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# Voices in cultural heritage preservation: a comparative study between New Orleans and Changting (China)

Guiyuan Wang

*Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College*

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**VOICES IN CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN  
NEW ORLEANS AND CHANGTING (CHINA)**

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

in

The Department of Geography and Anthropology

by  
Guiyuan Wang  
B.S., Nanjing University (China), 2002  
M.S., Nanjing University (China), 2005  
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My parents, care for me all the time. They never push me to do what I don't want to. All they do are encouragement. And they keep me from worrying about them far away in China. My boyfriend Richard (Maoyuan Xie) did his possible to support me. His patience and company made my field trips interesting, productive and safe. Thanks to Zheng-Ying He, Juan Wan, Amanda Hoover, Lucinda Freeman, Cory (Elizabeth Sills), Amy Potter, Christina for being my good friends and sharing so many precious moments with me.

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## ABSTRACT

This is a comparative study between the historic preservation in two countries – the United States (New Orleans) and China (Changting). The main questions are how the voices of different groups become foregrounded or effaced in the dynamics of the political process. Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts -- social capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital – are applied.

The historic preservation in the United States is distinct from that in China. First, the national structures of governments are different, and the historic preservation systems are established in dissimilar ways. Second, at the local level, the question, that who take part in historic preservation, has different answers. However, the dynamic of capital flow in historic preservation is similar. Property rights based on ownership, tax money, tourism income, and developmental capital are four forms of influential economic capital. Social capital includes the direct political power of governments, personal connections, access to Mass Media, and the indirect political capital derived from them. Academic knowledge and professional skills in urban planning and architecture are powerful cultural capital, which can possibly be transformed in to indirect political capital. Mass Media is a tool that can be used in favor of cultural capital as the voices of “authorities”.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This is a comparative study between the historic preservation in two countries – the United States and China. It is about how interest groups engage in the processes of cultural heritage preservation, and how certain groups' voices are muted or foregrounded in the practice. It is not a quantitative research. Rather, it is qualitative and ethnographic, with the City of New Orleans and the City of Changting (China) as the research areas. I have participated heritage preservation activities in both places. I use the terms -- historic preservation as well as cultural heritage preservation -- in a broad sense, indicating human efforts of protecting cultural legacy. There are three main questions in this research:

1) What are the institutions and practices of heritage preservation in New Orleans and Changting, especially after large-scale natural disasters, such the 1996 flood in Changting and Hurricane Katrina?

2) What are the roles of different groups in heritage preservation of New Orleans and Changting? They include government (agencies), non-profit organizations including local community organizations, and scholars and professionals in the fields relevant to heritage preservation. How do these groups actually engage in the processes?

3) There has been no comparative study of historic preservation between China and the United States. It is possible that the two countries borrow ideas from each other, especially with regard to incorporating the opinions of relatively powerless but highly interested and involved groups. Anthropology can provide a fresh examination of the complicated topic.

## RATIONALE

I have experience in participated in cultural heritage preservation projects in Changting and New Orleans. In 2003 and 2004, I took part in the Project of Preservation Plan for the Old City of Changting. I was a master's student and research assistant in Human Geography at Nanjing University, where I received my bachelor's degree in Geographic Information Systems. Before this project, I worked as a GIS specialist, applying GIS in fields including urban planning, which I soon found boring. For the first time, this project of cultural heritage preservation gave me chance to get in touch with a different culture and local communities. I spent one and a half months talking to natives, meeting government officials, investigating cultural resources, and formulating a preservation plan with other colleagues. I realized cultural heritage preservation is my real interest and decided to come to LSU for my second master's degree in Cultural Anthropology.



Figure 1 author in an Old House of Changting: Recording the Height of 1996 Flood; Source: photographed by Qiu, Xingjie. Processed by author

I began learning about New Orleans as soon as I arrived here. It is considered by Louisianains to be far more important than other cities in the State, even the capital city Baton Rouge. This differs from China where the capital city is always the biggest and the

most famous city in each province. With experience, I have come to understand the many ways in which New Orleans is special in Louisiana, in the United States, and worldwide.

In August 2005, three weeks after I arrived in the United States, New Orleans was hit by Hurricane Katrina and forever changed. About two months after Katrina, I went to New Orleans with Dr. Edwards and my classmates several times to investigate the direct causes of building and neighborhood destruction. The Lower Ninth Ward flooded most catastrophically. A storm surge came from the east via flooded Saint Bernard Parish and from the west through two large breaches in the Industrial Canal flood protection system, creating violent currents that not only flooded buildings, but smashed them and displaced them from their foundations.



Figure 2 Bulldozed Streets, the Lower Ninth Ward of Claiborne, October 29, 2005; source: photographed by Dr. Jay D. Edwards, Professor of Department of Geography and Anthropology, used by permission.

We also headed to the famous French Quarter. I was shocked by the difference between the miserable scene of the lower Ninth Ward and the tourists in the French Quarter. They seemed to forget the desperation in other neighborhoods of this city.



Figure 3 Tourists at Cafe Du Monde on October 29, 2005; Figure 4 Tourists near Cafe Du Monde on October 29, 2005; source: photographed by author

There are problems in the historic preservation in both the United States and China. Neither does a good job in integrating intangible heritage and local communities. The two cities differ in other aspects. First, in New Orleans local government's response to the natural disaster is inefficient while in China, armies would arrive in time, which might decrease the possibility of heritage damage. Second, the historic architecture in the French Quarter is visible evidence of people's efforts on preservation. Compared to it, many historic structures in China, older than buildings in New Orleans, are not well preserved and are even demolished to make space for development. Third, in New Orleans catering to tourists, overlooking historic preservation in economic development and disaster recovery are big issues. In Changting, tourism just began to develop. But economic and residential development has been actively threatening the historic fabric of the Old City in its never ending search for more space.

## TWO HISTORIC CITIES

Changting is located in the mountain area of Fujian Province in Southeast China. Known as the “Hakka Capital”, the Old City of Changting is one of the three centers of Hakka culture and a National Historic and Cultural City of China. The Hakka people are one of the sub-groups of the *Han* Chinese who migrated to Southeast China from the interior. In different environments, ancient Chinese culture transformed into unique Hakka Culture. In 779 AD (Tang Dynasty), long after migrants began to live there, Changting was officially established as a town by the Central Government of the time. The Old City was the original part with large amounts of tangible heritage. New Orleans is world-famous and has the largest number of historic buildings in the United States.



Figure 5, 6 Tangible Heritage: the Napoleon House and Lafitte's Blacksmith' Shop in the French Quarter



Figure 7, 8 Tangible Heritage: the “Historic Changting College of Imperial Examinations and an old household in the Old City; Source of figure 1 and 2 photographed by Author; figure 3 and 4 by Qiu, Xingjie

Besides tangible heritage such as historic buildings and landmarks, intangible heritage is also important. Dialect, cuisine, customs, folklore, and religion are part of local communities' ethnic identities and life styles. For example, Hakkas in migration developed a burial tradition called “the second-time burial”. They gather the bones of family ancestors from the original coffins, put them into a small pottery coffin (figure 9), and carry it until they settle and bury the coffin again (Wang 2005: 80). This custom is a product of the unique history of Hakka migration. It conflicts with the traditional Han Chinese belief that ancestors should never be disturbed after the burial. The “above-ground” burial tradition in New Orleans also diverged from the usual American way of burying the deceased under the ground. Both the customs are not only practically functional but culturally important. Another example of the intangible heritage in New Orleans is the Mardi Gras Indian parades and the costume making tradition (figure 10). In my opinion, the tradition of how those “Indians” construct and decorate those costumes piece by piece is more valuable than the material aspect because it is a living culture.



Figure 9, 10 A small pottery coffin for the second-time burial in Changting Museum; A set of Mardi Gras Indian Costume in the Backstreet Cultural Museum of New Orleans; source: both Photographed by author



In both cities, cultural mixtures resulting from historic migrations have transformed and fitted local cultures to their contexts. Local people have strong pride-of-place in both cities. Hakka culture is famous for its geographical mobility, stubborn resistance to assimilation, and ethnic self-consciousness (Leong 1997: 19). In Changting, locals call themselves Hakkas and define Changting as “a pure Hakka town”. The turn of the twentieth century witnessed an upsurge of nationalism among China’s elite and also the Hakka elite (Leong 1997: 83). Hakka residents I talked to were also proud of their identity, and many of them were worried about the fate of the Old City as an important Hakka symbol.

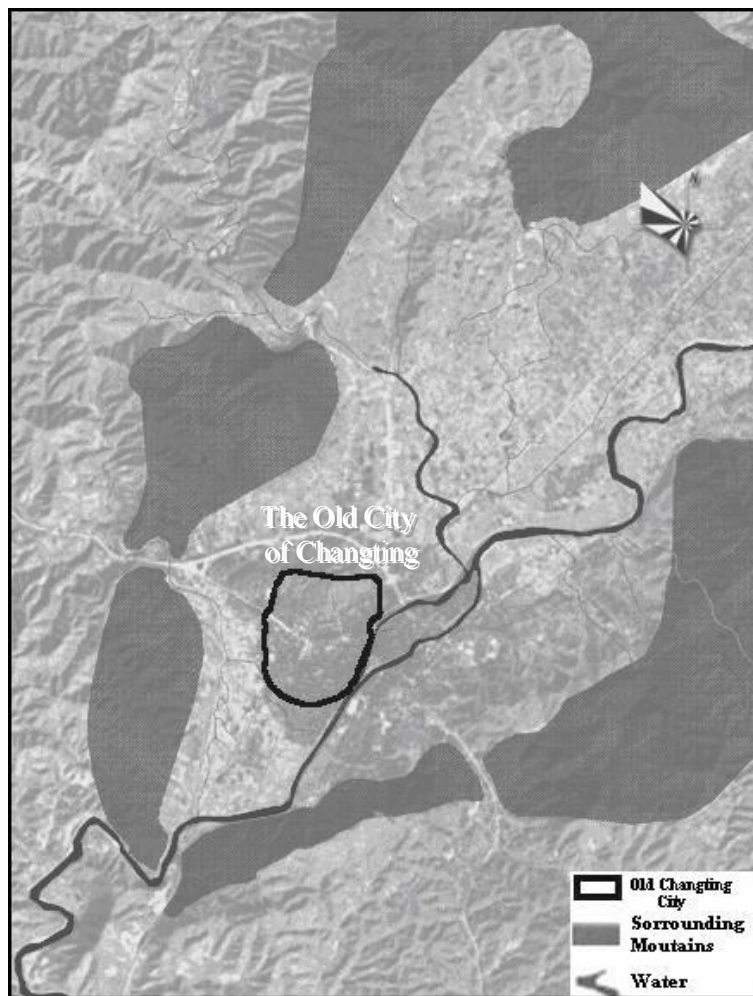


Figure 11 The Old City and the Tingjiang River

Source: the Historical Preservation Plan, by Nanjing University Urban Planning and Design Institute, 2004

New Orleans is also distinctive and “looks like nothing else in North America” (Lewis 2003: 6). Natives’ pride comprises a big portion of local people’s ethnic identities in New Orleans and Changting. “Ordinary Orleanians assume that everyone else shares their admiration for their native city” (Lewis 2003: 3).

In both cities, geography plays an important role in culture formation and transformation. The “Father of Waters” --Mississippi River and the “Mother River” of Hakka Culture -- Tingjiang River are of the most importance. The cultural heritage in both cities is related to them economically, socially and culturally. In both cities economy based on water transportation introduced cultural elements from other places. The settings of the Mississippi River and Tingjiang River connect New Orleans and Changting respectively with the outside worlds. Natural disasters such as floods and tropical storms are also factors that have made cultural heritage preservation in the two cities more complicated and urgent.

Problems of historic preservation plague both cities. Debates include what should be preserved, why it should be preserved, and how to balance the relationships between private ownership and public rights of historic preservation, and between economic development and historic preservation. In Changting, the pressures are mainly from industrial and residential development. In New Orleans, tourism industry is one of the major concerns. This city has one of the lowest average per capita incomes in the United States. The poverty and the competition over scarce resources for development and recovery post-Katrina are problems.

Power struggles exist in heritage preservation in both cities. In China, preservationists and development-minded people debate the damage to heritage resulting

from quick economic development (Wang 2000a). Changting is striving to protect its historic patrimony from damage caused by the expanding residential and industrial development. Another problem is the lack of non-government organizations to connect the efforts of common people, government and scholars and professionals working as preservationists. Due to fierce power struggles over historic preservation, I use pseudo names to replace all interviewees' and one local non-profit organization's real names.

If New Orleans was poor before the Hurricane Katrina, it has been made poorer. Tourism provides money and job opportunities. But some argue that tourism is destroying the social fabric of New Orleans. Problems of poverty and funding for historic preservation have been greatly exacerbated by the new demands of disaster recovery. The goal of this thesis is to dig into these problems and develop an interpretation of how the complex dynamics of power struggles shape in the historic preservation in both cities.



Figure 12 the Jazz Funeral for Katrina Victims Passing by the St. Ann St.; a Newspaper Collection Poster with “Katrina alters objectivity” in the Center, held by Nathaniel Ramsey, October 29, 2005; source: photographed by Dr. Jay D. Edwards, Professor of Department of Geography and Anthropology, used by permission

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN THE TWO COUNTRIES

#### National Historic Preservation Systems

The hierarchical relationship between national, state (provincial) and local governments in the United States and China are similar. But the two government systems are fundamentally different. The biggest difference is who has the right to make laws. In China, only the National People's Congress possesses legislative rights. Numerous local regulations, documents, measures, and notices for heritage preservation are not established through a formal legislation process and this can not be considered laws or codes (Wang 2000b). For example, the Historical and Cultural City Protection Regulations of: Beijing (the City of Beijing, 2005), Lijiang (the City of Lijiang, 1994), and Zhejiang (the Province of Zhejiang, 1999) were all written by their local governments. They are only regulations and do not carry the force of law.

In the United States, the Federal Government makes national laws for historic preservation. However its main duty is to provide maximum encouragement and to assist state and local governments (United States 2002: 35). State governments have legislative rights, and are the practical mechanism for the administration of heritage preservation (Cofresi and Radtke 2003). For example, before the National Historic Preservation Act was enacted in 1966, Louisiana was one of the several states which supported local preservation efforts by passing enabling acts for historic districts (Lyon and Brook 2003). Louisiana laws on heritage preservation date back to 1950. The current national law on historic preservation was enacted in 1982 (Louisiana Division of Archaeology 2001: 4).

In China, the National Ministry of Construction and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage are in charge of implementation of historic preservation. In the cases of National Historic and Cultural Cities, like Changting, their preservation plans must be approved by the State Council of China -- the Central Government. At the early stage, individual historic structures, such as the Imperial Palace, were the objects of the historic preservation. Later historic cities (towns) were considered comprehensive objects of preservation. Now historic districts and streets are the joint level between individual historic structures and cities (towns). This establishes the three-layer system of historic preservation of China (Wang 2000a). The preservation of individual structures is administrated by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage. Historic districts and cities (towns) are under the supervision of the National Ministry of Construction. Both report directly to the Central Government and have their own subordinate offices at the level of local governments.

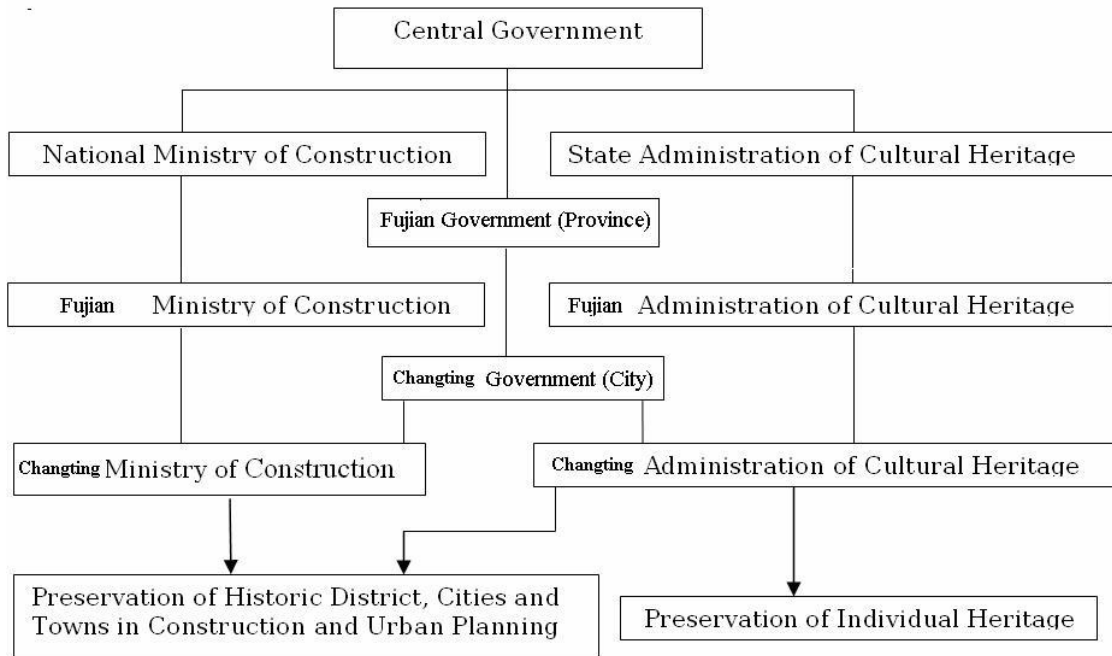


Figure 13 Government Structure of Heritage Preservation in China

Source: The comparative study of the protection system for the historical heritage in China and Abroad (Wang 2000); translated and revised for the case of Changting by author

In China, heritage preservation is the overlapping responsibility of two government branches, the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (with its local subordinates) and the National Ministry of Construction (with its local subordinates). The financial burden of historic preservation is assumed by governments. Severely restricted financial resources create problems in historic preservation (Wang 2000b).

In the United States, preservation plans supported by federal funding must be approved at the national level. The National Park Service carries the principal responsibility for overseeing Cultural Resource Management (Lowenthal 2003). The National Register of Historic Places defines and evaluates sites, buildings, structures, objects and districts (the United States 2002: 35). New Orleans is not treated as a whole for preservation. It is segmented into historic districts and individual sites.

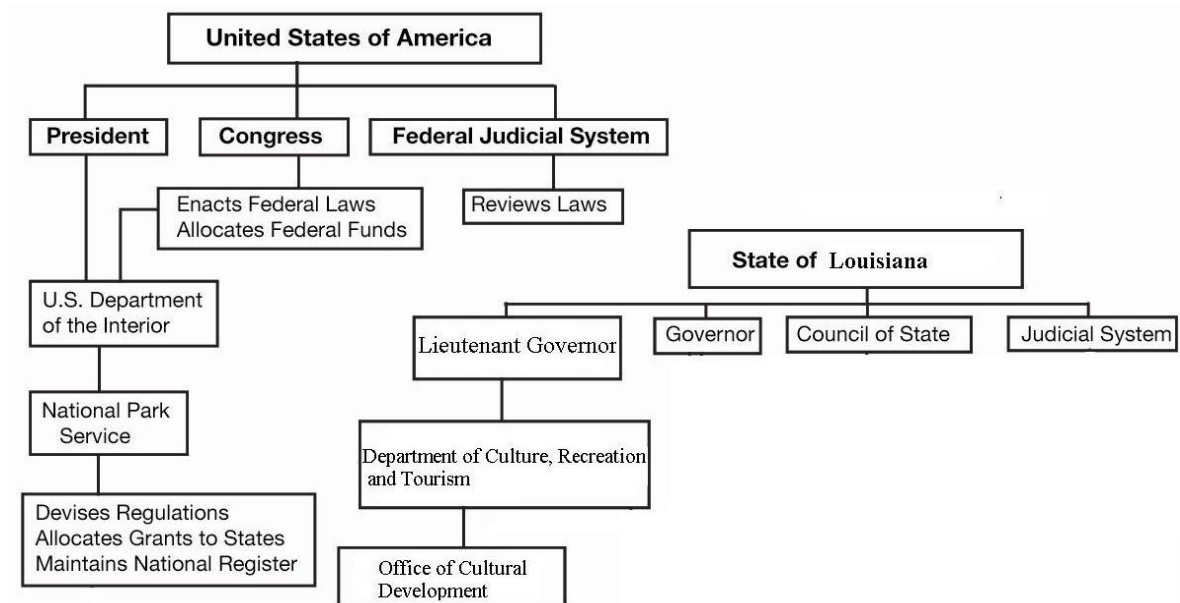


Figure 14 Organization of preservation responsibilities in Louisiana; source: the original diagram is about North Carolina, by Linda Harris Edmisten and Robert E. Stipe (from Stipe 2003 (ed.) Some Preservation Fundamentals), revised by author for Louisiana

In Louisiana, the Office of Cultural Development, a cabinet level branch of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism assumes the main responsibility for historic preservation. The Department oversees the state's management and conservation

of significant historical, natural, informational, and cultural sites and resources so that they will be better protected for future generations. At the same time, the Department promotes tourism in Louisiana. It is administrated by the Lieutenant Governor, who is separately elected from the Governor, and enjoys his or her own domain. The Lieutenant Governor appoints the department's secretary and various other officials.

Both countries have the problem of overly complex systems of historic preservation. Laws, regulations, standards, and guidelines have been developed with little reference to any single overall vision, and with little coordination (King 1998: 4). The complexity of historic preservation systems tends to create confusions.

### **Relevant Laws**

In the United States, there are 23 federal laws, and portions of laws that pertain to the preservation of the Nation's cultural heritage. The principal laws are the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 (and amendments thereto), the Historic Site Act of 1935, the National Trust of Historic Preservation, Creation and Purpose, Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974, and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Laws about transportation, environments, Marine Sanctuaries, Coastal Zone Management, Public Buildings, and Battlefields are also considered relevant (the United States 2002: iii). Among them, the broadest umbrella is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), under which, cultural resources and natural resources are both considered integral as two parts of the national environment. The most specific regulation is the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (King 1998: 35, 59).

Compared to the term "Cultural Heritage", the term Cultural Resource is not widely used in China. The three levels of the cultural heritage system are directly

influential in formulating preservation laws. The original object of historic preservation in modern China began at the first level – individual historic structures. Preservation of at this level eventually became unsatisfactory. In 1982, China initiated a listing of National Historic and Cultural Cities. Preservation efforts in each historic city as a whole began to grow fast. Later, due to the difficulty of preserving whole cities, historic districts and streets in those cities become the practical focus of historic preservation.

Due to the changing focus within the three-level-system, the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act of the People's Republic of China (revised in 2002), aiming at individual structures and sites was first created and the most mature. Its enforcement is supervised by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage. Historic and cultural districts and historic and cultural cities/towns fall under the National Ministry of Construction, but no national laws are specified for them. Regulations relevant to preservation are separately distributed in the Urban Planning Act, the Property Rights Act, the Building Dismantlement and Moving Act, etc. Certain local governments have established relevant regulations about the preservation of historic and cultural districts/cities/towns, without legal support of the Central Government (Wang 2000 b).

In national laws of heritage preservation, the two countries share the international goal of heritage preservation: protecting the historic and cultural heritage of the nation. Both countries emphasize the spiritual value of cultural heritage. The spirit of the United States is founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage (United States 2002: 34).

In the United States, local communities are emphasized more. Heritage as the historical and cultural foundation of the nation should be preserved as a living part of this country's community life for future generations (United States 2002: 34). Common



people are to be taken into account in historic preservation. The practice of preservation is about nurturing the grass roots and assisting communities with the preservation of physical structures, objects, and settings that tell the story of Americans' collective experience (Lea 2003).

The concept of a living community is not included in Chinese laws. Practically more groups in the United States share "the public interest" and engage in the preservation of heritage (the United States 2002: 34). For example, through public meetings, walking tours, artists' books, and permanent public sculpture, as well as architectural preservation, teams of historians, designers, planners, and artists worked together to understand, preserve, and commemorate urban landscape history as a vital part of people's life experiences (Hayden 1997).

The inadvertent and increasing loss and alteration of historic properties was underlined in National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (the United States 2002: 34). The vulnerability and severe loss of cultural legacy is not mentioned in the latest Cultural Heritage Preservation Act of China revised in 2002.

China emphasizes the value of heritage preservation in promoting scientific research which is not found in laws of the United States (2002). Heritage preservation is not related to economic growth and development in Chinese preservation laws. In the United States, the close relationship between development and historic preservation is clearly recognized. In the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, heritage preservation is considered a form of support for economic growth and development (the United States 2002: 34). But heritage tourism is developing fast in China. The latest

Preservation Plan and the Master Plan of Changting put priority on heritage tourism development in the Old City.

The general goals of preservation laws of the United States are similar to those of China. But communities in the two countries play different roles, and the relationship between heritage preservation and economic development in China is not expressed explicitly as it is in the United States.

In neither country, do national laws recognize cities and towns as units for historic preservation. Although historic cities (towns) are at the highest level of preservation, China is lacking in national legal support for the establishment of historic and cultural districts and cities (towns). In the United States cities and towns are not considered entities for historic preservation; while historic districts are the largest units of historic preservation.

## **UNIQUE NEW ORLEANS AND CHANGTING**

### **Non-National Cultures**

New Orleans and Changting are both unique and ethnically differ from “national” cultures, respectively. The ethnic characters of both cities are related to human Diaspora. The Hakka, “guest people” (kejia) who migrated from inland China to South China, are considered a “subethnic” branch of the Han Chinese, speaking a Han dialect and with little officially recognized history of their own (Erbaugh 2002).

As a product of Hakka migration, the Hakka language is one of the eight major Chinese languages (dialects), with an historical relation to Mandarin. In Hakka dialect, many ancient Chinese words, pronunciations, and rules of grammar are maintained in its spoken form, which are no longer maintained in today’s standard Mandarin (Wang 2005:

86; Xie 2002). Much of their culture is quite different from that of the Han around them, and some argue that they should be considered a genuine minority ethnic group (Blum and Jensen 2002).

Creole culture makes New Orleans unique. In contrast to what some people may think, the Louisiana Creole culture is not dead. It is very much alive and does not show signs of dying anytime soon (Kein 1999: iv). Creolization refers to a process of open-ended cultural syncretism which characterizes all colonized places throughout the world, particularly those who colonized after ca. 1450 (Edwards 2004). The Louisiana language or dialect “is not broken French or a patois, or any other racist designate”; Creole Language should be preserved and respected as part of the shared French heritage (Kein 1999: iv). Creole language in New Orleans and the Hakka dialect in Changting are important in that both are living languages, not only spoken by but embodied in the social life of their respective local communities (Wang 2005:57).

Another example of cultural distinctness is found in burial practices. New Orleans and Changting are unique in their special ways of burying the dead. In China, ancestors’ remains should not be disturbed after they were buried. The Hakka “the second-time burial” conflicts with this national tradition. In order to migrate, Hakka would dig out the skeletons of their ancestors, put them in a “second-time” coffin, much smaller than a regular coffin, and carry it with them to their new destinations. Hakka cemetery culture diverged and evolved differently from the mainstream burial practice (Wang 2005: 63). There were the famous above-ground tombs that have remained quintessential images of New Orleans since the antebellum era. The outsider’s eye for the exotic fixed on these

tomb-filled graveyards as emblems and relics of francophone culture itself, unique signs of the social and environmental entropy of the Crescent City (Upton 1997).

There are more examples of how New Orleans and Changting are culturally distinct. Hakka architecture expresses traditional Chinese philosophy but also maintains hidden meaning of ancient phallism (Wu 1998). Creole buildings exhibit a geometrical philosophy of layout originated from its unique history. Louisiana's Creole architecture has revealed much about the manner in which colonial architectural traditions adapt and evolve (Edwards 2004).

Hakka Cuisines in Changting has become more and more famous (Wang 2005). Creole cuisine in New Orleans enjoys high reputation as attraction to tourists. It is celebrated and imitated in restaurants throughout the United States.

All these factors contribute to the uniqueness of the two cities and explained, at least on the surface, why historic preservation is important. Private development plans and large scale urban planning threaten the historic fabric of both cities. Natural disasters make the poor financial situations worse in both cities. The political structures of governments are not efficient in historic preservation. All of these issues threaten historic preservation in New Orleans and Changting in different ways.

### **Local Historic Preservation**

In China, the practical process of heritage preservation usually progresses from top to bottom (Wang 2000 b). Governments alone initiate and administer historic preservation and there is no case of individual or private agencies sponsoring major preservation projects. In cities or towns, historic preservation is directly under the supervision of governments.

In the United States, the major burden of historic preservation has been borne by private agencies and individuals, and they continue to play a vital role in the whole process under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Local governments are the most important engines of preservation activity because of their close physical proximity to the citizens most directly affected (Cofresi 2003). In both countries, national governments are in practical control based on their control of money and political resources.

In the United States, a cultural resource management program can be established in response to large development projects. For instance, to protect Navajo Nation lands, in 1977, the Navajo Nation Cultural Resource Management program was formally established for the tribe (Two Bears 2006). In China, before large construction, mainly infrastructure development, the company undertaking it also should apply to the local government for archaeological investigation and excavation in the construction area (China 2002). Because historic preservation in China does not have a history of public action and local law enactment, it is usually experts or scholars who evaluate the potential damage of cultural heritage. Their appeals may or may not arouse the attention of governments. Although different, the effective historic preservation in both countries requires government enforcement.

Both countries share similar debates about how to balance historic preservation and economic development. In both countries, pressures from residential, tourism, and industrial development is the biggest problem for heritage preservation. Local development often changes or destroys historic settings. In the United States, all approaches to preservation -- whether through planning, regulation, or economic

subsidies -- are aimed at the objective of producing the right balance between too much and too little economic impacts. This is especially true at the local government level. The political aspects of most or all preservation controversies are inevitably related to more fundamental economic considerations (Cofresi 2003).

## **FUNDAMENTAL THEORETICAL SOURCES**

Power struggle is one of main topics of social practice. In the processes of historic preservation, some people's performances are impacted by dominance. Domination is "in effect whenever the individual's goals and purposes and the means of striving for and attaining them are prescribed to him and performed by him" (Marcuse 1970: 1-2).

The main questions in this research are how the voices of different groups become foregrounded or effaced in the dynamics of the political process. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of power and practice is applied. The main concepts are social capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital. At the center of Bourdieu's sociological work is the logic of practice that emphasizes the importance of the body and practices within the social world (Wikipedia 2007 and Bourdieu 1977: 16).

### **Economic Capital, Social Capital and Cultural Capital**

Capital is accumulated labor in its materialized form (economic capital) or its embodied form (social capital and cultural capital); both take time to accumulate and both possess the potential capacity to produce profits and to replicate themselves in identical or expanded form (Calhoun 1993). Capital is a resource inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible (Bourdieu 1983).

The social world can be conceived as a multidimensional space that can be constructed empirically by discovering the main factors of differentiation

which account for the differences observed in a given social universe, or, in other words, by discovering the powers or forms of capital which are or can become efficient, like aces in a game of cards, in this particular universe, that is, in the struggle (or competition) for the appropriation of scarce goods of which this universe is the site. It follows that the structure of this space is given by the distribution of the various forms of capital, that is, by the distribution of the properties which are active within the universe under study – those properties capable of conferring strength, power and consequently profit on their holder... These fundamental social powers are, according to my empirical investigations, firstly economic capital, in its various kinds; secondly cultural capital or better, informational capital, again in its different kinds; and thirdly two forms of capital that are very strongly correlated, social capital, which is the form the different types of capital take once they are perceived and recognized as legitimate (Bourdieu 1987: 3-4; also cited by Calhoun 1993 ).

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential human resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu 1983:249). It is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility (Bourdieu 1983). These relationships may exist only in the practical state, in material and or symbolic exchanges which help to maintain them; they may also be socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name (the name of a family, a class like middle-class tourists, or governments of various levels) and by a

whole set of instituting acts designed simultaneously to form and inform those who undergo them (Bourdieu 1983).

Bourdieu argues that “the volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected” (1983: 250). I want add that not only the size of but also the *strength* of the network of connections is determinative of the power of the social capital held by the agent. Although social capital is relatively irreducible to the economic and cultural capital possessed by a person, it is never completely independent of it. The network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term (Bourdieu 1983: 250).

The concept of cultural capital is fundamentally linked to the concepts of fields and habitus. It “is convertible, under certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications” (Bourdieu 1983: 244). Profits from intellectual rights are good examples. Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the institutionalized state, a form of objectification. For example, architecture and urban planning are two leading disciplines in historic preservation. Scholars and professionals from these two fields are often institutionalized as knowledgeable “experts” or “authorities” superior in historic preservation.



Symbolic capital is a sub-set of cultural capital. It “may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility” and is considered superior aesthetic taste by a society (Bourdieu 1988:244). In historic preservation, the question of what should be preserved as cultural heritage is related to this concept.

With varying levels of difficulty it is possible to convert one of these forms of capital into the other (Calhoun 1993). The convertibility of the different types of capital is the basis of the strategies aimed at ensuring the reproduction of capital (Bourdieu 1983).

Bourdieu criticizes objectivism that refuses to take account of individual actors’ actions, and instead relegates them to the social framework within which they function as virtual automatons, shackled to objective relations of social structure. His theory purports to fill in the gaps between subjectivism and objectivism (Throop and Murphy 2002). That is why he emphasizes that there are different forms of capital, material and nonmaterial.

### **Bourdieu, Phenomenology and Tourist Gaze**

Individuals bring pre-existing concepts in their interactions with the world. Domination can be exercised by man, by nature – it can also be internal, exercised by the individual on himself (Marcuse 1970: 1-2). Like critical science, Bourdieu emphasizes that subjectivity is constrained by durable dispositions (1990: 42).

Phenomenology is a means of addressing whatever shows itself to us, and whatever seems to be something (Heidegger 1962: 51). Bourdieu argues that phenomenology is flawed because it does not explore how lived experience is produced through the dialectic of internalization of previously externalized structures (Troop and Murphy 2002). According to him, phenomenology is limited to apprehending ‘the world as self-evident’, ‘taken-for-granted’ (Bourdieu 1977: 3).

We must understand Bourdieu's statements about phenomenology in certain contexts (Throop and Murphy 2002). There is one point that both ways of thinking agree on. Phenomenology also emphasizes the unbreakable relationship between subjectivity and objectivity, which is often over-simplified by modern science (Thomas 2006). In effect, many of Bourdieu's important insights have been derived from the phenomenological tradition (Throop and Murphy 2002).

The embodiment state of cultural capital reminds me of phenomenological embodiments, the "cultural knowledge" held by certain individuals or the whole community due to their own experiences with the cultural heritage of that community. At the same time, from a phenomenological perspective, the experiences of different persons within a group are emphasized. Embodiment and bodily practice have received considerable attention in anthropology over the past two decades (Persson 2007). Cultural phenomenology is even considered a paradigm of anthropology, with embodiment being understood as the existential and intersubjective ground of culture and experience (Csordas 1999; Persson 2007).

Although some researchers emphasize embodiment more as a restriction: a living-moving body serves to structure and to shape entire scenarios of place (Casey 1993: 48). More and more scholars consider two dimensions of a human need. A human needs home, dwelling and place and a simultaneous need for space, vastness and immensity (Persson 2007). The existential significance of being implaced and grounded, and the concomitant significance of expansion, of moving into perspectives and experiences that are seen to be vaster than the habitual lifeworld, is strongly thematized in the ethnographic field

(Persson 2007). The need to stay is continuously balanced with a desire to liberate oneself from the “drudgery of place” (Relph 1976: 42, Persson 2007).

Phenomenological understanding of embodiments echoes, to some extent, the concept of space in the theory of the tourist gaze. Space in postmodernism is localized, specific, context-dependent, and particularistic by contrast with modernist space which is absolute, generalized, and independent of context (Urry 2002: 114).

John Urry puts emphasis on visual characteristics of cultural heritage. One nature of the gaze is themed: The construction of themed environments waiting to be viewed by visual consumers (2002: 114). But visual elements of heritage are insufficient. Body experience is also important (Strain 2003:275). Tourists also look for the interaction with “real” New Orleans life style, not just having visual experience.

Ellen Strain’s perspective resonates with phenomenological perspectives that tourists have different expectations, which are diverse not only because the context and atmosphere vary, but also because of their own diverse backgrounds. For example, with travel practices there may be genuine desire for meaningful cross-cultural interaction. However, the other desires that impel tourism and the various inequities that characterize host/guest relations make it a problematic terrain for such interactions (Strain 2003: 277). Tourists’ experiences can be quite different from their expectations. According to my questionnaire survey, some tourists blame unrealistic media as one of factors leading to dissatisfaction. This may have negative impacts on both tourism and historic preservation.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### COMPARATIVE METHOD

I use the comparative method as the conceptual framework in this research. Comparing cultures is a long tradition of cultural anthropology. Different countries have different heritage policies, laws and financial supporting systems (Wang 2000 b). The practices of historical preservation are cultural behaviors and deserve comparative study.

Comparison among different countries is not only feasible but also will provide a valuable new look at how we can improve the comprehensive system of assessing the significance of cultural heritage (Donaghey 2001). We can learn from one and the other. There are several differences between heritage preservation practices as they are performed in Chinese and American cities. But there are few comparative studies between United States and China. Under the frame of comparative study, I use participant observation, interviews, personal experience, and questionnaire surveys to collect the first-hand data. I consulted existing documents and academic studies for the second-hand data. In addition, GIS, photography and poetry are supplemental tools.



Figure 15 Participant Observation in a household in the Old City, in 2003; source: photographed by author

## **PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS**

Compared to other “famous” historic cities or towns in China, Changing is not intensely studied. So gathering of the first-hand information was extraordinarily important. When I took part in the Project of the third Preservation Planning for the Old City of Changting, in 2003 and 2004, participant observation and interviews were done together.

We recorded the history of each historic building, most of which were local houses. We asked for permission to go inside these houses, and talked with residents about their family history, how the old house was built, and their plans for the future. All locals were very hospitable and many of them have the front gates of their houses open. The first thing they did, when we went in, was to treat us with a cup of tea. Tourists were few and had not been a disturbance to locals’ lives. On the contrary, outsiders were potential sources of new information or who could convey common people’s ideas to governments. Most people we interviewed were elders or at least middle-aged. In many families, young people migrated to bigger cities for jobs. Residents were highly cooperative and willing to talk about what they thought about the Old City, possibly because they did not have many chances to talk to “governments”.

Sometimes, we encountered someone, although not a professional, who was enthusiastic about historic preservation of the Old City. Once we met a retired teacher riding a bicycle and distributing flyers about protecting the curtain wall of the Old City. We stood there and interviewed him. He is a local resident, worrying about the damage to the stone wall from continuing urban development. On the flyers he gave us, I saw others’ name with his who established a local organization intending to preserve the Old

City. We also made appointments, and talked to officials in local government. For example, an official, not working in a department relevant to heritage preservation, wrote a book about local society several decades ago when he was a teenager. We considered him an important informant since he had done extensive research for this book.

Those people have something in common—their life in the Old City. They were not only telling us about history, but also of their physical and emotional connections with the Old City. I had not received systematic training in anthropology when I was doing research in Changting and was not very conscious of the power struggle, although I was confused by it when I was participating in the preservation project. I am now in a better position to re-analyze the previous participant observation and interview results, from a more “anthropological” perspective.

Since now I am in the United States and can not do new Chinese interviews easily. I made two in-depth interviews via telephone for forty minutes in March and fifty minutes in April 2007. The interviewee is Q, a senior urban planner, also called a “Planning Engineer” in China. He was one of my thesis advisors in 2004 and 2005. He considers himself as a preservationist. Q is a senior member of China Associate of City Planning and personally is committed to historic preservation.

After being retired from Jiangsu Institute of Urban Planning and Design, Q is active in doing relevant research and has published several articles on historic and cultural preservation in China. As an expert in urban planning and historic preservation, Q was hired as one of the two leading planning engineers of Urban Planning Project of Historical and Cultural City of Changting. He was in charge of the historic preservation section of the whole project. Another section is the Master Plan, which is oriented to

future economic development of Changting. Q also took part in this section. The questions I asked Q were:

- **What is your positionality in historic preservation?**
- **What and why should heritage be preserved? Why it is important?**
- **Who initiates historic preservation in China?**
- **Who do the practical job of historic preservation?**
- **What are being debated about historic preservation in China?**
- **How does the system of historic preservation in China work?**
- **What do you think is the relationship between developments and heritage preservation?**

In addition, I use a questionnaire survey done by Juan Wan. She was also a team member of the Preservation Plan of Changting. With multiple-choice questions and a few open-ended questions, this questionnaire is about how locals view historic preservation and tourism development in the Old City. About 350 questionnaires were returned.

In the United States, I have constructed Maps for Historical Districts in New Orleans based on high-resolution Remote Sensing Images. I also established the GIS Database for Development of a Sustainable Heritage Resource Partnership for Geographic Data of Post-Katrina New Orleans, including several sub-databases of base elevation, top elevation, flood depth (due to Hurricane Katrina and Rita), geographic locations, historical and cultural significance of National Historical Landmarks and Sites and local Historical sites and districts in New Orleans.

Interviews provide first-hand information. In 2006, I did a questionnaire interview survey about how tourists' expectations differ from their actual experience in New

Orleans. The questionnaire is four-pages long with multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions. I handed tourists questionnaires on the Moon Walk, close to the French Quarter. Forty-one questionnaires were returned. Some people rejected politely because their schedules were tight or did not want to spend time on a questionnaire. Many people were kind and patiently finished the questionnaires, sitting on the benches or simply standing. In this thesis, the data about the Mass Media sources of tourist' expectations and why they feel unsatisfied with their trips is drawn from this questionnaire.

I did four face-to-face interviews in New Orleans, each for thirty minutes to an hour. All of the interviewees work in non-profit organizations, voluntarily or full-time. They are familiar with government agencies that are in charge of historic preservation. They are also local residents who care about their neighborhoods. All of them showed great interest when I told them this was a comparative study between the United States and China.

First I interviewed M, a native New Orleanian. I knew her from the Pitot House Museum in New Orleans. She was the former director of the Louisiana Landmarks Society and worked for the Preservation Resource Center. Now she is working in a real estate brokerage firm in New Orleans. She got her master's degree in Architecture. In the last year of her graduate study, she began to work for the Preservation Resource Center (the PRC). In all, she worked eight and a half years there, from 1995 to 2004. She was the director of LA Landmarks Society until Jan. 2006.

Through M's personal connections, I interviewed J from the Mid-city neighborhood Organization, D from the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans, and N from the French Quarter. All of them were invited through emails. J is from New



York and now working for Shell Corporation. D is a full-time staff member in the Preservation Resource Center. N is the president of a neighborhood organization of the French Quarter. The four face-to-face interviews were done respectively in two coffee shops, the Preservation Resource Center, and the Napoleon House in the French Quarter, on April 6<sup>th</sup>, April 19<sup>th</sup>, and April 29<sup>th</sup> in 2007. All participants including me were relaxed during the interviews. The questions I asked were:

- **What is your positionality in historic preservation?**
- **What and why should heritage be preserved? Why it is important?**
- **What do you think is the relationship between ownership and heritage preservation?**
- **What do you think is the relationship between developments and heritage preservation?**
- **How should the systems of historic preservation be established and perform?**
- **What are problems of heritage preservation (in your neighborhood)?**
- **Are there examples of struggle between your organization and others?**
- **Are there examples of debating within your organization?**

After the fourth interview, I went to a garden party in the French Quarter. The party provided me good opportunities of chatting with local residents, through which, I had a better understanding of the locals' opinions. From a critical humanist perspective, "insider authorship is an important complement" to my knowledge (Knauff 1996: 59-60). Indeed, what these people provide is not supplemental but indispensable information in drawing the whole picture.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND POETRY

In this study, comparison is extended into photography to show the “flavors” of certain spots in New Orleans and Changting. Photography is a supplemental tool. It is commonly and widely used, but its potential is not fully explored (Laughlin 1980).



Figure 16 the “Sunday in the Park Concert and Picnic” sponsored by a French Quarter neighborhood organization, May 13, 2007; source: photographed and processed by author



Figure 17 A Traditional Structure in the Old City; Photographed by Q, Xingjie and Processed by author, used by permission

I used images photographed by me and other team members of the Preservation Plan of Changting. Every time I went to New Orleans, I used my digital camera to record what I saw and what I felt. They are not only “points” in history. They help people construct the images of the two cities.

Taking photos helped trained my eyes to see the important visual details which combine to establish each unique place. I began to appreciate these places as the natives viewed them rather than as an outsider. Some of the photos are processed artistically. I consider they are more “honest” about what the photographer’s thoughts and feelings about the New Orleans and Changting.



Figure 18 Detail of a House in the French Quarter; source: photographed and processed by author

There are poems about the two cities, respectively in English and in Chinese. All of them are about people whose lives are connected with the cities. For example, Mountain Songs are important part of the Hakka intangible heritage (Wang 2005: 57). I use two examples in the chapter 4. The first is written by a Creole author, about how Creole means to her. The second is a mountain song, an oral “poem”, which records a segment of a Hakka family’s everyday lives.

## GIS AND REMOTE SENSING

Geographic Information System (GIS) has been applied to historical preservations (He 2005 et al; Xu et al 2005; Wang 2005). GIS offers many tools and its full potential have not been realized (Ebert 2004). Maps made with GIS on Remote Sensing images are widely used in historic preservation. In the case of Changting, GIS and Remote Sensing images were used to construct a series of maps and three-dimension models like figure 19 shows. For this research, I choose maps made with GIS that show architecture and Rampart Wall system of the Old City.

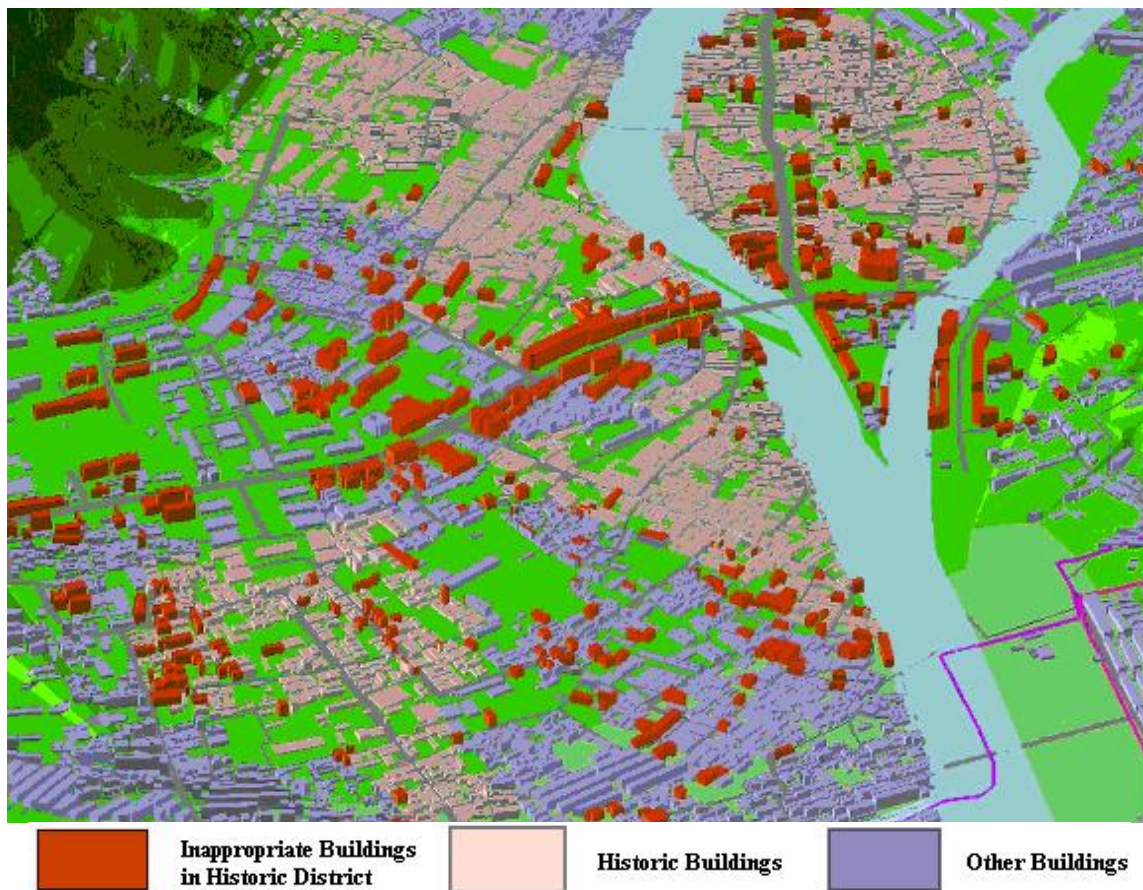


Figure 19 Virtual Three-Dimension Model of the Old City of Changting based on R.S. Images, GIS software, and field work; Source: the Preservation Plan of Changting, Nanjing University Urban Planning and Design Institute, 2004

In the case of New Orleans, I established a GIS Database for historic buildings and districts. for Development of a Sustainable Heritage Resource Partnership for

Geographic Data of Post-Katrina New Orleans, including several sub-databases of base elevation, top elevation, flood depth (due to Hurricane Katrina), geographic locations, historical and cultural significance of National Historical Landmarks and Sites and local Historical sites and districts in New Orleans.

### **A LITTLE SUMMARY OF MY POSITIONALITY**

My identity as a young Chinese female scholar is also a factor that shapes my research and the way this thesis is written. I began to love traditional Chinese culture from my undergraduate period. Then I was tutored by preservationists of older generation when I first took part in historic preservation of Changting. I believe putting my own efforts in historic preservation is worthwhile from then on. I am amazed by New Orleans also. This valuable city should be preserved, no matter how badly it has been damaged. I volunteered in the clean-up project with other LSU students to help out in April 2006. As long as there are people coming back and appreciating this city, the cultural heritage in New Orleans is alive.



Figure 20 LSU Volunteers Cleaning Katrina Debris in the CBD, New Orleans, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006; Source: photographed by author

I received formal education in the fields of GIS, Human Geography and Anthropology. I have about five year's experiences in historic preservation in both New Orleans and Changting. I think it is pointless to simply judge that urban planning, architecture, GIS, and Remote Sensing as "hard" disciplines, and anthropology, sociology are the "soft" side in historic preservation.

My goal is to combine disciplines like GIS and social sciences together in the study of heritage preservation. In the process of governmental decision making, they should play a role in advising and informing governmental decision and policy making.

## CHAPTER 4 MULTIPLE VOICES

### CAPITAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

New Orleans and Changting are different because of separated political, historical and geographical backgrounds. In the two cities, groups and individuals have different degrees of control over historic preservation. Using Bourdieu's concepts of capital and theory of power and practice, I intend to interpret the dynamics of the actions of some of these groups. People have diverse beliefs and dispositions – their own habitus in terms of historic preservation. Cultural capital, social capital, and economic capital are interchangeable and feed upon one another to create diverse situations. Capital is unevenly distributed, so power is also distributed unevenly.

Social capital in historic preservation is tied to political power. I define the social capital held by governments, including government agencies and officials, as direct political capital. It is a sub-type of social capital, perceived and recognized as legitimate by the society. Entities and people with connections to the holders of direct political capital have indirect political capital. Both types of political capital are ultimately supported by the legislative power of governments. The holders of political capital are most strategically positioned to successfully express their voices in historic preservation.

If the holders of political capital are also holders of cultural capital: their knowledge may be easily transformed into political capital. They may be recognized as authorities with better expertise in evaluating the authenticity of cultural patrimony. Their cultural capital may be considered authoritative, correct, and be highly valued by the society.

Cultural capital can be transformed into political capital. This is especially true in traditional Chinese Society. The tradition, that “To Serve in the Government if You Establish Your Scholarship”, has been established and maintained since the Han Dynasty (BC 134; Lou 2005). The academic world and the political system in China are connected based on this rule. Some scholars become famous and politically influential as a result of their academic achievements. In turn, their political power makes their academic performance more successful. Regulations and planning strategies made by them are influential in historic preservation.

The holders of economic capital may have negative or positive attitudes toward historic preservation. Governments in New Orleans and Changting both emphasize economic development, through which successful business people acquire indirect political power. After natural disasters, the short-term goal of economic recovery further pushes historic preservation towards the periphery.

Some people argue that historic preservation and economic development can be aligned or that historic preservation is even a type of long-term economic development. However, this conflicts with the traditional conceptualization that economic development and historic preservation as conflicting rivals, which dominates in everyday society such as governmental operations, and also to certain extent, exists in academic world.

To approach this complicated topic, my analysis is based on four issues that are debated within different groups: 1) what heritage should be preserved and why; 2) who is responsible for historic preservation; 3) how to balance the private ownership rights and public rights of historic preservation; 4) what is the relationship between development and historic preservation.



The first question asks why cultural heritage is important. Although most people agree that cultural heritage is an essential component of modern urban planning, they have different reasons of supporting historic preservation. The second question is about the main players and disciplines in historic preservation. The third question is whether the private ownership rights should dominate historic preservation as public rights. The final question asks whether development and historic preservation are necessarily rivals. The word development includes industrial development, tourism development, residential development, and other types of economic development

## **WHY PRESERVE AND WHAT TO PRESERVE?**

### **What is the Core?**

The two questions are closely related. What is valuable to people is often the reason why they preserve it. Some people emphasize historic buildings. D<sup>1</sup> is native from the suburban area of New Orleans. He graduated and majored in architecture from University of New Orleans. Now D is a full time preservationist working in the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans (PRC). He thinks “heritage is the treasure left by our ancestors. It is important to keep up these beautiful buildings... what we should keep alive and not let it die”. D appreciates the vernacular houses in neighborhoods more than the big houses in the Garden District. He thinks the simplicity of space in these neighborhoods is beautiful; and in New Orleans, people do not leave their neighborhoods often; it is difficult now [post-Katrina] to get people back and find them a place to live. So among all types of heritage, the house is the first thing in historic preservation. New Orleans culture is centered on its houses.

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<sup>1</sup> D is a resident, preservationist, planner and environmentalist. I interviewed him on April 20, 2007 in the Preservation Resource Center, New Orleans.

Many old houses are efficient in withstanding natural disasters. D pointed out houses reacted to Hurricane Katrina differently. To him historic preservation is also an environmental issue. The old houses were constructed of good quality wood. They survived much better than houses that were constructed using modern materials and technologies.

J<sup>2</sup> is from New York and now living in the Mid-City Neighborhood. She works full-time for SHELL. She and her husband own a small business in the neighborhood. They are volunteers in the Mid-City Neighborhood Organization (MCNO), one of local non-profit organizations. All workers are volunteers in this organization. J calls herself a modernist preservationist. She means her perspective is more of a local resident who is deeply involved in the community. She and her husband are volunteers in the Mid-City Neighborhood Organization, one of the local non-profit organizations dealing with neighborhood issues including historic preservation. She also emphasizes the “good quality” of old buildings. J is “personally interested in historic houses and loves them because of the uniqueness and small features of each house.” She uses three buildings in the Mid-City as examples. Owned by one person, these three buildings “are almost identical, but different in color and small features...everyday you can see something new ... [these houses] stand for good quality and require money to maintain...it is logical to preserve these houses because newly constructed ones are without that good quality.”

Historic architecture is not the only focus. M<sup>3</sup> has worked in non-governmental organizations of historic preservation in New Orleans for ten years. She is a native New Orleanian and a resident of Tremé. She used to work in Preservation Resource Center for

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<sup>2</sup> J was interviewed on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in a coffee shop in the One Shell Square, New Orleans.

<sup>3</sup> M was interviewed on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in a coffee shop in Marigny, New Orleans.

eight and a half years and was the former director of Louisiana Landmarks Society. Now she is working in a real estate brokerage firm in New Orleans. M told me that “we are desperate to let people know that preservation is not only about rich people and pretty houses.”

N<sup>4</sup> is the president of a local neighborhood organization in the French Quarter. I call it the FQ in this thesis. N grew up in a small town of North Louisiana. He was a visitor when he found his job in New Orleans. He moved to the French Quarter in 1985 and is still living in the neighborhood. N considers himself a preservationist. He owns a company in New Orleans. He agrees that the core of heritage preservation is architecture. But architecture is not the only thing. He thinks there are at least three reasons to preserve heritage. First it is culturally important for a society to

understand “where we come from.” Second, historic buildings are aesthetically beautiful. For example, he commented that the interior of the historic Napoleon House was nice because of its texture is “old-looking”. He loves this city and “the quality of life here is high,” so he chooses to stay in New Orleans, even though his own company can good a profit everywhere else in the United States. Thirdly, cultural heritage is economically important. Heritage preservation itself is a huge economic development.



Figure 21 The Napoleon House Federal Mantle; Source:photographed by Dr. Jay D. Edwards, Professor of Department of Geography and Anthropology, used by permission.

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<sup>4</sup> N was interviewed on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in the Napoleon House, the French Quarter, New Orleans.

To summarize, the focus of historic preservation in New Orleans is mainly tangible heritage. Intangible heritage – life styles, traditions, customs and locals' identities — remains largely neglected.

**The Pot calls the Coffee Pot**

Hey, Cajun,  
and you, Creole,  
how come you call yourself  
white or black? Who gave you these names?  
We are descendents of the French, the Spanish,  
the Africans, the Indian, the Acadian, the Haitian, and  
all the other Gombo people who came to  
Louisiana. These spices made the Gombo.  
Our rich culture serves as our common bond.  
We are of the same paprika blood, and that  
blood connects us with the world.  
If racists want to stick paper stars on our  
skins to tell us what we are, let them  
boil in hell with their foolishness.  
We are the Louisiana French, proud of  
the French and African heritage. We are  
European, African, Asian, and American.  
Cajun, Creole. Let us dare to say it.  
And all the worst for those who do not like what  
we are, how long can they look at us and tell  
us we do not exist?  
But my friend, do not throw away the spice  
because it is too light or too dark.  
If you do that your will not have Gombo,  
ever again, but a foul melted stew made up of  
the denied flesh of your ancestors,  
your grandmother, your grandfather, your mother,  
your father, your sister, your brother,  
your aunt, your uncle, your cousin, your niece,  
your nephew, your children, or  
yourself.

By Kein, Sybil 1999. Gumbo People. P 30-31. New Orleans: Margaret Media

In China, the “orthodox” philosophy – Confucianism, is deeply embedded and embodied in traditional Chinese architecture (Li 1999). Architecture symbolizes the hierarchical system of Chinese society at all levels from a family to the whole country (figure 22). Hakka residential buildings also express the pursuit of harmony between the humans and Nature and the Universe, which is considered beautiful (Wu 1998).



Figure 22 A Family Temple in the Old City of Changting; Source: photographed by author

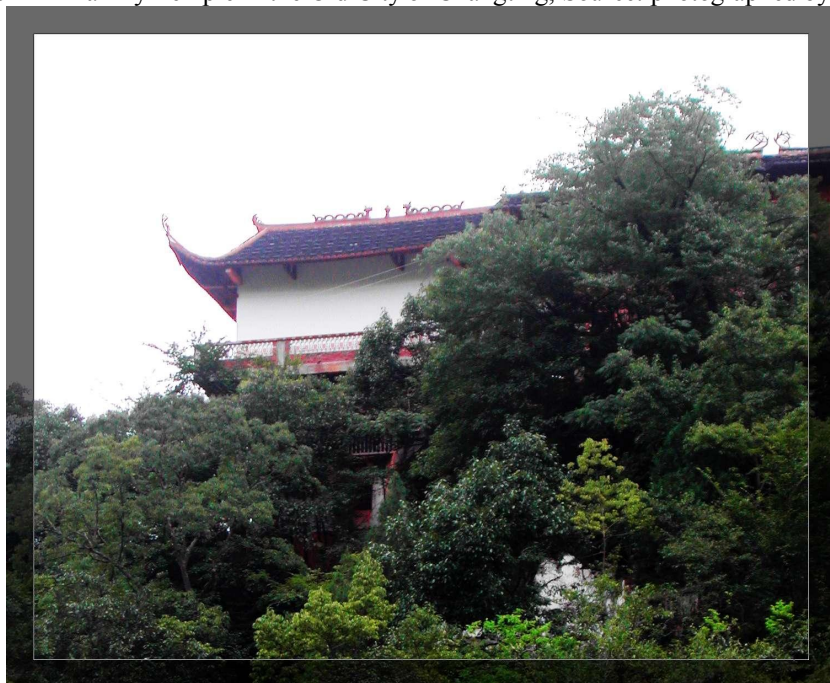


Figure 23 Harmony between humans and the Nature --A Temple hidden in trees; source:by author



Figure 24 A local morning: a young woman combing on the street; source: photographed by author

Increasingly Chinese professionals and scholars believe that architecture is only a small part of cultural heritage. Tangible heritage is alive only if intangible heritage and life styles of local communities are preserved. A historic and cultural city can not be preserved as a big “museum” (Zhao 2002). Some characters of local life, as this Hakka mountain song says, can not be put in a museum.

### **Sing a Hakka song**

Sit in a row and sing mountain songs. You beat the drum and I hit the gong.  
Daughter-in-law fries sea-shell behind the kitchen. The sea-shell shells prickle father-in-law's feet.  
Father-in-law cries out loudly and daughter-in-law laughs loudly.

Sit in a row and sing mountain songs. Father beats the drum and son hits the gong.  
Daughter-in-law fries the sea-shells. Bending his back gandpa makes the fire. Grandma examines the tree parks and sister sings mountain songs.

By Chung, Yoon-Ngan<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> CHUNG Yoon-Ngan (鄭永元), Copyright 1999. Electronic documents, <http://www.asiawind.com/pub/forum/fhakka/mhonarc/msg02284.html>, accessed June 5, 2007.

In the Old City, narrow historic streets are important for locals. These streets also function as spaces for chatting with neighbors and friends and doing anything that is not considered private (figure 24 and 25). In the Preservation Plan of Changting, the Old City was considered as a whole.

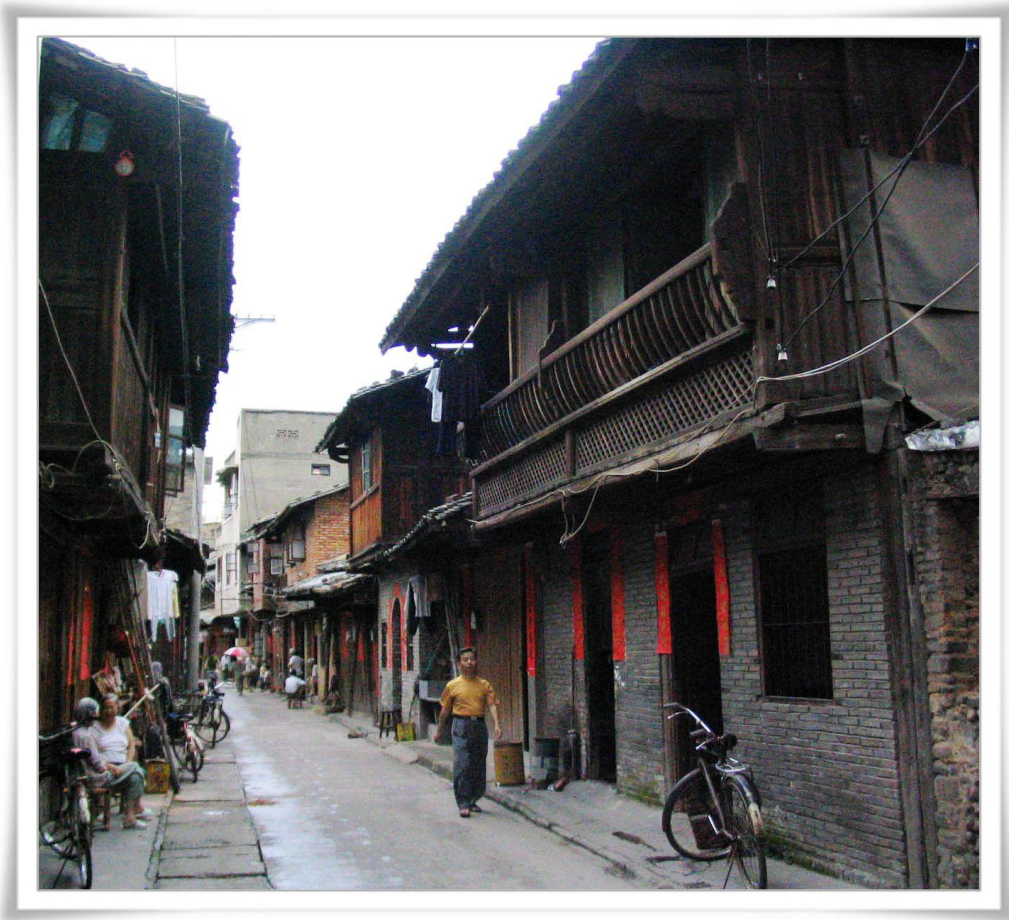


Figure 25 locals chatting or walking in the Old City; photograph by He, Zheng-Ying, used by permission

Q<sup>6</sup> is the main planner of the Project. Through archival research and field work, he found that the Old City is the only Hakka town that is well preserved, resulting from a combination of slow economic development and a relatively isolated geographic environment. Three cities are the major Hakka cultural centers in mainland China:

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<sup>6</sup> Q was the main planner of Preservation Plan of Changting. He is 71. In 1975, he was graduated from Tongji University, located in Shanghai, majoring in urban planning.

Changting, Ganzhou, and Meizhou. Q has investigated all of them and concluded that the other two have already been swallowed by modernization and that little cultural integrity survives. Q feels the urgent need to preserve Changting as the last authentic Hakka city. Q underlines that the historical and cultural atmosphere of Changting is more important than individual historic structures. What makes Changting valuable in terms of Hakka culture is the traditional life style in the Old City. This enlivens the historic buildings and invests them with meaning. Q commented that too much emphasis on individual buildings had resulted in the misunderstanding of historic preservation of urban heritage in China.



Figure 26 the “Fengshui” of Changting; Source: the Preservation Plan of Changting, Nanjing University Urban Planning/Design Institute, 2004

In the Preservation Plan of Changting, cultural heritage is integrated at diverse scales. According to “Fengshui”, the traditional environmental philosophy of China, Changting is a city sitting with a “Back Mountain” and close to a water resource in a desirable way. It enjoys more opportunity to prosper. The selection of geographical location of Changting by ancient Chinese, who were ancestors of Hakkas, is cultural heritage at a larger scale than architecture.



The Curtain Wall System of the Old City, constructed from 1636 A.D. is part of its Fengshui and famous for its shape called the “Buddha’s Necklace”. The city gates connected by the curtain wall are just like the beads of



Figure 27 the texture of the Curtain Wall of the Old City, the layers showing construction efforts of different historical periods; source: photographed by Qiu, Xingjie and processed by author

Buddha’s necklace. To local people, the Buddha’s Necklace still serves as the psychological boundary of the Old City (Wang 2005:35).



Figure 28 the Curtain Wall System of the Old City (the Buddha’s Necklace), in Changting Museum; source: photographed by author in August, 2003

Chinese scholars have begun to emphasize intangible heritage. The religious system (figure 29), cuisine and foodways, traditional handicrafts (figure 29), and folk customs (figure 30), are included in the Preservation Plan of Changting (Wang 2005:57). However, until now preservation of intangible heritage and local life styles has been largely limited to academic research. In the practice of historic preservation, tangible heritage, especially architecture, is still the leading actor. This is partly due to the fact that the major disciplines in historic preservation practices are urban planning and architecture design. Social sciences are not significantly involved in historic preservation.



Figure 29 Craftsmen making Buddha Statues in a local shop in the Old City of Changting; source: photographed by Qiu, Xingjie

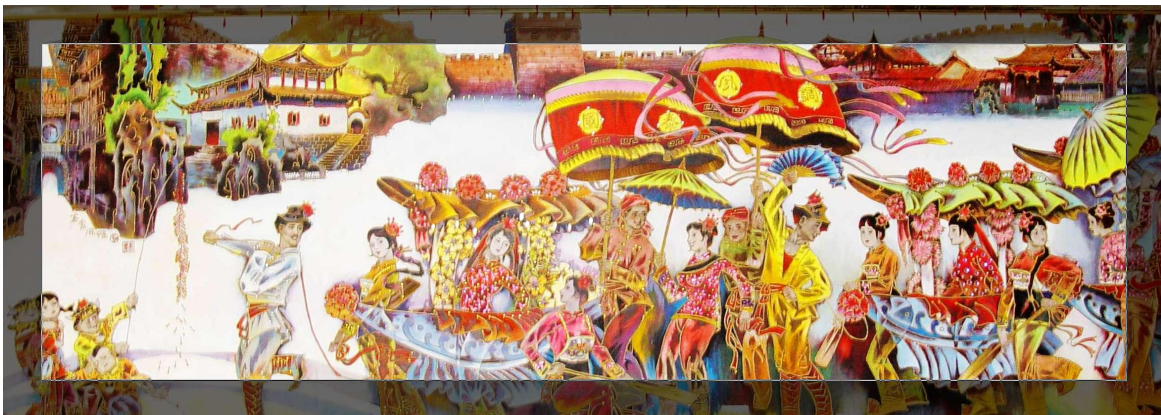


Figure 30 Folk-custom of the Old City; source: photographed by author in a local inn of Changting; source: photographed by author in august, 2003

**Limited Disciplinary Scope**

In both the United States and China, architecture and urban planning are leading disciplines in historic preservation, as figure 31 and 32 show. Except for community volunteers, all my interviewees (Q, M, and D) working in historic preservation have either academic or professional backgrounds of urban planning, or architecture.

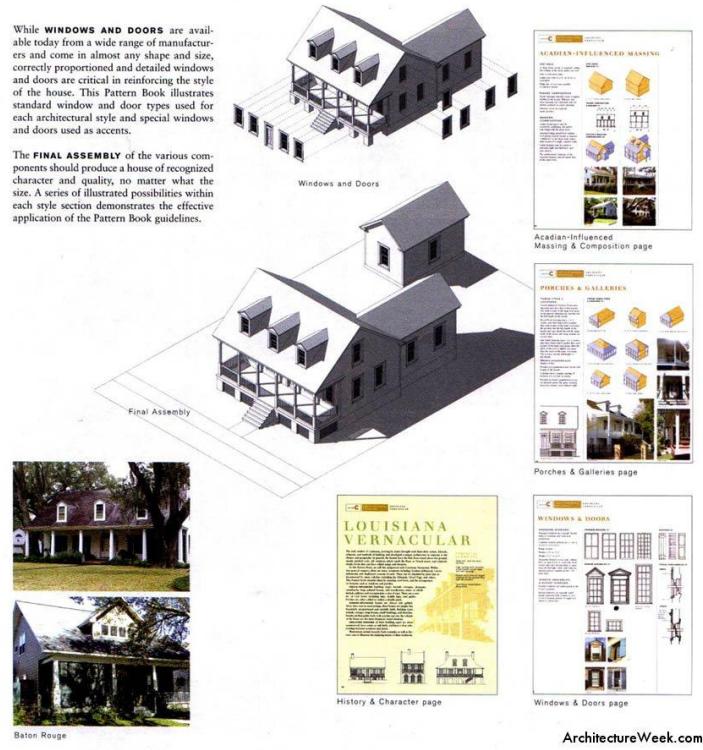


Figure 31 A page of the “Pattern Book”, a product of “Louisiana Speaks” -- a long-term planning initiative of the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA); Source:<http://www.louisianaspeaks.org/>

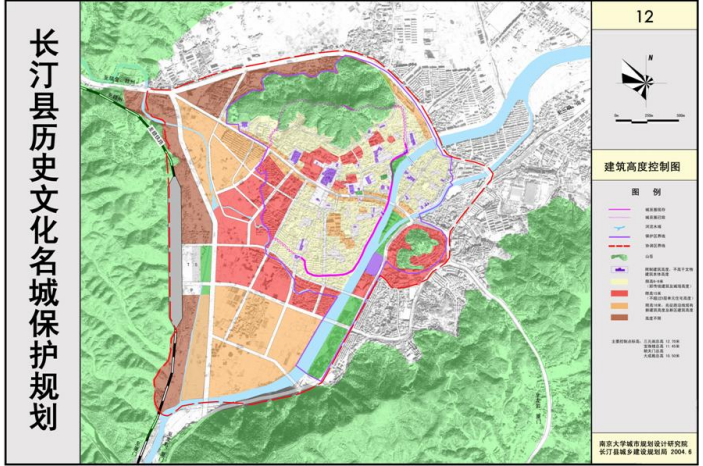


Figure 32 the Building Height Control Plan (Map); source: the Preservation Plan of Changting, Nanjing University Urban Planning/Design Institute, 2004

GIS and remote sensing are common tools in historic preservation. I could participate in the historic preservation of New Orleans because I have a degree in GIS. In these fields, tangible heritage – the physical aspects of cultural legacy – are the focus of historic preservation. For example, figure 33 shows the flood water surrounding the Superdome in 2005 and the same area one year later.



Figure 33 the Superdome: Post-Katrina Comparison Images of 2005 and 2006; Source: made by author in the Computer Aided Design & Geographic Information Systems (CADGIS) Research Laboratory at Louisiana State University, based on ADS40 imagery from 3001 Inc; the resolution is one feet.

In China, “experts” in historic preservation are drawn from urban planning, architecture, and GIS. Buildings as tangible cultural heritage are the practical units of

historic preservation. GIS and Remote Sensing are applied in a “scientific” way to include more features than individual buildings (Wang and Qiu 2005). Two of the three team leaders of the Preservation Plan Project of Changting are senior urban planners. One is a professor specializing in GIS applications. Beginning with an individual historic property, a small historic district is established based on the buffer areas of nearby individual historic properties. As figure 34 and 35 show, the size of the buffer area is determined by the size of the historic properties and their significance. Significance is defined by the City Administration of Cultural Heritage (Changting) and the Provincial Administration of Cultural Heritage (Fujian). In the Preservation Plan of Changting, although intangible heritage is considered, practical strategies are targeted to tangible heritage such as buildings and the curtain wall system.



Figure 34, 35 Buffer areas of each historic building; uniting nearby buffer areas into a small historic district  
Source: Preservation Plan, by Nanjing University Urban Planning and Design Institute, 2004

Post Hurricane Katrina, according to the United New Orleans Plan (UNOP<sup>7</sup>), a joint effort of the Mayor, City Council and City Planning Commission of New Orleans, participants in the Historic Preservation Technical and Financial Assistance Program are drawn from Tulane University School of Architecture and the University of New Orleans Department of Urban Planning and Studies. In the Computer Aided Design & Geographic Information Systems (CADGIS) Research Laboratory at Louisiana State University, the historic architecture of New Orleans was input into a GIS database for future preservation.

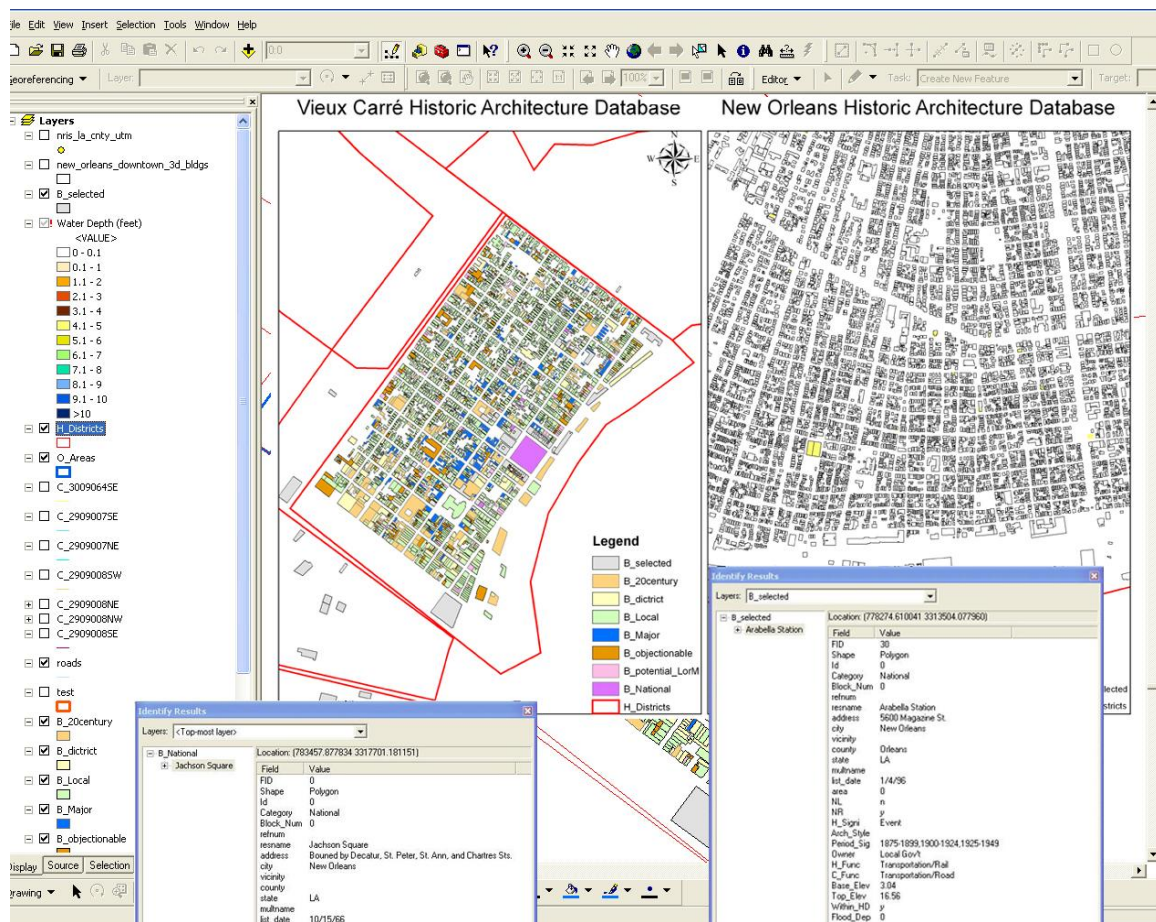


Figure 36 the Historic Architecture Database of the French Quarter and other historic districts in New Orleans; besides the geographic information; for example, the image shows the “significance level”, base elevation, flood depth during Katrina, historical function, and cultural function of the Jackson Square and the Arabella Station; Source: established by author, with ArcGIS (ArcMap) in CADGIS Lab, LSU

<sup>7</sup> The first draft of UNOP was finished at the end of January, 2007.

Only certain aspects of tangible heritage are preserved. Using the French Quarter as an example, The Design Guidelines of Vieux Carré Commission only restrict changes to the facade. This creates the problem of “facadism” that anything behind the facade including the inside structure is neglected.



Figure 37 the Street Facade in the French Quarter; Source: photographed by author

Intangible cultural sediments are often neglected (Xi 1992; Ruan 1992). Social disciplines such as anthropology and sociology are seldom involved the decision making process in historic preservation. Local residents and organizations generally follow the ideal of “traditional” disciplines such as architecture or urban planning.

When I interviewed people, their first response often was that my major might be architecture. After I told them that my major was anthropology, many commented that it sounded “interesting”. Social sciences have not been considered a “serious” participant in

historic preservation. The model of the historic preservation of a city is often a big database of tangible heritage.

Anthropologists understand the material culture and built-environment biases of U.S. cultural heritage policies. The aftermath of Katrina holds the promise of making inescapably clear the importance of “place” to communities in ways too easily overlooked by the usual historic preservationists and it demands that government planners begin to appreciate the importance of talking to ordinary people and in recognizing culture as being “in people’s heads” (Paredes 2006).

Some urban planners have realized that the disciplinary scope of current historic preservation is incomplete. Q’s is committed to historic preservation through his urban planning background. He has long experience in the field and has seen many problems of cultural heritage preservation in the environment of rapid development in China. His comprehension of historic preservation changed markedly. When he graduated from a university famous for its engineering disciplines in the 1950s, he was passionate about modern things. From 1950s to 1970s, Q’s generation (my grandfather’s generation) and my parents’ generation received their education when China was trying to overturn her past and embracing new knowledge from the West.

In China, ideas about development and historic preservation are changing. Q thinks specialists are now reevaluating traditional Chinese culture and trying to understand why certain things survive through time. But economic development is still an important index of political success for government officials. To them, urban planning and architecture are efficient tools. When historic preservation is on their agenda, these two disciplines are still the top options.



## **THE MAIN PLAYERS**

In the United States and China, different political systems result in the differences in the application of historic preservation. The Federal Government, the Louisiana State Government, and the City of New Orleans have not formed an efficient cooperative relationship. Historic preservation in New Orleans is mainly a local effort. The Federal Government's general shift since the 1980's toward devolution plays a role in the localization of historic preservation somehow. Non-governmental organizations and City Government agencies assume the primary job. Cultural Resource Management (CRM) firms and academic institutes also take part in historic preservation. But they are not directly involved in the power struggle due to the fact that they are hired by government.

In China, political system is a unified network. Changting Ministry of Construction and Changting Administration of Cultural Heritage are supervised by their superiors -- Fujian (Provincial) Ministry of Construction and Fujian (Provincial) Administration of Cultural Heritage. At same time, they are government branches administrated by the City of Changting. For instance, Changting Administration of Cultural Heritage is subject to the City of Changting and Fujian (Provincial) Ministry of Construction is subject to the Province of Fujian. Professionals and scholars are hired by local government branches for certain jobs. In both New Orleans and Changting, local governments are powerful holders of political capital and/or economic capital.

### **New Orleans: Government (Agencies) and NGOs**

In New Orleans, local government and government agencies are often considered less efficient and less responsible than they should be in public affairs including historic preservation. Many think that the current Mayor has been more pro-development and has

not paid sufficient attention to preservation issues and needs. D commented that “the local government does not do anything” for historic preservation before Hurricane Katrina. According to the UNOP, Hurricane Katrina inflicted significant damage on more than half of the city’s twenty historic districts; the estimated number of historic properties affected is 25,000. But “the city and other agencies have limited resources and are challenged to assist; preservation issues need to be considered at the neighborhood-level” (New Orleans 2007:1.13).

The former chief technology officer Greg Meffert, who also oversaw the City Planning Commission and the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC), deemed these two government agencies “top heavy and inefficient departments”. There was almost a two-year wait to for HDLC approval “because there were endless deferrals, endless pontificating. Exception had become the rule.” Meffert fired HDLC Director Elrhei Thibodeaux in 2005 as part of the organization’s reform. The controversial move cut HDLC approval time down to eight weeks (Roberts 2006)

Government agencies are branches of the city government. In October 2005, the City of New Orleans laid off more than 2,400 employees, which left the Historic District Landmarks Commission and the Vieux Carré Commission understaffed. The VCC had only two employees. These government agencies had to turn to non-government organizations for help. Because the HDLC is severely understaffed, neighborhood volunteers are working to complete the paperwork begun over five years ago. Volunteers are surveying each house for the involved process (Roberts 2006). The VCC had no staff to answer phones, handle routine paperwork or, perhaps most important, patrol the French Quarter checking on construction and looking for work done in violation of its

regulations (Eggler 2005). In the venerable French Quarter, damage has occurred: a Victorian-era house at 1025 Orleans was demolished without permission before anyone realized what was happening (Farwell 2006). The VCC proposed three steps to fill the gap: 1) Create a citizen volunteer corps to take over some of the duties; 2) Request the National Guard to lend the commission whatever aid it can; 3) Pursue the idea of creating nonprofit Friends of the Vieux Carre Commission organization that could provide financial support for the commission's work (Eggler 2005).

Without the support of local government, non-profit organizations have to struggle to accomplish historic preservation. According to D, the PRC plays an important role in helping common people. One of its contributions is an important local magazine – *Preservation in Print*. D says that after the disaster, more people are involved in historic preservation, which makes it “more grass-rooted now than before”. J from Mid-City agrees that the PRC does a good job in educating people. She describes the way PRC works “like the Home Depot where people can learn practical details of historic preservation.” This helps grass-roots restoration and bootstrap recovery post-Katrina.

Non-profit organizations like the PRC are “conscious” of their status as the team leaders of the historic preservation in New Orleans. M told me that a “rescued” house was a tangible product showing that the PRC was doing its job. The Mid-City Neighborhood Organization also leads the task of preservation and makes an effort to reach out to people and to help residents in practical historic preservation projects. Information relevant to historic building recovery is posted on its website<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> The information is posted on the Website of the Mid-City Neighborhood Organization on December 7th, 2006, under the “Rebuilding Tips” category; <http://mcno.org/category/rebuilding-tips/>, accessed May 31, 2007.

If you own a historic building damaged in last year's storms, you should be aware of a grant opportunity that may help you. \$10 million has been appropriated by Congress to the National Park Service for the purpose of saving and preserving the character of historic properties damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and/or Rita (posted on Thursday, December 7th, 2006). The deadline is December 15th, so apply today! You can get the application from the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation website (MCNO 2006).

In this case, the Mid-City organization acts as informational connecting point between the State Government and the Federal Government, and common people, skipping over the New Orleans Government.

Lack of government support also means a lack of funding. Non-governmental organizations have to struggle to survive, with the situation far worse following Katrina. M says that money is a big problem for all non-profit organizations including preservation organizations. Like all other non-profit organizations, the PRC get little money from local government. Although it "is the leader and does not compete with them for resources, it has to compete nationally with other similar organizations." D thinks it is ironic that, at this point, Hurricane Katrina had a positive impact on heritage preservation in New Orleans because it makes the urgency known nationally and assists the PRC in obtaining donations.

The directors of non-profit organizations need to have considerable business knowledge and experience to run the organizations economically and to successfully raise money for historic preservation. Donations are the main money source. Lack of business

knowledge is a problem. Many people in non-profit organizations are not experienced with business practices. Business knowledge and skills as powerful cultural capital are extraordinarily important for non-profit organizations because they don't have the income of a commercial entity. This effectively produces divides within and between neighborhood organizations.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, all New Orleans non-profit organizations lost much of their financial support because many individual and corporate sponsors (antique shops, corporations, restaurants) closed or are operating on severely reduced incomes. The preservation organizations in New Orleans are facing much fiercer competition than before. M thinks that the PRC does the job well, because it has established several sources including donation, membership, and the sale of small products. But the PRC is an exceptional example. Louisiana Landmarks Society has a very small number of staff. Neighborhood organizations like the Mid-City can not afford full-time staff. Their workers are volunteers. As long people show interest, they are trusted to do it by themselves. I would hazard a guess that most neighborhood organizations are like the Mid-City Neighborhood Organization.

Getting money is just one part. How to invest in historic properties and make a profit requires extensive business knowledge. When the PRC was planning to purchase an historic structure, some people thought it might raise money for the organization and it was a type of historic preservation. Others believed that such a big investment was risky and did not deem it an appropriate way to do preservation. Only if the director of the PRC knew how to combine profitable investments and historic preservation that such debate could end in a "win-win".

Non-profit organizations are usually politically powerless when facing government's anti-preservation decisions. In the French Quarter, N thinks his organization the FQ<sup>9</sup> plays a different role than the Vieux Carré Commission (VCC), a government agency. According to him, the VCC has the "real power", which means it has direct political capital to influence the decision of the City Council. N says that if the head of the VCC is inept, which did happen before the current VCC president, this government agency might fail in its job of protecting the heritage of the French Quarter.

As a neighborhood organization, the FQ is not directly "politically influential". However, people in the FQ have their own ways to put indirect pressure on government agencies. One weapon is mass media. The



Figure 38 A Online Radio Spot Calling on Help by the FQ; source: the website of the FQ

FQ closely watches the VCC and city government. If a harmful policy is adopted, or if useful policies are circumvented, the FQ may call on help from the public through mass media, among which radio and the Internet are usually used. People on the streets including tourists, are interviewed about their opinions on a certain issue relevant to the French Quarter, and the results are made public over the Internet. For example, the FQ published an on-line radio spot about a twenty-six-story tower that was being planned for the French Quarter:

<sup>9</sup> FQ is used as the code name for a neighborhood organization in the French Quarter in order to protect it.

Some developers said they want to fix a five-story building in the first block of Royal Street. That would be good. But to do it, they want to build a twenty-six-story tower on the back. Twenty six stories! People are joking that it is the world's largest camel-back building. The zoning allows 85 feet. Before Katrina, the city let the developers add another 90 feet. Basically double. The developers say after Katrina, the cost went up. Now they want a whole another 90 feet. Triple! From 85 to 265 feet! If the New Orleans city Council let this pass, how can it ever tell anybody else "No"? Council members, Oliver Thomas, Arnie Fielkow, Shelley Midura, Stacy Head, James Carter, Cynthia Hedge-Morrell, and Cynthia Willard-Lewis, please vote to say that the enough is enough. (The FQ 2007)

People hear the radio spots and call their City Council members, whose names and telephone numbers are listed on the website. In addition, the FQ has a secret tool to support their ideal of historic preservation. There are about 800 members in the organization. Most members of the FQ are upper-middle or middle class. Two thirds of them are residents of the French Quarter. They are encouraged to use their personal connections as an indirect political social capital to influence governmental decisions. They encourage people who are "good for the job" to apply for the positions in government agencies relevant to heritage preservation. For example according to N, the FQ had contacted the current director of VCC and encouraged him to apply for the position. He successfully got the job.

Another example of “indirect influence” is that the activists of the FQ personally contact politicians or “important persons” outside of New Orleans. According to N, when the politician gets several phone calls or emails about a certain issue, he or she knows it must be an important one. And if the person does not have opposing opinions, he or she probably will consider doing what the FQ wants him or her to do. In this indirect way, the FQ expresses its voice through other “politically more powerful” people. Of course, the influence is limited because it is indirect. However, it succeeds whenever the goal is popular or considered just by many citizens.

CRM firms and academic institutes also take part in historic preservation. For example, students and professors of Louisiana State University did surveys for Louisiana Speaks initiated by the Louisiana State Government (figure 39). The CADGIS Lab of the university established the database of historic structures in New Orleans. But they are hired by governments and work as consultants. They are not considered the main players in the power struggles of historic preservation.



Figure 39 Students of LSU Doing a Shotgun Survey for Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS); Directed by Dr. Jay D. Edwards, professor of the Department of Geography and Anthropology.



In summary, due to neglect and inefficiency of the local government and the national governmental policies of disinvestment in cities, non-profit organizations in New Orleans play the major role in historic preservation. For some non-profit organizations the lack of economic capital is offset by certain cultural capital, mainly business knowledge and skills. The Mass media including websites and radio are used as a form of public social capital to put pressure on local government. Personal connections are often used as indirect political capital to balance some government official's direct political power.

### **China: Local Government and Hired “Intellectuals”**

The history of heritage preservation in China is not an interactive process between public participation and government administration as it is in the United Kingdom and Japan (Wang 2000b). There is a hierarchy of power among local people, government officials, and intellectuals hired by government. China has a long history of “Rule by Human, not by Law” (Liu 2004). Government officials sit at the top of the historic preservation system. They employ the intellectuals to conduct specific evaluations and produce plans. Laymen are supposed to follow the ideas of “wiser” people including both government officials and intellectuals.

In China, there are no organizations such as PRC and neighborhood organizations participating in historic preservation. The main players of historic preservation are governments and the “intellectuals” from urban planning or architectural institutes. Some of them are university-based. Others are professional institutes. According to traditional Chinese culture, intellectuals are respected as “authorities” in their fields.

Chinese society has been long resembled a patriarchal clan system. Taking orders from the leaders is the central philosophy. The whole society tends to act in a more unified way (Chen 1915). When big disasters happen, paternalistic governance is quick in response. Changting has survived major floods in the 20<sup>th</sup> century including the ones in 1996. In 2006, another big one hit the central and north parts of Fujian Province, including Changting, with 3500 households damaged. Chinese Armed Police were quickly sent to the spot where flood water burst into residential areas (figure 40). Compared to the disaster response to Hurricane Katrina, more time was saved. But on the other hand, local government's focus on economic development delayed its efforts of historic preservation after the disasters. The damage of the 1996 flood to the patrimony of the area was not assessed until the third Preservation Plan began to be made in 2003.

Historic preservation of a city is at the option of the local government. According to Q, in famous historic cities like Beijing and Nanjing, historic preservation is under the

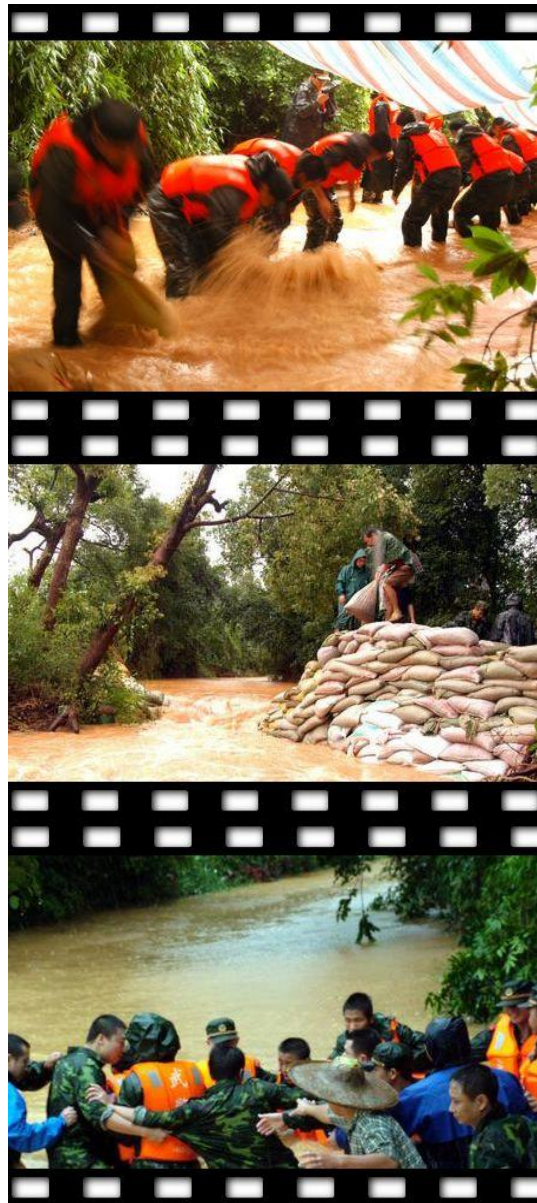


Figure 40 Chinese Armed Police fighting to stop the flood in Changting, 2006;  
Source: China Foto Press, by Zheng, Qiusheng and Huang, Jun

supervision of the Central Government and is watched by everyone. Historic preservation in these cities is better supervised. Outside of the major power centers, historic preservation is a more passive decision made by local governments. It is usually started when events force local governments into action. For example, Changting was listed as a National “Historic and Cultural City” in 1994. The first preservation plan of Changting was initiated right after that nomination. One of motivating factor is the availability of funding. In recent years, tourism development has stimulated preservation plans in many historic cities (towns) and districts. Large scale construction or urban growth is also a reason for making historic preservation plans.

After making a decision to initiate historic preservation, the local government hires an urban planning or architecture institute to create a plan. Ideally, a public bidding process should be invited and the most qualified competitors chosen. But personal connections are latent social capital that subvert the public bidding process. In 2003, the Changting Bureau of Construction contracted with the Institute of Urban Planning and Design of Nanjing University for undertaking the third Preservation Plan. This institute was qualified but it also had personal connections to the Fujian Province Government, the political unit superior to the city of Changting. Chen, the head of the Urban Planning Division of Fujian Ministry of Construction, was also Professor X’s part-time PhD student. Chen directly supervises the Changting Bureau of Construction, who hired us. In a word, personal connections as indirect political capital are influential in who will be in charge of making plans for historic preservation.

Local government controls all the money spent, and participates in the whole process the preservation planning. When we were doing our job, the Changting Ministry

of Construction provided all kinds of official support for our field work, accommodations, archival research, and permissions to interview officials in other governmental branches. When the job was done, local government invited officials from the Fujian Provincial Ministry of Construction, recognized scholars and professionals to judge the plan in the form of an “Examination and Evaluation Meeting” (figure 41). Beyond officials from the Fujian Ministry of Construction and the Changting Bureau of Construction, and us, outside specialists were also paid to evaluate the Preservation Plan and attend the meeting.



Figure 41 the “Examination and Approval Meeting” for the Preservation Plan; only local Officials and non-local Intellectuals participated; source: photographed by Qiu, Xingjie, used by permission

The power of an official’s political capital is not absolutely dominant. First, the Examination and Evaluation Meeting was a type of publication of the process of planning. Participating consultants have the right to publish their opinions on academic outlets or

popular magazines, as “authorities.” Through Mass Media, professionals and scholars may put pressure on government officials, who might often consider their ideas. The more famous the specialist is, the more likely that he or she has influential indirect political capital. Some intellectuals have both indirect and direct political capital. In China, good scholarship has long been connected to the tradition that “To Serve in the Government if You Establish Your Scholarship” (Lou 2005:31). If an intellectual is a deputy of the National or Provincial People’s Congress, or a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, he/she has voting rights which can effect historic preservation.

Local communities’ role in historic preservation was not salient. Intellectuals were considered more knowledgeable than local people concerning the preservation of their cultural heritage. Local lives were recorded mainly through our observations, supplemented by interviews and questionnaire surveys. No residents were invited to the Examination and Evaluation Meeting except for local officials.

Another example is the language used in the whole process. The Hakka dialect and Mandarin are not mutually intelligible. All project team members speak Mandarin, while locals speak the Hakka dialect. Most can speak Mandarin with varying levels of perfection. When we were doing the research and at the Examination and Evaluation Meeting, local officials and residents communicated with us in Mandarin. Although the goal was to protect Hakka cultural heritage, Hakka dialect was neither incorporated nor essential in the Preservation Process.

According to Q, although individuals can apply to governments for historic preservation projects, it is not the regular procedure and generally requires a long wait for

governmental response. In some cases, there is no response at all. For example, before a public construction project, a citizen has the right to apply for preservation of his impacted property. Probably the structure would have been torn down by the time the application is processed.

Most local residents are concerned about historic preservation. A questionnaire survey was done concerning local residents' opinions on historic preservation<sup>10</sup>. Three hundred and fifty six questionnaires were returned. The result shows that 246 persons supported the local government's historic preservation plan while eight opposed it and others either did not care or did not know about the governmental attitude towards historic preservation. Two hundred and sixty five persons thought that local residents' attention and participation are important for historic preservation. But this survey was not an influential basis for making the preservation plan; rather it was made at the last stage of project. The results were not even integrated into the Preservation Plan of Changting. To summarize, the main players are local government and intellectuals hired by local government. The ultimate decision would be made by government officials and intellectuals' knowledge was considered "authoritative".

## **OWNERSHIP RIGHTS**

The relationship between private ownership rights – "Property Rights" -- and public rights of historic preservation is debated in both the United States and China. Although the goal of preservation is widely held, it is not yet strong enough to overcome opposing forces and priorities (Mayes 2003). As a preservationist, D believes that in a poor city like New Orleans, "being poor means we must keep what we got," but "a lot of

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<sup>10</sup> This questionnaire survey was done by Wan, Juan in 2004 for her master thesis. She was a graduate student and team member of the Preservation Plan of Changting. The citation is approved by her.

people don't know what they have -- the incredible and special stock of heritage in New Orleans." J points that how ownership rights impact the goals of historic preservation. Both D and J think that it is each individual's duty to preserve heritage. Each owner should put effort in preservation of his or her property. D and J become frustrated when the owner of an historic property is not interested in historic preservation.

Historical structures may be turned into commercial buildings. When the potential value of a historic site greatly exceeds the value of its present income-producing capability, there is created inexorable pressure to tear down the building and put the site to a more productive use, even a parking lot (Cofresi 2003). The question of whether gentrification is good for local communities is controversial. Property owners found it financially more rewarding to sell their properties to outside investors who were benefiting from the increasing tourist and port traffic (Bourgeois 1988). For renters, gentrification is increasingly forcing them out of their familiar neighborhoods, replacing their residents with time-shares and condominiums.

Some New Orleans preservationists see gentrification in a positive way or think it is two-sided. As a preservationist, M is also a native and resident, owning her own house in the Tr me neighborhood, adjacent to the French Quarter. She does not "see many bad points of gentrification." On the issue that gentrification may change the social fabric of a neighborhood, she responded that social fabric "will change anyway and what makes a 'neighborhood' is subjective." She thinks it is good to make abandoned houses pretty. To make the point clear, she told me that it was those who "benefit from the bad status quo, like the unsafe situation of Tr me, who want to keep it that way because they make money from it (illegally)."

D is also a native of New Orleans. He believes that whether gentrification is good or bad depends on whose interests are considered. Owners “definitely love gentrification” but renters don’t like it. A possible solution is to make renters become owners: “if they get to buy the properties before gentrification and the prices get higher”. D has a positive attitude towards gentrification and thinks “change is a part of life”. But he also mentioned that owners don’t favor gentrification all the time. If they have to pay higher taxes for their properties, they may feel differently about gentrification.

In some cases the owner can not afford or does not want to spend money on the maintenance of the historic structure. When an historic building has little or no potential to satisfy the owner’s economic expectations, it may be lost through lack of maintenance and the inevitable deterioration that follows (Cofresi 2003). Until 1975 and for fourteen years, the Vieux Carré Commission had been trying unsuccessfully to get the owners to make elementary repairs to stabilize these structures (Davis 1975). In 1960s, the Baker’s Cottage, one of the oldest standing houses in the French Quarter, was exposed to demolition by neglect by its owner. J gave an example in the Mid-City neighborhood about the “fifty percent threshold” of demolition: after Katrina, FEMA established a rule that if a building was more than fifty percent damaged by Hurricane Katrina, it could be demolished. So an owner could let a house deteriorate until it exceeded fifty percent damage, when it qualified for demolition.

Besides economic factors, the owner may have different esthetic tastes than preservationists. D gave me an example of an owner in Holy Cross who intended to tear down a house built in 1870 because he wanted a big yard and a driveway. The same thing happened in Changting. In 2003, while the preservation study was underway, 100-year-



old houses were being replaced by modern rectangles by their owners. We, as cultural preservationists, had told them that these houses were historic valuable. But these owners appreciate modern forms more than traditional architecture style, which they consider out-of-date and inconvenient.



Figure 42 A modern building with some traditional features, facing a traditional house in the Old City; source: photographed when author was standing in the roofless courtyard of the traditional building

The extent to which ownership rights influence historic preservation differs depending on how governments regulate the relationship between the two. For example, Mid-City and the French Quarter are both national historic districts, but owners of historic structures in the two districts don't share the same rights related to preservation. The French Quarter is defined as a city-regulated historic district while Mid-City does not have local regulations governing new construction. According to N, in the French Quarter there are strict district rules and regulations. Ownership is not equivalent to complete

control because local historic properties in the French Quarter are protected by the Design Guidelines of the Vieux Carré Commission.<sup>11</sup> N considers that “the tighter the law, the more successful the community, in terms of historic preservation”.

In China, under the Property Rights Laws (Article 51), many types of cultural heritage are owned by the State, including memorial buildings, old architecture, and cultural relics that are found underground, underwater and in sea (China 2002). In addition, land is usually state-own. Obviously ownership in China does not carry the same meanings as ownership in the United States. However, apart from “important” or officially recognized cultural heritage, a large amount of China’s cultural heritage is owned by private individuals, who do make decisions. Ownership rights dominated before our surveys and evaluations were translated in to local regulations. Government enforcement is decisive in how much impact ownership rights have on historic preservation. Only the Changting government can initiate and enforce a preservation plan. Without governmental backing, preservationists have no chance to save cultural heritage when its owner decides to tear a property down.

In both countries, preservationists are worried about the public’s attitudes towards historic preservation. In the case of Changting, Q thinks that that China is still a developing country and that the government places much more emphasis on economic development than on historic and cultural preservation. Most Chinese people pursue the goal of “making China a highly developed industrial country and everybody wealthy.” Although more and more people see the importance of historic preservation, Q thinks that

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<sup>11</sup> In 1986, the Commission adopted the Design Guidelines which sets forth procedures and city ordinances relating to the Vieux Carré historic district. Specifically it relates to awnings, paving, lighting, security treatments for window, gates and fences, roofing, painting, air-conditioning and exterior mechanical equipment, skylights, and many other matters.

the Chinese government is not doing a good job in public education. Many Chinese feel confident about the huge amount of existing cultural heritage in this country. They value development over historic preservation.

To sum up, in both countries, governmental limitations on private ownership impact historic preservation. In the United States, governments' attitudes to "property rights" and the public rights of historic preservation have already strongly affected the enactment and enforcement of preservation laws (Mayes 2003). In China, governments' enforcements of historic preservation have had critical impacts on how owners of historic properties react to preservation plans. Preservationists in both countries complain that some owners of historic properties are not conscious of the value and the advantages of historic preservation.

## **DEVELOPMENT VRESUS HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Development comes in many forms. In New Orleans, tourism development, economic development and recovery represent different types of pressures on historic preservation. In Changting, economic and residential developments are transforming the Old City from both inside and outside.

### **New Orleans: Tourism and Economic Development and Recovery**

#### **Tourism**

The story of heritage preservation in New Orleans has been tied to the development of the tourism industry (Stanonis 2006:23). From the beginning of the Twenty First Century, New Orleans has become one of the most popular tourist destinations in the United States: an estimated eleven million tourists visit the city every

year (Souther 2006:1). Since 1975, the tourist industry has come to play the dominant role in the economic life of New Orleans (Lewis 2003:154).

Tourist attractions attempt to construct or reinforce their positions as favored objects of the tourist gaze (Urry 2002:38). French Quarter preservation and tourism has depended on the careful crafting of the neighborhood’s malleable image. During much of the Nineteenth century, tourists found little to distinguish New Orleans’s culture and architecture from that of other cities (Stanonis 2006:5). Between the First and Second World Wars, tourism boosters and writers began to craft “popular perceptions of New Orleans (Stanonis 2006:1). The Jackson Square has changed itself according to the needs of tourism development (Stanonis 2006:151). Those with greater authority and influence promoted particular images (Sheehan 2006:87).



Figure 43 One of the most popular tourist attraction and a symbol of the history of New Orleans – the Cathedral; Source: photographed by author

In the French Quarter, entertainment and popularization of culture have attracted a more affluent population, increased property values for home-owners, and at the same time, priced out working-class residents. This has resulted in permanent changes in the social fabric of the neighborhood (Gotham 2005). Tourism is a tool used to exclude certain classes and activities from Jackson Square because of perceived economic advantages (2006: 122).



Figure 44 the “Exoticness”: a Carnival Scene in New Orleans, Feb. 2007; source: photographed by author

Mass media such as the Internet and TV may become powerful vehicles, though which certain “knowledge” about New Orleans are reported to people outside, if they are used effectively by cultural brokers in heritage tourism. New Orleans is symbolized as an exotic place with unique and attractive cultural heritage. This has been marketed and packaged, becoming a large portion of tourists’ “knowledge” about New Orleans.

Tourists expect to experience the old colonial culture and exotic pleasures, which are on a different scale from those typically encountered in everyday life (Urry 2002:12). New Orleans is a place to escape or transcend the everyday, even temporarily, to dislocate one's sense of self and thus, to open up new possibilities of being, new dimensions of self (Persson 2007). The "Big Easy" has been crafted into a place where tourists seek out the exotic. The French Quarter has been transformed into a carnal fantasyland; tourists can do what the French Creoles supposedly did and indulge themselves (Stanonis 2006:165).

The lack of a comprehensive preservation plan in New Orleans results from an over-emphasis on certain dimensions of tangible heritage. According to the Design Guidelines of the Vieux Carré Commission, the historic value of the neighborhood is found in the design of its individual buildings, the street scene, and the overall relationship of buildings, streets, topography and water (Vieux Carré Commission 1986:1). Only the outside "facades" of buildings and streets, which of course are visible to tourists, are protected by the Design Guidelines. The interiors structures, which are rightfully part of the authenticity of historic buildings and which made sense to their former French residents, are not covered by the Design Guidelines.

To larger extent, intangible heritage and patterns of social life are neglected. Critics argue that tourism has damaged the ambience and social texture of the oldest parts of the city (Lewis 2003:159). Several friends of mine, who are locals, lamented that only tourists went to the French Quarter. This results in a situation in which culturally sensitive tourists are disappointed by the non-existence of a traditional social life. Cultural brokers lead tourists into pseudo-authentic cultural experiences, which are advantageous to both cultural brokers and entrepreneurs who offer such experiences.

Following Katrina, tourism is still the main focus of economic development in New Orleans. According to UNOP, many businesses report that they will be unable to continue if tourist traffic does not increase (New Orleans 2007). Immediately after Hurricane Katrina, President Bush addressed



Figure 45 Bush at the Jackson Square giving a speech, Thursday, September 15, 8:00 PM; source: Hugh's Katrina Timeline

the nation in Jackson Square, calling the country and the city to pull together to rebuild New Orleans, to rebuild order. The city had no electricity, water, or gas, but the Jackson Square area looked beautiful and serene—quite unlike the reality in the rest of the city (Sheehan 2006). According to Hugh's Katrina Timeline Website, under a situation in which locals were still completely displaced, tourists were being welcomed to return to the graceful French Quarter.<sup>12</sup>

Major televised presidential speech and photo op in Jackson Square. Power in the dark city miraculously works long enough for the presidential motorcade to make it in. The speech itself is staged and lit by top TV talent. Warm incandescent lights bathe the president and make him look comforting, while the nearby cathedral and surrounding historic buildings are dramatically lit by banks of giant HMI arcs running off AC generators that would keep a hospital going just fine. What few people remain in the area

<sup>12</sup> Hugh's Katrina Timeline, <http://www.ominous-valve.com/katrina.html>, accessed June 14, 2007

are kept blocks away from the president and his giant shoot. After the speech ends, the lights are killed and wrapped. After the motorcade is gone, the city power goes off as mysteriously as it had come on, and New Orleans is dark once again (Hugh's Katrina Timeline).

When tourists began to visit New Orleans again, many locals struggle to get back home. In 2006, on January 16, Martin Luther King's birthday, a protest march started on Claiborne Street, going through the Upper and Lower Ninth Ward, and ending in the French Quarter. About 150 people carry such signs as, "Honor MLK, Bring All New Orleans Home," "I have a dream that the 9th Ward will be rebuilt in New Orleans," etc. on August 25, 2006, most of the population had still not returned; electricity was off in many places; public housing was mostly closed; water pressure was half normal; many hospitals, especially those for the poor, remained closed (Hugh's Katrina Timeline). Without local communities, it is pointless to say that cultural heritage, especially intangible heritage can be preserved.



Figure 46 A protest march on Monday, January 16, 2006, Martin Luther King's birthday; source: Hugh's Katrina Timeline



## Economic Development and Disaster Recovery



Figure 47 the “Planned” Riverfront Expressway failed to be constructed; source: The Second Battle of New Orleans, (Baumbach and Borah 1981)

Long before Hurricane Katrina, historic preservation had some important victories over economic development. The Second Battle of New Orleans – the Vieux Carre Riverfront-Expressway controversy -- is a good example. It brought together groups of preservation-minded citizens and their success against the powerful economic and governmental interests and represented a victory for local citizen activism (Baumbach and Borah 1981).

A full understanding requires that we place this victory in its social and historic context. The early battles over the nation’s most historic places, including the famous Second Battle of New Orleans, were fought principally by “preservationists” and joined by the environmental movement – “a coalition of concerned citizens, scientists, lawyers, architects, and educators”; they were more affluent, better organized, and better equipped

with education and access to national mass media (Baumbach and Borah 1981:xvii). In a word, the Battle is not a local victory but a national victory in which the holders of “new” mainstream knowledge about environments defeated the “old” ideal. Historic preservation itself has not grown into a concept stably implanted in everyday life.

Table 1 Citywide Implementation Timeline of the UNOP (portion)

	Short-term	Mid-term	Long-term
Economic Development	57%	34%	9%
Historic preservation/urban design	19%	31%	50%

Source: “The Unified New Orleans Plan”: Citywide Strategic Recovery and Rebuilding Plan (draft), 1/31/2007

Post Katrina, the pressure of recovery is pushing historic preservation further to a periphery status on the agenda (table 1). According to the Recovery Implementation Timeline of UNOP, economic development and historic preservation are given different priorities. There is on-going tension between the desire to preserve the unique and valuable heritage of the City’s neighborhoods and the desire to rebuild, renovate, or in some cases demolish damaged houses, and also to permit the use of modular or other pre-built structures in the rebuilding effort (New Orleans 2007).

The superior position of economic development to historic preservation is basically a result of valuing property more than people. From the perspective of the richest people, the richest corporations, and the most powerful politicians and media outlets in our society, New Orleans must be rebuilt for the convenience of investors, entrepreneurs, and owners; in the wake of the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and his own administration’s maliciously incompetent relief efforts, President Bush outlined a program of legalized looting to enable corporations to profit from the misfortunes of poor people (Lipsitz 2006).

Common locals are forgotten again. Anthropologists warn that if the free market fundamentalism became the key to rebuilding New Orleans, valuing property more than people would elevate the pursuit of profits for developers over the preservation of the coastal wetlands that have traditionally protected New Orleans from the effects of flooding (Lipsitz 2006). People must be considered and historic preservation must be integrated in disaster recovery. It would be short-sighted to put preservation aside and wish to go back to it when something is forever gone.

### **Changting: Economic and Residential Development**

The tourism industry in Changting is still in the beginning stages (Fu 2004). Since in 1994 when Changting was nominated by the State Council as a National Historic and Cultural City, tourism has begun to grow slowly. The Old City is considered an area for developing heritage tourism. But tourism in Changting is still at its beginning stage. Currently the pressures on historic preservation are residential and industrial development.

#### **Economic Development**

In the last Master Plan of Changting made in 2001, two new industrial areas were proposed at the north and south sides of the Old City. In order to connect the two areas, the planners changed the road system. Two new main roads were designed. One would be the result from widening of an historic street. The other one would penetrate through the “Back Mountain” of the Old City (the two Red Lines in figure 48a).

In the Preservation Plan made of 2003, the potential damage of the 2001 Master Plan was corrected and another road system surrounding the Old City was established. All main roads are put outside of the Old City (including the “Back Mountain”). The historic streets will keep their original widths, as figure 48b and figure 49 shows. The

transformation of the road system plan was supported by local government because more government officials have been persuaded by the planners of the wisdom of new Master Plan which superseded the Master Plan of 2001.

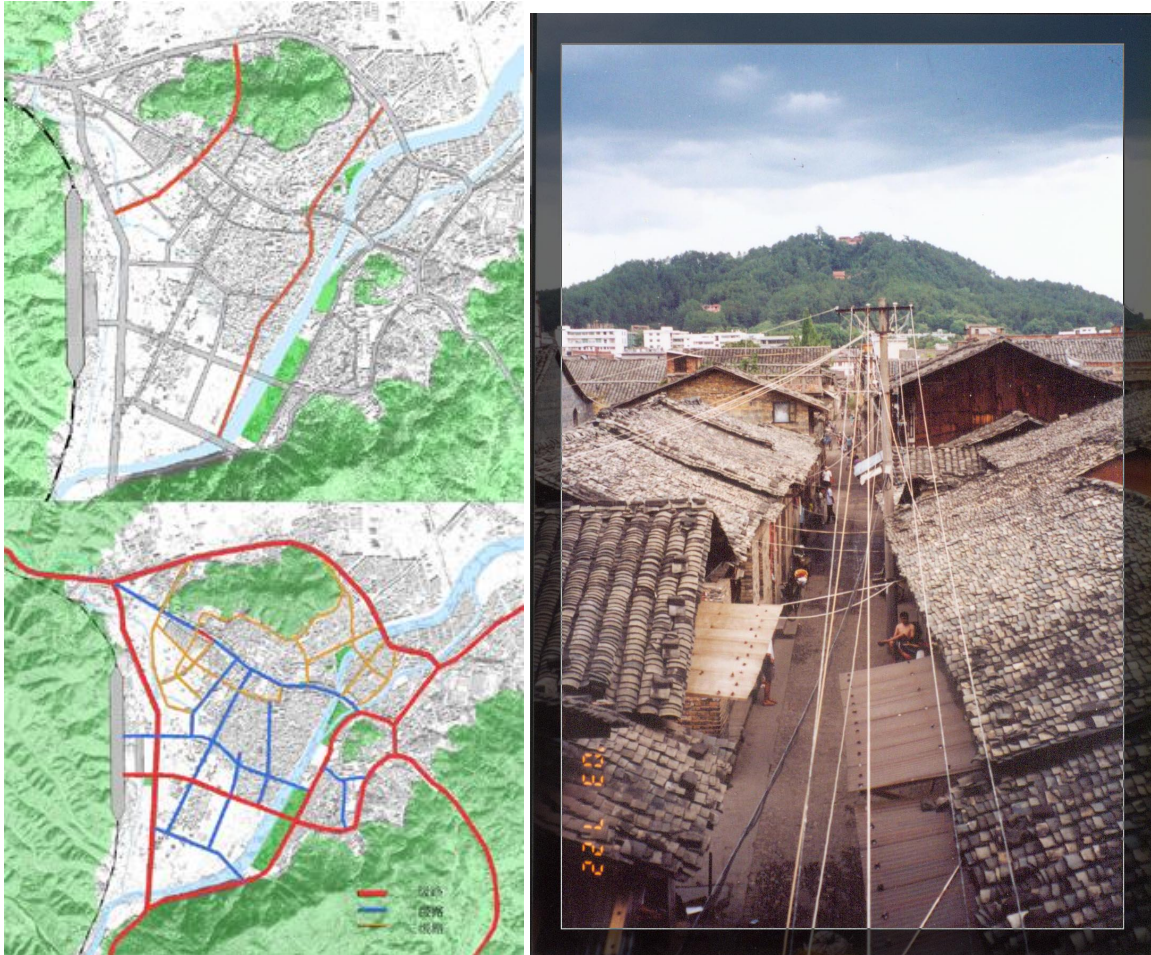


Figure 48a (Left top), The New Roads in the 2001 Master Plan; Figure 48b (left bottom) the road system in the 2004 Preservation Plan; Source: the Historical Preservation Plan, by Nanjing University Urban Planning and Design Institute, 2004; Figure 49 (right) A Historic Street leading to the “Back Mountain”; source: photographed by Qiu, Xingjie, used by permission

## Residential Development

Residential growth is a big problem. Population growth places excessive demands on limited land resources in the Old City. Many apartment buildings have been constructed in the New City area surrounding the Old City. But in the Changting basin, the Old City is still a preferable place to live. Especially for many elderly residents who

are used to living there, it has good “Fengshui” and has been home for generations and generations of their families.

Although people like to live in the Old City, many think traditional architecture is not as convenient as modern buildings. According to the questionnaire survey, locals prefer modern architecture. In a sample of three hundred and fifty six residents, one hundred and sixty three reported that living in traditional houses was not as convenient as living in modern houses. One hundred and six persons had the opposite opinion and eighty seven had no preference. If new residential houses were needed, only thirty residents chose traditional architecture; one hundred and fifty six chose modern architecture; about one hundred and seventy preferred modified traditional buildings with modern facilities. If local government would provide financial assistance, eighty residents would select traditional architecture; one hundred and sixteen wanted modern architecture; sixty three would select modified traditional buildings with modern facilities.

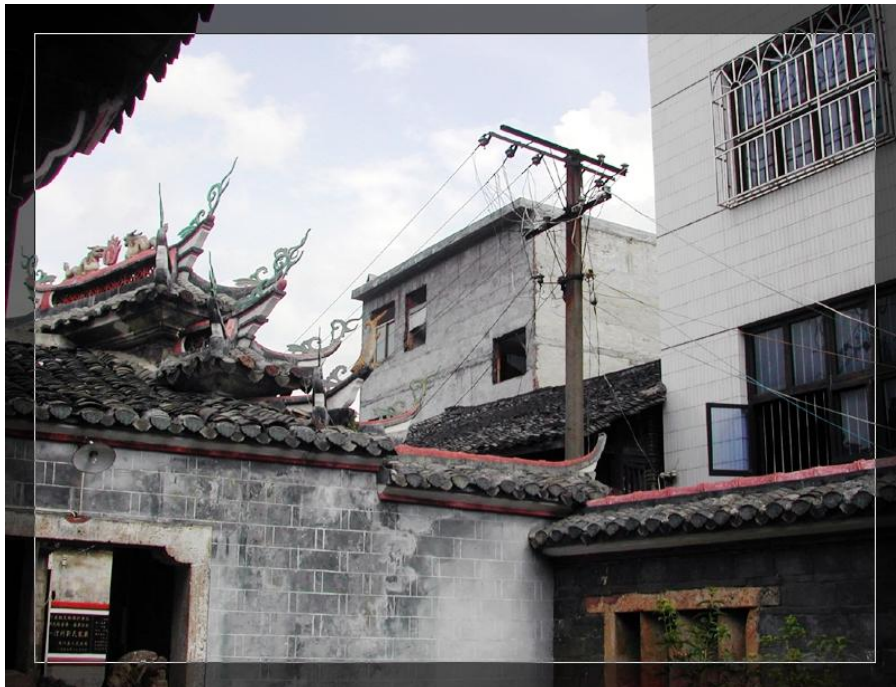


Figure 50 A Modern “box” building sitting with a traditional house in the Old City; source: photographed by author

For local residents, the joy of living in a traditional house is not the only concern. Changing is poor city. Modification of an old structure requires money and time. Most of residents prefer modern apartments or houses because they are quicker to build. And since it is expensive to modify an old house, why not construct a new one. When we were making the Preservation Plan in Changting, the owners of an historic property tore down the building as fast as possible after they were told that the property was historically valuable. The family constructed a modern house on the groundwork of the historic house. They did it before the preservation plan was finished and passed. The family knew that was a good way in which they could have their “modern” home without intervention from local government and those “intellectuals” from outside.

### **Historic Preservation and Development as Rivals?**

Historic preservation has long been considered to be the enemy of development. Some argue that the United States National Trust for Historical Preservation merely served as a slush fund for the wealthy and elite to oppose developments that offended their aesthetic tastes; it should not become involved in “anti-free enterprise” activities such as opposing large-scale sprawl developments (Mayes 2003).

Many preservationists think it is wrong to assume that the historic preservation and development are two conflicting sides. J agrees that the debate between economic development and historic preservation is a major issue in the Mid-City neighborhood. But in her opinion, economic development and historic preservation can be aligned. She gave me an example in her neighborhood. A bank consulted the neighborhood organization when their commercial building needed to be renovated after Katrina. J thinks that the coordination between them contributes both to the economic development and historic

preservation. Also as an owner of her house and a small business in the Mid-City, J believes that a modern construction, if it is not in line with historic structures in the neighborhood, will impair the economic value of the whole Mid-City Neighborhood.

Some preservationists think historic preservation represents a form of economic development. According to D from the PRC, an “industry around historic preservation” can be established in New Orleans. D believes that New Orleans can be “the Preservation Capital” of this country. About 200,000 houses need to be refurbished post-Katrina. Crime and poorly educated children are big problems, the latter further making the former worse. An historic preservation industry could provide hope and well paying jobs for well-trained people. N from the French Quarter also views historic preservation as a type of economic development. He emphasizes that preservation is good for the city as a whole, but may be bad for some private “purses”. The problem is, according to N, that “not all politicians see that” historic preservation can be profitable as historic preservation.

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

### CAPITAL IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The historic preservation in the United States is distinct from that in China. First, the national structures of governments are different, and the preservation systems are established in dissimilar ways. Second, at the local level, the question, of who participates in historic preservation has disparate answers. In New Orleans, government agencies, including the Vieux Carré Commission, and non-profit organizations, like the Preservation Resource Center, and many neighborhood organizations, assume the main job of practical historic preservation. CRM firms and academic institutes are hired by governments in some cases. In Changting, it is consulting specialists from academic and professional institutes who do surveys and make preservation plans for the local government. Non-governmental or non-profit organizations seldom participate in historic preservation in China. Local citizens usually do not participate importantly in historic preservation.

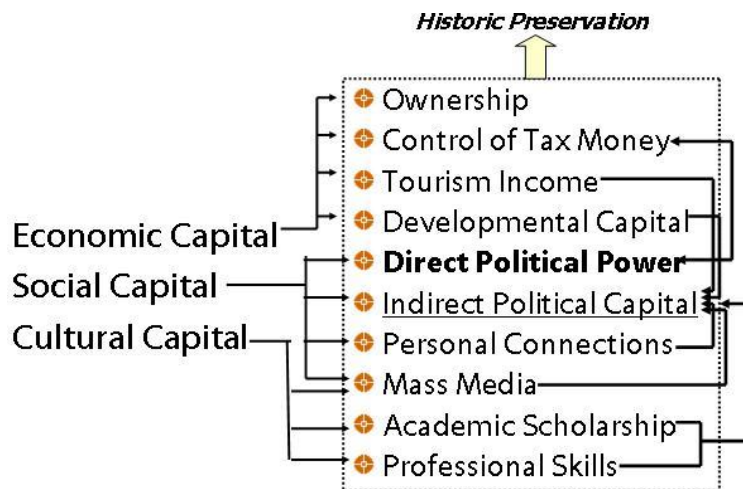


Figure 51 the Forms of Capital in Historic Preservation; made by author

In spite of the differences between the two countries, the capital flow in historic preservation is similar (figure 51). Property rights based on ownership, tax money,



tourism income, and developmental capital are four forms of influential economic capital. Social capital includes the direct political power of governments, personal connections, access to Mass Media, and the indirect political capital derived from them. Academic knowledge and professional skills in urban planning and architecture are powerful cultural capital, which can possibly be transformed in to indirect political capital. Mass Media is a tool that can be used in favor of cultural capital as the voices of “authorities”.

### **Direct Political Capital**

Political capital is more influential than other types of capital. Historic preservation is highly dependent on governments’ regulations and enforcements. Governments in both the United States and China have an important stake in providing financial and legal support, and supervision for historic preservation. Their opinions and actions on the important issues, such as what should be preserved, what should be developed, and how property rights work, have fundamental influence.

Governments also control large amount of economic capital – the tax money. As the most powerful agents in historic preservation, governments’ inefficiencies are the biggest impediments in all public affairs, including disaster response and historic preservation. In the United States, there is a serious lack of coordination and information exchange between the Federal, State and local governments. The conflicting and unclear responsibilities result in the hardships in historic preservation and inconsistent standards among historic districts in New Orleans.

In China, the three-level-system – individual sites and landmarks, Historic Districts, and Historic and Cultural Cities (towns) – creates overlapping responsibilities among diverse governmental branches at multiple levels. The Changting Ministry of

Construction is in charge of the preservation of the historic city as a whole while the Changting Administration of Cultural Heritage supervises the preservation of individual historic structures and landmarks. In practice, they are two inseparable dimensions of regional presentation.

In both countries, the principal goal of local governments is development. In China, the national ideal that we should build a modern and strong country has been popular for decades. Many people's comprehension of development, especially in a place like Changting, is generally equivalent to "Modernization". International style architecture is afforded higher value on the grounds of convenience. Younger generations admire the stylish modern buildings. Old people either have the same opinion, or are not able to influence young people's opinions.

In both governmental agendas, historic preservation is generally conceptionized as the opposite of development. In New Orleans, inaction of the local government forfeits to non-governmental organizations both the responsibility and the financial burden of historic preservation. In the case of Changting, local government has enough political power to decide the fate of the Old City. Neither government shares the idea that historic preservation can be aligned with economic development, or that it is a form of economic development. Development is placed at the top of the agenda; historic preservation is pushed aside when development or recovery is "urgent". The only context in which governments tie development with preservation seems to be tourism. However, preserving just for tourists has produced limitations of physical protection of cultural heritage as well as social problems in local communities in New Orleans.

### **Indirect Political Capital and Others**

Indirect political capital may influence the governmental decision-making process. It is the most flexible form of capital in historic preservation. Many other forms of capital can be transformed into indirect political capital. Cultural capital (such as professional skills, scholars' academic knowledge and the information conveyed by Mass Media), economic capital (owned by tourism industry and successful businessmen as developers), and social capital (the social impact of Mass Media and personal connections) are potential sources.

The preservationists and intellectuals in both countries are drawn primarily from urban planning and architecture. Preservationists' power rests with their cultural capital – academic knowledge, professional skills and aesthetic tastes. They are considered “authorities” who know what and how to preserve better than common local citizens. Due to the limited disciplinary scope, current historic preservation policies are not comprehensive. Certain aspects of tangible heritage, like the interiors of historic buildings, and almost the entire stock of intangible cultural heritage are neglected in the formal practice of historic preservation.

Social sciences like anthropology and sociology have contributed to the study of intangible heritage and relevant social communities, but they are not as politically powerful as architecture and urban planning. The Practice of historic preservation remains stuck in the “hard” aspects of cultural heritage. The built environments narrowly conceived -- architecture and physical landmarks -- are the principal objects of preservation, while invaluable intangible heritage associated with living communities is

largely left out of practical historic preservation. Social sciences need to be better integrated into historic preservation in both United States and China.

Different forms of social capital are “invisible” sources of indirect political capital. Social agents construct links to governmental decision-making through personal connections. Some people or organizations put pressure on them through effective use of Mass Media. In both New Orleans and Changting, personal connections with government officials play an important role; preservationists are capable of manipulating Mass Media to emphasize and empower their goals.

Economic capital is influential. The economic and indirect political capital of well-financed developers is often difficult to combat. Property rights also need to be considered. In New Orleans, the owners of historic properties may overlook their responsibilities to historic buildings when it suits their purposes. After Katrina, some owners abandoned their historic properties to achieve the fifty percent standard for demolition. In Changting, if the owner does not believe historic preservation, he or she may tear down an historic structure before the preservation procedure began.

## **SOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Intangible Heritage and Comprehensive Preservation**

China has started an effort to include both tangible and intangible heritage under the frame of Preservation Plans of Historic and Cultural Cities. But this has just begun. Before the 1990s, historic preservation in Changting followed the old philosophy that individual heritage -- always tangible heritage such as historic landmarks -- was the main object of preservation. With the initiation of its listing as a National Historic and Cultural City, comprehensive preservation of the whole city has become salient. Intangible

heritage is considered as indispensable part of a historic city and is included in the recent Preservation Plans. In recent years, several kinds of intangible heritage in China have been nominated as World Heritage. This has helped to popularize its importance in Chinese society.

In the United States, sometimes certain parts of tangible heritage are neglected. In New Orleans historic districts, the architectural and street facade is protected while the historic interiors of the buildings can be changed at the owners' wills. Preservation of the exterior appearances is only superficial and destroys the integrity of the cultural meaning. In addition, the preservation of intangible heritage has not been initiated by governments. Both are the outcomes of the fact that New Orleans has set its priorities on maximizing income from the tourist industry.

In China, there are also "fake antique" buildings that are actually recently built. They are evidence that some governmental officials misunderstand what is really valuable. In some cases, authentic historic structures were torn down and replaced by the "fake antique" buildings. Luckily, this has not been a problem in Changting, but did happen in some Chinese cities. The efforts of historic preservation are wasted if they are oriented to turning precious human legacy into artifacts without vitality, or to transforming a historic city into a kind of Disneyland. Intangible heritage and people associated to them must be integrated into comprehensive preservation.

Historic preservation is complicated and nuanced. It is a political issue about what should be preserved or changed. Class, ethnicities, genders, as well as age all affect people's opinions about historic preservation. Putting these variables into consideration will be helpful in establishing a comprehensive framework of historic preservation.

## **Non-Government Organizations and Mass Media**

In the United States, non-government and non-profit organizations play important role in public affairs. Many residents work in neighborhood organizations as volunteers. Organized together, their power is more influential than that of any single individuals. Mass media such as the Internet has become a useful tool for public and political voices. These organizations help to connect the efforts of common people, preservationists, and governmental agencies.

In China, individuals can not participate in historic preservation efficiently. When we were in Changting, local authors and volunteers of historic preservation were part of our information sources for making the Preservation Plan. According to the questionnaire survey, most locals are interested in, and willing to participate in, the historic preservation of the Old City. But there was no organized effort. The establishing of non-profit or non-governmental organizations might represent an important step for public participation of historic preservation in China.

## **AN EPILOGUE**

A majority of New Orleanians of all racial backgrounds and in all types of neighborhoods – hard hit or not – said the experience has made them stronger. It provides a sense of why this historic city has been able to maintain its low-lying land and irreplaceable culture throughout the country's history. Residents maintained this strength by relying on personal relationships and their faith in God. Nine in ten said their friends and family were an integral factor in their ability to cope with the challenges posed by the storm and its aftermath, while seventy seven percent said that

their faith or religious beliefs had played a vital role ((Kaiser Family Foundation 2007: 3).

Now nearly two years and one year have gone respectively after the landfall of Hurricane Katrina and the flood of Changting in 2006. There are problems and questions of not only historic preservation. Changting has recovered and New Orleans is recovering. People who love the old cities are doing what they can. Being able to come back and be alive again will show that the value, which their citizens of both countries place on cultural heritage, amounts to a kind of strength which is above the ordinary.

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**APPENDIX: THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON TOURISTS IN NEW ORLEANS**

**PART A MY PERSONAL BACKGROUND:**

**1. I am a native of:**

- New Orleans*
- Inside Louisiana but outside *New Orleans*
- Outside Louisiana but inside the United States (please indicate the state)   
My State: \_\_\_\_\_
- Outside the United States (please indicate the country)   
My Country: \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Personal Information:**

- My **Age** Is:            10-20                       20-30                       30-40   
                                 40-50                       50-60                       60 plus
- My **Gender** Is:        Male                       Female
- Now** I am:              In School                       working                       retired
- Occupation:**        Self employed                       Blue collar   
                                 White collar                       Other

- Education Completed:**    Grammar School     High School     Some College   
                                 BA/BS Degree     Graduate Degree     Technical/Professional training

**PART B MY PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH NEW ORLEANS:**

- 1. Previous Visits to *New Orleans*:**                      0     1     2 or 3     more
- 2. My last visit to *New Orleans* was:**                      Pre-Katrina                       Post-Katrina
- 3. Is the *French Quarter* the first place you wanted to visit in *New Orleans*?**  
Yes                       No
- 4. The top 3 sources from which you received information about *New Orleans* are:**
- TV                       Radio                       Movies                       Internet                       Academic materials   
Tourist guides/postcards/photographs                       Novels                       Family/friends   
Newspaper/Magazine articles
- 5. What most attracted you to *New Orleans* BEFORE you came here?**  
Unimportant=**0**                      Somewhat important=**1**                      Very important=**2**
- The joy of living an uninhibited lifestyle                      0     1     2
- Relatives or friends who reside here                      0     1     2
- Social opportunities, meeting new friends                      0     1     2
- Festivals, Performance (Mardi Gras etc. )                      0     1     2
- Sports related events                      0     1     2

Shopping in and Experiencing in <i>the French Quarter</i>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Dining in good restaurants	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
The mysterious voodoo/ghost tours	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
The old European atmosphere	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
The impact of Hurricane Katrina firsthand	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Experience participation in Katrina Recovery: (house gutting, street cleaning, etc.)	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural heritage: (Historic architecture, Museums, Lectures about Creole lifestyle, etc.)	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping for antiques	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Bars/clubs	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
The gay lifestyle	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Guided tours: (Riverboat tours, plantation tours, ghost tours/cemetery tours/voodoo tours, etc.)	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Music (e.g. Jazz)	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
“Real” New Orleans life (Getting beyond the tourist façade)	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
An American Creole lifestyle without leaving the country	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Cajun Culture	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Other interests	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

**6. Considering Hurricane’s impacts, what most concerned you BEFORE your visit?**

No=**0**                      Somewhat=**1**                      A lot=**2**

Sanitation problems	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Lacking hotel rooms	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation problems	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Lost neighborhood culture	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Crime	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Higher costs	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Other(s) _____	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

**PART C MY PRESENT NEW ORLEANS EXPERIENCE:**

**1. How long have you been in the city on this trip?**

Days: 1                       2-3                       4-6                       7 or more

**2. How long have you spent in *the French Quarter*?**

Days: 1                       2-3                       4-6                       7 or more



**3. What have you done while in the French Quarter? (For those items you have done, please indicate that if they are below, matched or exceeded your expectation)**

Did not do it= <b>0</b>	Did it somewhat= <b>1</b>		Did it a lot= <b>2</b>			
Exceeded expectation= <b>E</b>	Matched expectation= <b>M</b>		Below expectation= <b>B</b>			
Checked Hurricane Katrina's impacts	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Participation in Katrina Recovery	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Sightseeing on foot (not guided)	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Visiting accompanied by natives	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Guided tour(s) like Carriage ride, Riverboat tours, plantation tours, ghost tours/cemetery tours/voodoo tours	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Met friends/relatives	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Museum visit(s)	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Historic house visit(s)	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Dining out	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Bars/clubs/honky-tonks	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Watched street performance	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Attended Church	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Sports related events	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Jazz and other music styles	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
Custom events or lectures	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>

**4. Did you take a Katrina Tour into the damaged neighborhoods?**

Yes  No

**5. What have you bought while in the French Quarter?**

Tourist guide(s)  Map(s)  Souvenir(s)  Art   
 Clothing  Books  Speciality items  Antique(s)   
 Furniture(s)  Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Who influenced your visit here the most when you are in New Orleans?**

Local residents  Tour guides  Service people (e.g. in bars)   
 Street artists  Musicians  Drivers (Taxi, Carriage etc.)   
 Street entertainers  Vendors  Readers (Tarot, Fortune telling)   
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

**PART D THINKING ABOUT MY TRIP:**

**1. In general, to what degree has your experience here satisfied your expectation?**

Not at all  Somewhat  A lot

**2. Possible reasons for dissatisfaction are?**

Lack of safety       Too crowded       Too dirty   
Too expensive       Inability to experience the real N.O.

Other reason(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**3. What do you think might be responsible for tourists' dissatisfaction? (Check any that apply)**

Tourist agencies     Local government     Federal Government   
Criminals       Hurricane Katrina     Local people's unwelcome attitudes   
Unrealistic Media     Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Will you recommend *the French Quarter* to your family members or friends?**

Yes       No       Undecided

**5. Will you recommend other neighborhoods seriously impacted by Hurricane Katrina, e.g. *Lakeview, N.O. East* and *Lower Ninth Ward* to your family members or friends?**

Yes       No       Undecided

**6. Hurricane Katrina has become new attraction to tourists to *New Orleans*?**

Yes       No       Undecided

**7. How do you think this kind of 'Disaster Tourism' will influence the recovery of the historic city?**

Positively       Negatively       Undecided

**8. What experience did you like best?**

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**9. What experience did you dislike the most?**

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## VITA

Guiyuan Wang was born in the City of Lanzhou, the capital city of Gansu Province in Northwest China. She is the only daughter of her parents. She spent seven years in the City of Nanjing, in South China from 1998 to 2005. From Nanjing University she required her bachelor degree in Geographic Information System (2002) and first master degree in Human Geography (2005).

She was admitted in the graduate program of anthropology at Louisiana State University in August 2005. She is currently employed by the Coastal Environments, Inc., a Cultural and Natural Resource Management Company in Baton Rouge. She works as a GIS specialist and anthropologist.