a limitation. However, these limitations do not affect the conclusions or detract from the contributions of this study.

7.6 Future Research Directions

Venting-anger resistance is full of violence and belongs to the set of destructive resistance. Compared with other resistance, it is more sensitive. The Chinese government seldom discloses relevant information. For example, there is little information about the 6.27 riot in the media of China. There is also little research literature on this type of resistance. More attention should be given to it in the future. The following are suggested research questions: what are the characteristics of the people who participated in venting-anger resistance positively? Why do they participate in it positively? Do they have any special aims? Are there any tactics adopted in the process? The answers to these questions will be an important and

constructive supplement to resistance theory.

Petitions are a production of China's political system and political environment and are different from that in other countries. There is little systematic research on this phenomenon, which should be given more attention in the future. Also, in this study, two types of peasant thinking were identified, contractual thinking and relative thinking. Thinking is an important precondition of behavior. Do these two play an equal role in behavior or conflict? If not, which one is more likely to cause conflict? These questions should be answered in the future.

As mentioned in the section on limitations, the more exact role that tourism companies play in the process of conflict and their relationship with local government is not very clear, and should be further researched in the future. In addition, villagers' committees are an important conflicting party but have been ignored in the field of tourism research. Hence, it is necessary to give more attention to it especially on issues involving policy making and distribution of benefits.

In Zhaoxing, many villagers rented their houses to outsiders and received a sum for this. How do they use the money? What are the changes in their life style and working style after receiving the money? It will be an interesting topic.

Conflict is a complicated phenomenon and its happening is affected by many factors. This research is a case study. The results in this research are mainly based at four tourist sites, and need to be verified and improved with other cases in the future.

Finally, I proposed some recommendations concerning the law. However, no matter how perfect the law is, if it is not implemented effectively in practice, it is a mere scrap of paper. From previous chapters, we see that legal cases against the

government are still subject to interference by Party and government officials. As a result, many peasants doubt the authority of the law, or do not believe in the impartiality of judges. In recent years, a series of judicial reform measures involving personnel, funds, and the properties of the courts has been taken to try to maintain the sanctity of the law, and to reduce this interference, such as the establishment of cross-administrative-division courts and circuit tribunals. Are these measures effective and to what extent? How to further maintain the authority of the law effectively and practically? All these are important research questions and worth further exploration by scholars from different fields.

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