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BRANDING CHONGQING

Understanding Chinese Place Branding from a Government

Perspective

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BRANDING CHONGQING: UNDERSTANDING CHINESE PLACE BRANDING FROM A GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Due to the complexity and multi-disciplinary nature of place branding, there is no universal explanation or theory that is commonly accepted despite decades of commitment and research. This research aims to explain how place branding is conceptualised in China. The similarities and differences of Chinese place branding in comparison to western concepts of place branding are presented through a review of both western and Chinese literature. However, a theoretical foundation remains elusive, as all existent literature directly applies either marketing theory or branding theory to local contexts, or only focuses on practice perspectives, such as the influence of mega events. This research attempts to close this research gap and provide a path to a better understanding of place branding.

Taking a case study approach, the paper examines a vast body of discussion arising from in-depth interviews with branding authorities and government officials in the case study city of Chongqing. The analysis shows that place branding in China is influenced, and largely controlled, by the government. Cases of place branding in the three major aspects of tourism, commerce and resident identity, are described, and the role of government in place branding is revealed. Rationales for government engagement in place branding and the general branding processes are investigated in detail, which constitutes the major practical contribution of this study. Discussion of the agents of Chinese place branding, place branding as a government tool, and the trend towards policization contribute to the theoretical expansion of place branding beyond a neoliberalism perspective.

Keywords: China, Chongqing, place branding, case study, ideology, government process, public administration

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No power, a little knowledge, a little wisdom and as much flavour as possible.

Roland Barthes, 1978

Lecture at the Collège de France

People say pursuing a PhD degree is a hard choice (as you can find more than 100 answers of the question "How hard is a PhD" on Quora) yet I find that the past five years have been a wonderful journey. I feel lucky to have an opportunity to pursue a study of my interest; I feel grateful to have support and advice from supervisors, friends and family; and I feel happy to witness my own growth in the way I see science, life and the world.

When my colleagues talk about Dr. Mihalis Kavaratzis, my dear supervisor, with me they always mentioned his talent in composing research and remarkable academic achievements in place branding field. However, what I see in him is unlimited enthusiasm and passion in exploration of the field he loves. One can only make widely recognized achievement if they commit themselves, which is true not only in the case of academic research but in the case of all other fields. Dr. Dimitris Papadopoulos witnessed the difficulties, doubts and growth that I experienced in the past five years. With his positive and calm style and long experience and insights in social science research, he helped me to cultivate myself into a mature researcher. Calmness and rigorousness are what I learnt from Dr. Papadopoulos. Dr. Ming Lim, who offered immense helps at the very beginning of my PhD, enlighten the path my academic career. Using professional knowledge as an academic, Dr. Lim trained and transferred me from a young man who barely know how to write academically to a qualified PhD candidate within a short time. In China we have an old

saying "身正为师，学高为范" (Whom is more learned is my teacher, whom is more righteous is my model). All my supervisors perfectly interprets this Chinese old saying, as the most important things I learnt from them are not from what they said but what they do.

Without funding support from Miss Wen, my mother, this entire research would have been impossible. What I inherit from her is not only slender figure, perfect chin line and hair, but also more importantly a positive attitude towards life, a spirit of never giving up, integrity, and tolerance. She sacrificed a lot to raise me, as I was a rebel since I was little. Saying thank you between family members has never been a custom in China. My sincere hope for my mother is that she will find a man who really care about her and who can really make her happy. Smile on her face is the most thing I want in the world and I love you, mother.

My friendship with Wendy Wang, who is also a PhD candidate majoring city image advertising, starts with a cigarette. I still remember the lifesaving cigarette from her on that rainy and cloudy afternoon outside Starbucks as I was self-doubt and tortured by a section in this dissertation. The feeling of mutual sympathy (she was also finishing her master dissertation) makes us quickly become friends. Spark of thoughts, fruitful conversations, World of Warcraft and wines constitute our five years friendship. More words are redundant yet I will make love (of course just as friend) eternal just in case I may need another cigarette in the future. There are many other wonderful people I met in Leicester. I had many happy moments with my friend, colleague and roommate Ying, who is also the most beautiful and cute young Chinese lady of our school. Road trip, Shisha, drinking, ice cream and flying kite, as well as conversation on research and life made my life energetic.

Mr. Liu Zhuo has been my friend for over ten years. We had a lot of in-depth conversation towards life, research and even philosophy. He helped me a lot during my fieldwork in Chongqing and we worked several branding cases together. I am sure we experienced more things but at this very moment, I cannot even name one. Maybe this is the highest state of

friendship. Thank you for being my friend and wish you luck in your future PhD study. Professor Song from Chongqing Technology University helped me to recruit my interviewees in Chongqing. She is not only my bachelor degree dissertation instructor but also the person who initially lead me to the path towards academic. I am grateful to have so many wonderful friends in my life despite the distance and time difference. Typesetting work is partially finished by my little sister Xinwen. I just suddenly realized that she is no longer the little follower of me but a pretty-young woman. Thank you for your accompany at the last year of my PhD and wish you good luck of your study in UK.

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Confucius said "[I am] independent by thirty" and my mother complaint "you are single by thirty". Looking back the former 30 years of my life, I feel grateful and content. A promising future is waiting for me and I am ready for it. So thank you so much, the love of my life, for not showing up during my PhD, which allow me to concentrate on my study. Being alone allow me to think and woolgather about the world but I am not a singlism neither DINK. Therefore, if I can make you giggle every my love, do not forget to marry me because I want to go to the village where I grew up with you, I want to chasing the aurora with you, and I want to grow wrinkles with you.

Bowen Zhang

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致谢

毫无权势，一些知识，一些智慧，以及尽可能多的趣味。

罗兰·巴特，1978

在法兰西学院的就职演说

很多人都认为读博是一个艰难的选择，然而回首过去的五年我更觉得这是一段美好的旅程。能有机会深入研究自己喜欢的领域我很幸运，能得到家人朋友和老师的支持我很感激，能见证自己的成长，从更深刻的角度去看待科学，生活和世界我感觉很开心。

当我的同学和同事和我聊起我的导师 Dr. Mihalis Kavaratzis 时，提起的多是他在地区品牌研究中无以伦比的天赋和突出的成就。对我来说感受更深的更多地是他对自己所深爱领域的无限热情。一个人必须要全身心投入才能获得广泛认可的成就，这不仅仅是指学术领域而是在其他任何方面。在过去五年我面临困难，怀疑和成长的时候，Dr. Dimitris Papadopoulos 都给予我了很多鼓励。他积极沉稳的个人风格，在社会科学领域多年浸淫的经验和见解帮助我成长为一个成熟的研究者。我从他那里学到了冷静和严谨。Dr. Ming Lim 在博士学习的初期给我了无数的帮助，是她帮我指明了研究生涯的路。是她以专业的知识和热忱的工作态度帮我从一个年轻的学生转变为一名合格的博士研究生。中国有句古话叫"身正为师，学高为范"， 三位导师身体力行地向我阐述了这句话的意义。

没有温女士，我亲爱的妈妈的资助，我无法顺利完成我的博士学习。从她那里我继承的不只是修长的身材，完美的下鄂线和乌黑的头发，更重要的是对待生活积极的态度，永不放弃的精神，正直与耐心。养育一个小就叛逆的儿子她牺牲了很多。对家庭成员说谢谢从来不是中国家庭的传统。我衷心地希望她在将来的日子能找到一个真正关心她，能让她开心的人。你脸上的笑容是世界上我最想要的东西，我爱你妈妈！

我与王典（传媒学院的一位博士）的友谊适于一支烟。是她在那个多雨阴郁的下午递给了我一支救命烟，彼时我正站在星巴克外面因为在论文的某一段卡住而怀疑人生。相似的心情让我们迅速建立了革命友谊因为当时她也在完成她的硕士论文。我们不但是同事，

朋友还是曾经的室友。无需多言,我将保留我们之间永恒的爱,以防未来我还需要一支烟。在莱斯特的学习生活中我还遇见了很多美丽的人儿。干盈博士是商学院除了我以外最美丽的人。和她们的公路旅行,水烟,饮酒,冰淇淋和放风筝,以及关于研究和生活的谈天使我的生活充满活力。

我与刘卓已经是超过十年的朋友。我们之间有很深刻的关于生活,研究甚至哲学的聊天。我在重庆实地调研期间他也给予了我巨大的帮助,我们甚至一起合作完成过很多品牌案例。我十分确定我们之间经历了其他更多有意义的事而然此刻我却一件都想不起。可能这就是友谊的最高境界。和你做朋友我与有荣焉,祝你未来博士学习之路顺利。重庆工商大学的宋瑛教授是我本科学习的系主任和论文导师,是她在最初引领了我学术研究的道路。感谢她在我实地调研期间的无私帮助。无论相隔远近,友谊永记于心。本文的一部分格式排版工作是由我的妹妹张馨文完成的。我直到最近才突然意识到她已经不是那个我身后的小跟屁虫而是一个大姑娘了。感谢你在我博士最后一年的陪伴,愿你在英国学习顺利。

中国的地区品牌研究学者使我收益良多。清华的范红老师,社科院的刘彦平老师,中国传媒大学的文春英老师和广东外语外贸大学的刘超老师学术会议上的见解,研究和文章让我对中国的国庆有了深刻的认识。来自重庆旅游部门,商委,文化委和宣传部门的受访者是本研究的主要数据来源。因为研究伦理和保密的原因,他们的名字无法出现在这里。在这里对他们的支持表示深深地谢意。

子曰:【吾】三十而立;我的妈妈则抱怨到"你是三十而单"。回首生命的头三十年,我更多地是感到感激和满足。未来之路光明灿烂,我已准备好迎接新的生活。在这里非常感谢我的挚爱,感谢他为了让我全身心投入学习而在我整个博士学习生活中没有出现。单身使我有更多认真思考或者胡思乱想的时间但是我绝不是一个单身主义者或者丁克。因此如果我可以让你每天傻笑,my love,记得和我结婚。因为我想和你一起去我长大的村庄,一起去追逐极光,一起长皱纹。

张博文

2019 年九月

CHAPTER 1.   INTRODUCTION

If you have an urgent need to make money, you can be a city developer; if you have a grand ideal to achieve, you can be a city planner; only when you find that you really love a city, you can do the idealist thing: to become a city researcher.

In memory of Peter Hall,

"To learn China and the world"

What is a city, but the people.

Sicinius in Shakespeare's Coriolanus, Act III, Scene I

1.1 Cities Development in New Era

Cities have always been an important part of human civilization (Bairoch, 1991), and the development of the city goes along with human civilization and progress (Distasio and Dudley, 2002). In the eyes of Edward Glaeser, human beings are a species that is extremely destructive to nature. If humans want to protect nature, the best way is not to go to nature, but to go as far as possible from nature (Glaeser, 2011). High-density urban life not only helps protect the natural ecology, but also stimulates innovation. Face-to-face interpersonal communication and multicultural collisions in high-density cities have been the engine of human progress since ancient times (Glaeser, 2011).

Since the 1980s, the globalization of the economy and the internationalization of cities have been the two major trends in the development of the contemporary world, which

require the optimal allocation and combination of the resources of the world (Sassen, 1991). The process of economic globalization is accelerating, resulting in the vertical and mature division of labour in the world. A new hierarchical architecture has been formed on the basis of the division of labour between the developed countries and the underdeveloped countries, between the developed regions and the underdeveloped regions. This is true for China.

Economic globalization is an objective trend in the development of the contemporary world economy. The accelerated economic development of the 1990s was a process of rapid acceleration and polarization within developing countries. For example, China is now the world's second-largest economic entity. Several large cities along the coast have caught up with developed countries and reached a high level of actuality, entering the ranks of international cities. The state poverty counties of the Midwest, however, have an average annual income per head of less than 2,300 yuan (approximately £256).

1.2 Running Chinese cities

In today's China, there is never enough time. Due to economic development, rapid urbanization has become China's top political task. Market-oriented policies, the globalization processes, the development of new information technologies, the pursuit of efficiency and competitiveness have all accelerated the pace of urban life and work. Therefore, the expansion of the city, the construction of infrastructure and the planning and construction of urban renewal projects must be completed in a very short period. There is no time to summarize the lessons learned from past projects, undertake local research, or build capacity for planners; there is not enough time for local residents, commercial enterprises or new immigrants to participate in planning. However, urban development is ultimately a long-term process, and urban development strategies should be prepared for such development (Kunzmann, 2017).

In this rapid development mode, increasing numbers of problems are exposed. First, rapid development does not leave the city much time to shape local characteristics, and it is difficult to design and enhance the city's characteristics with such rapid development and construction. Urban characteristics are often built on the influence of local cultural, religious, social and economic development, land-ownership models, and urban builders (architects and engineers) (Kunzmann, 2017). Except for a few places that benefit from local landscape features and historical and cultural heritage, most Chinese cities look similar, with several, more or less attractive, high-rise buildings interspersed by wide traffic corridors. It is becoming more and more difficult to distinguish the characteristics of any particular city.

Many cities, such as Chongqing (Picture 1), have built so-called creative areas. A wide range of shops, restaurants, cafes and bars are located in traditional buildings. These newly built or remodelled areas have retained their historical structure, and are loved by young people and foreign tourists. This practice is common in cities in China, and even the oldest residential stilted buildings (in Shibati area) in Chongqing have adopted the same approach. There are a handful of commercial real estate developers that replicate European-specific projects (such as the Fairy Mountain European Town), but whether these projects will become new examples of Chinese urban characteristics is questionable.

Picure 1. Hongyadong stilted building in Chongqing, fully occupied by hotpot, Peking roast duck, bars and souvenir shops.

Similarly, the city's landmark buildings, created by the world's top architects, have become suitable urban characteristics. For example, the Chongqing Grand Theatre (see Picture 2), which faces Hongyadong across the river, was designed by von Gerkan of the German GMP design company. Its unique shape is referred to as a sailboat by the designer, hence the name Lonely Sails Far Away (孤帆远影). Some residents do not approve of the design, claiming that it looks like a tank, so the Chongqing Grand Theatre is also dubbed the World's Largest Tank[1]. Landmark buildings may be highly recognizable in the business investment handbook, but for shaping the urban landscape they could be in any large city. Large cities like Chongqing need to accommodate millions of migrants, and this pressure makes cities eager to improve residents' living conditions, with no time to think about how to establish city characteristics.

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[1] Zaobao news: https://www.zaobao.com.sg/special/feature/story20091129-28995

Picure 2. Chongqing Grand Theatre and Hongyadong (bottom-left), night view. The neon lights on the typical modern building standing behind Hongyadong say 'Jiefangbei (the centre of Chongqing city) welcomes you'.

1.3 From art and cultural and creative industries to cultural place brand

The industrial revolution of the 19th century quickly changed the social structure of human society. The mode of production changed from agriculture and handicrafts to the industrial society, with a rapid increase in productivity, which led to the rise of the commodity economy with the city at its core, and modern production methods and life concepts. In the economically prosperous Victorian Empire era, the British Empire expanded its colonies due to its overcapacity in manufacturing, with art and design as a driving force for social progress, and industrial development was the result. From the Victorian era to the modern day, design styles such as art nouveau, art deco, constructivism, Bauhaus, neoplasticism, suprematism, streamlined form, popart, optical art, and postmodernism have all influenced the economic landscape.

Each genre reflects the aesthetic taste of its era, and the aesthetic style created by the design informs the culture, its accumulation, creation and creativity. The connection of

industries with creativity, along with the assistance of technology and intellectual property together create great value. The role of art and design in economic society has become increasingly prominent. There is a traceable source of modern cultural and creative industries. Art itself is the carrier of cultural creativity and the concrete realization of media. It belongs upstream of the cultural and creative industries, which include radio, film, television, animation, audio, video, media, visual arts, performing arts, craft, design, sculpture, environmental art, creative advertising, fashion design, software and computer services (Howkins, 2002).

Cultural and creative industries are used to industrialize cities (Moore, 2014). In recent years, cultural and creative industries have become an important symbol of cities' cultural competitiveness (Zhang, 2014). The cultural and creative industries are among the best endorsements and promoters of a city's image. Promoting cultural and creative industries is expected to enhance the cultural heritage of a city and boost its image (Kavaratzis et al., 2014). For example, Beijing's 798 Art Zone, a 10 square kilometre visual arts park, has been transformed from a ruined state-owned factory into a fashion landmark. Today, there are nearly 200 galleries, artists' studios, curators' offices, cafes, bars, etc., and the 798 Art Zone is listed among the three major tourist destinations in Beijing in many international travel publications, following only the Forbidden City and the Great Wall (Waibel and Zielke, 2012). Cases of cities creating their calling cards through their cultural and creative industries are commonplace, such as London's Olympic Park, the Taipei World Design Conference, the Avignon International Arts Festival in France, the Red Dot Design Award in Essen, Germany, and the Linz Industry in Austria. All have become cultural centres, and have led the trend of urban branding.

China has a rich culture and its cultural heritage attracts millions of foreign tourists every year, and provides a true history class for young Chinese. Nevertheless, Chinese city governments pay more attention to their modern cultural facilities. The problem in

many cities is the belief that the cultural life of the city needs to be reflected in modern museums, concert halls or opera houses. Therefore, many have spent a lot of money inviting world-class architects to design and construct cultural landmarks, hoping to attract media and tourists. For example, there are 8 national cultural industry demonstration bases in Shenzhen, one national cultural industry demonstration park, one national original music base, one national animation industry base, four Guangdong cultural industry demonstration bases, and three Guangdong cultural (creative) industrial parks. Countless buildings built by top designers are located in these parks and bases. Another example is the Chongqing Grand Theatre, mentioned above.

Cultural projects do help the cultural development of the city, but are, in the end, products of a very westernized modern culture. In the international urban system, the creation of cultural brands contributes to the promotion of a city's international status (Wang, 2018). However, cultural brands that are too westernized and have no Chinese characteristics do not increase the international competitiveness of the city. The characteristics of the city culture and inheritance of Chinese culture need to be displayed instead of a western characteristic culture (Wang, 2018). Moreover, the shaping of urban cultural brands is by no means supported only by the cultural and creative industries (Su and Li, 2010, Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2011).

1.4 Lack of resident involvement in city development

Since the reform and opening up of China, it has experienced a rapid urbanization process. The construction of large-scale infrastructure has changed the face of China. In the past 30 years, Chongqing's Jiefangbei area has developed into a high-rise central business district (Picture 4) from a dilapidated city (Picture 3). Similar changes can be seen in almost every city in China.

Picure 3. Jiefangbei in 1980

Picure 4. Jiefangbei central business area surrounded by luxury outlets, department

stores and office buildings.

Alongside the construction of infrastructure, China's social lifestyle has undergone tremendous change. A large number of Chinese people have entered urban life from the agricultural regions. In 2017, China's urbanization rate was 58.52%, compared with 19.2% in 1980[2]. In the 40 years of reform and opening up, China's urbanization level has tripled, and the urban population has grown from 200 million to 813 million[3]. However, the influx of residents has put tremendous pressure on existing urban infrastructure. Planning parties, government agencies, developers and builders have had to rethink urban life and make adjustments accordingly. Following this raging urbanization process, China's most eye-catching urban landscapes no longer feature the traditional pavilion, but one skyscraper after another across the skyline. Urban renewal, with the demolition of existing urban areas (such as hutongs, urban villages or old communities) is conducted to complete the modernization process. Although there are important economic considerations behind this, it is usually directly related to land appreciation (Zeng et al., 2018). To a large extent, the One Thousand Cities and the homogenization brought about by urbanization are the reasons for the lack of urban characteristics (National Information Centre, 2016).

The process of urban renewal requires the participation of citizens, local businesses and social groups. Emphasizing the need for public participation in urban planning and changing the situation of previous urban planning by experts and functional departments are urgent problems to be solved (Liu and Zhu, 2005). Emphasizing public participation in the formulation of urban policies, targeting specific urban public policies, discussing the rationality of public participation and how to implement public participation in specific policy processes are also issues that need attention (Irvin and Stansbury, 2004). Infrastructure construction is oriented towards privatization, and

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[2] National Information Centre: http://www.sic.gov.cn/News/455/6167.htm
[3] Sohu News: http://www.sohu.com/a/253306760_100028279

introducing the concept of market competition, improving the efficiency of urban construction is seen as a feasible way forward (Lovan, 2004).

China's urban development is no easy task. Cities need to develop viable development strategies. While ensuring economic growth, they must also achieve sustainable development and enhance people's lives and working conditions. These three policy areas are already complex, and local governments have to balance the central government's top-down instructions (due to policy funding requirements) and local demands. In this process, only a small number of large state-owned enterprises or large real estate developers can participate and local businesses and residents are hard to find.

1.5 City in the slogan: the obsession with branding and numbers

Chinese cities are obsessed with slogans and brands. City propaganda agencies must make a statement when demonstrating their urban development strategies. The visions of mainstream cities promoted by the central government, urban planners, urban propaganda departments, and the mass media, often referred to slogans in their early years, but now more commonly refer to the so-called brand. It is a common fact that the main role of such visions is to please local governments, secure policy funds and attract investment.

More than 2,000 cities in China (including prefecture-level cities, county-level cities and county towns) are trying to market themselves, by creating image advertisements, collecting city songs, applying for relics, renaming, selecting image ambassadors, and building landmarks. The enthusiasm for city slogans remains high. Yichun Tourism Administration Department once released a indecent slogan: A City Called Spring (一座叫春的城市), which can also be interpreted as A Throating City in Chinese (currently changed to A City in Spring). Haikou's slogan, Entertainment Capital could provide a basis for rumours; and Modern Charm Regional Centre, the capital of the city

and the coastal provinces uses the riddle Killing and Guessing, which is Shijiazhuang's slogan. Local governments often give city slogans awards. The Chongqing Municipal Government rewarded the slogan Haven't Been to Chongqing, Don't Know China with a great deal of money, but soon had large-scale doubts, as the featureless statement "haven't been to place **A**, don't know China" "haven't been to place **B**, don't know China" is like a universal fill-in-the-blank slogan.

At a tourism expert symposium in 2008, the vice president of the China Tourism Culture Resources Development Promotion Association pointed out, "the city slogan is the easiest to become the right nonsense"[4]. Positional confusion, poor promotion, lack of international vision, rough design, and insufficient public participation are common problems for these slogans (Liu, 2018). From the Four Wuhan (innovation centre, trade centre, financial centre, high-end manufacturing centre), to the later Five Wuhan (vigorous city, higher education city, green city, liveable city, inclusive city), people only wanted to ask how many Wuhan there were.

Whether it is a sustainable city, a creative city, or a new smart city, these visions are not a suitable path for all urban development, bridging the gaps in past urban policy and responding to the policy paths of central ministries for the future city. In the process of city branding, many cities in China have linked the city's economic opening, municipal construction, investment attraction, tourism development, and environmental transformation to the city brand, resulting in many so-called Green Cities and Quality Cities, an Environmental City, a Garden City, etc. This is essentially a way of equating a city's image or slogan with a city brand, or even equating simple city packaging with a brand. In the speeches of leaders, and government planning policies, it has reached the point where no brand equals no city.

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[4] https://hzdaily.hangzhou.com.cn/hzrb/html/2010-07/11/content_900972.htm

Chinese cities emphasize rankings and numbers. Every city wants to be better than other cities and attract more foreign investment, tourists and high-quality talent. In well-designed urban brochures, each city constantly notes their ranking to prove their strength through these awe-inspiring numbers. One of the most obvious features is the foregrounding of GDP. Whether for active or passive reasons, local governments seem to be eager to prove that they have achieved economic growth. It seems that GDP is the only important figure in urban development.

This "worship of GDP" comes from a misunderstanding (Tan, 2017). Since the reform and opening up, the central government has put forward the basic line of "taking economic construction as the centre", and Deng Xiaoping put forward the famous argument that development is the last word. These two concepts are relevant statements for developing China, but in real life they are often misunderstood, resulting in GDP worship. For example, local officials narrowly interpret "economic development as the centre" as "centred on GDP growth" and "development is the last word" as "GDP growth is the last word". Therefore, GDP is the only indicator, measuring everything and covering everything. Officials desperately pursue GDP growth as political achievement, because GDP is visible, tangible, and quantifiable, while social costs, benefits, efficiency, and quality are neglected, and the costs of growth are not considered. GDP worship also comes from the flaws in the government's evaluation mechanism (Tan, 2017). The standard measure of political achievement is quantifiable GDP. If GDP growth is fast, there is political achievement, and vice versa, if GDP growth is slow, there is no political achievement or political achievement is not prominent. Whether there is political achievement is the main basis for the promotion of current cadres.

The obsession with numbers has also led to the emergence of economic indicators of urban development and urban branding as the only criteria for measuring success. In official speeches, the government's planning summary, or propaganda, it seems that only numbers and rankings can prove anything.

1.6 Origin of the topic

New York symbolizes wealth, naturally, with Citigroup and Morgan Stanley; Detroit is the automobile city, with GM, Ford and Chrysler; Silicon Valley symbolizes advanced technology, with HP creating the IT empire in a garage there; Paris is fashion and romance, with L'Oreal and Chanel; Frankfurt has the top mechanical manufacturing technology, with Mercedes-Benz. Place branding, from its first appearance, has been used to solve development issues in cities, regions and nations (Kotler, 2002; Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010). Worldwide, place competition has gradually focused on place brand competition (Anholt, 2007), and place branding is getting ever more attention from place managers.

The increasing competition between cities worldwide (especially in emerging markets) can be witnessed, but the literature about cities mainly focuses on western cities, which results in a dominance of developed countries (Wei et al., 2006, Yulong and Hamnett, 2002). With the on-going shift of political and economic power to Asia (Bjorner and Berg, 2014), there is increasing research on Chinese cities (Wai, 2006), but this still fails to provide sufficient support for practical issues.

With rapid urban development, enormous efforts has been made in place branding yet many problems have arisen in Chinese cities. If place branding can solve these problems, what is its role? What methods are applied? What role does place branding play in urban development? With these questions in mind, the author begins to explore relevant theories and practices. What this study tries to do is discussing the evolution of place branding theory; expounding the basic mechanism and process of a Chinese place

branding case (Chongqing city); comparing Chinese and western place branding practice and proposing a new theoretical model based on the case study. To understand how the government conducts place branding is also one of the aims of this research, which is one of the theoretical contributions of this paper.

1.7 Empirical study context

To give the reader a better understanding of the context of the case city of this study, this section describes the branding attempt of Chongqing city, portrays Chongqing historically and culturally, and last illustrates place governance structure and national/local positioning.

1.7.1. *Chongqing, a city cultivating her image and forming her brand*

Recognised officially as a municipality in 1997, Chongqing is one of the largest water, land, and air transportation hubs on the Chinese mainland, where the mighty Yangtze and Jialing rivers conjoin. In 2010, the Chongqing Liangjiang New Area formed the third national economic development zone together with Pudong and Binhai. Over the past decade, Chongqing has developed several city brand concepts including (but not limited to) Dream City, City of Magic, and Mutual Wealthy. These city brands were abandoned very soon and even cannot be seen in the official documents today. From 1999 to 2014, Chongqing city conducted three major city branding (or city promotion) campaigns, Harmony Chongqing, Five Chongqing (Safe Chongqing, Liveable Chongqing, Forest Chongqing, Healthy Chongqing, and Convenient Chongqing), and Chongqing Dream. Before Harmony Chongqing, there were only fragmental city promotion campaigns such as Construction of the Three Major Economic Zones (构建三大经济区), Four Chongqing (四个重庆活动), Green Project (青山绿水工程), and The Clearance Project of City (主城净空工程)[5].

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[5] Chongqing municipal government work report 2002 (2002 重庆市政府工作报告)

Besides these branding activities, mainly targeted internally at China, there were internationally orientated branding campaigns such as the Hanyu Qiao Chinese Proficiency Competition and the annual Chongqing and the World: Culture Festival (重庆与世界·文化嘉年华), which aimed to communicate an open, enthusiastic and inclusive international city image. These city branding campaigns are documented in official files which offer a good informational foundation to this research.

Located in upper reaches of the Yangtze river, southwest China, Chongqing is the only municipality in the western part of the People's Republic of China, a megacity in a national centre city, an international metropolis, and an economic, financial, scientific, logistics and trade logistics centre[6]. It is an important strategic fulcrum for the development of the western region and the Belt and Road initiative, Yangtze River Economic Belt, and inland China open highland[7]. Chongqing is located at the confluence of the Yangtze and Jialing rivers, and the main city area is surrounded by water, so it is also called River City[8]. As two rivers run through the city, more than ten thousand bridges with various designs and structures cross the rivers in the city, giving the city the name Capital of a Million Bridges. The topography of Chongqing gradually gets lower from north to south towards the valley of the Yangtze, while hills and low mountains dominate the northwest and central parts. The southeast part is on two large mountains, Daba and Wuling. Due to its geographical features, Chongqing is also called Mountainous City. Abundant water sources and hilly terrain generate high humidity and the city is often foggy, so it is also called City of Fog. The most recent and popular name for Chongqing is Three Dimensional Magical City, as many tourists post pictures of Chongqing showing its unique architectural structure. The most famous sites are Hongyandong (洪崖洞), shown in Pictures 5and 6, and Chongqing Light Railway No. 2

[6] Chongqing Government official website: introduction of Chongqing, available at: http://www.cq.gov.cn/cqgk/2000200.shtml
[7] Chongqing Government official website: introduction of Chongqing, available at: http://www.cq.gov.cn/cqgk/2000200.shtml
[8] State Council Information Office Website: introduction of Chongqing, available at: http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/dtzt/27/14/2/Document/670514/670514.htm

(shown in Picture 7). A netizen describes Chongqing saying, "the light rail passes through the building" and "above the road is the house, below the road is also the house, and there are houses above the house"[9].

Picure 5. Caiyuanba Bridge, Chongqing, (Aerial View: http://niaokanhp.com/index.php/news/197)
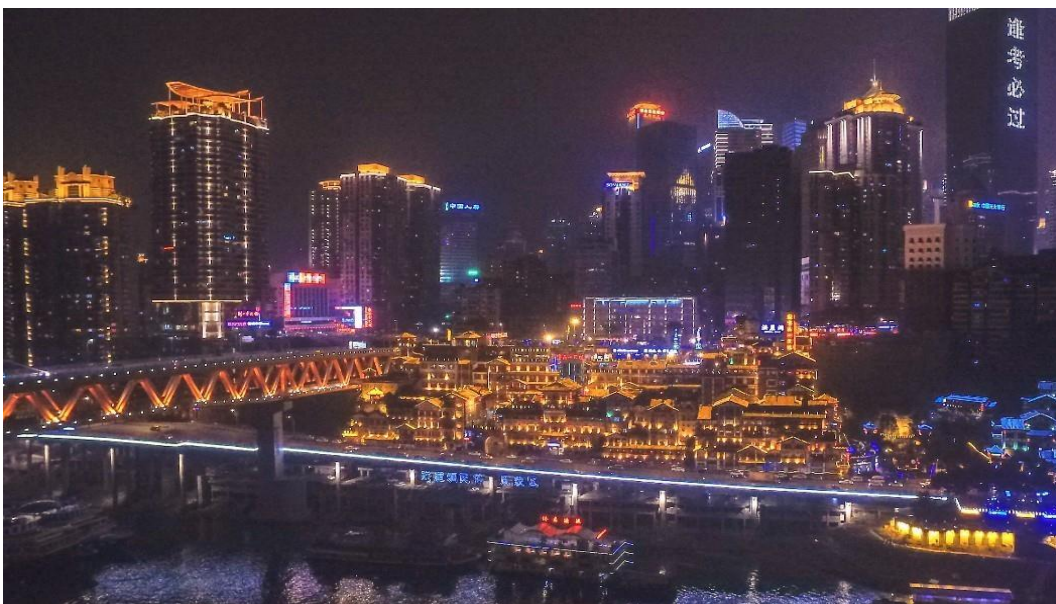
Picure 6. Hongyadong, Chongqing, night view (Aerial View:

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[9] Zhihu (similar to Quora), Chongqing topic, https://www.zhihu.com/question/38614289

Picure 7. Liziba   Light   Railway   Station   (CQNews:
http://cq.cqnews.net/html/2015-01/12/content_33142509.htm)

According to the officially released data from the Chongqing Tourism Department, during the May Day holiday in 2018, more than 100,000 tourists visited Hongyadong, and Chongqing received 17.735 million domestic and foreign tourists within the three day national holiday[10]. Appearing in the Top 10 Travel Destinations in the World in Frommer's magazine, World's Top 10 Most Potential Tourism Destinations in Longlt Planet magazine, The Fastest Growing Top 10 Tourist Cities in the World (ranked No.1) by the World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC), Chongqing is also honoured as China's Most Potential Investment City, and World Characteristic Charm City[11].

As a municipality, Chongqing has a unique national position in central government. Chongqing is positioned as one of the Regional Centre Cities in China by the Ministry

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[10] Xinhua News: http://www.xinhuanet.com/fortune/2018-05/04/c_1122785687.htm
[11] Xinhua News: http://www.cq.xinhuanet.com/2017-10/28/c_1121869419.htm

of Housing and Urban Development, which aims to promote regional economic and social development and narrow the gap between regional developments. Chongqing is also a national pilot area for urban and rural integration, positioned as such by the State Council[12]. This pilot area aims to improve the urban-rural dual structure in Chongqing and solve Three Gorges Reservoir area immigration problem. The other national authorized region in Chongqing is Liangjiang New District. This district is a sub-provincial district and national new district under the jurisdiction of Chongqing Municipality. It is the first national development and opening district in inland China, and the third national district approved by the State Council after the Shanghai Pudong New Area and Tianjin Binhai New Area. The position of these new districts is made very clear in official government documents. They are required to become forerunners in the overall strategic urban-rural integration reform experiment at the national strategic level; important inland manufacturing and modern service industry bases; financial innovation centres in the upper reaches of the Yangtze river; important gateways to the openness of the inland region; and demonstration windows for scientific development[13]. The Liangjiang New Area is the place where the China (Chongqing) Free Trade Experimental Zone, the China-Singapore (Chongqing) Strategic Interconnection Demonstration Project, the Yuxinou International Railway (connecting Chongqing to Duisburg, Germany), and the Chongqing Lianglu & Cundan Bonded Port Area are located[14].

As an emerging city and future star of China, Chongqing is forming its city brand with unique natural characteristics and national policy preferences.

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[12] Some Opinions of the State Council on Promoting Chongqing's Overall Planning for Urban and Rural Reform and Development （国务院关于推进重庆市统筹城乡改革和发展的若干意见）: http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2009-02/05/content_1222355.htm
[13] Liangjiang New District Government website: http://www.liangjiang.gov.cn/Content/2014-12/08/content_1219.htm, and The state Council Information Office website: http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/xwfb/99/8/Document/1227948/1227948.htm
[14] Liangjiang New District Government website: http://www.liangjiang.gov.cn/Content/2014-12/08/content_1219.htm

1.7.2. *History, economy and culture of Chongiqng*

Chongqing is a city with a long history and is the birthplace of the Bayu culture. Its origins can be traced back to ancient humans. From the origin of the Three Gorges humans 2 million years ago, there are more than 3,000 years of written history, from the Pakistani countries in the pre-Qin period to the Kuomintang in modern times. From the ruins of Wushan to the deep Yangtze river valley, Chongqing has experienced numerous trails and hardships. In the early Palaeolithic period, 2 million years ago, the earliest human beings in China, the Wushan, appeared in Wushan County, Chongqing. In the late Palaeolithic period, from 20,000 to 30,000 years ago, the Tongliang culture (now Tongliang District) appeared. In the 16th year of Emperor Song Xiaozong's reign (1189), Song Guangzong first became the King of Gong and later became emperor. He was promoted to the Chongqing Prefecture, which Chongqing was named after (ancient name Ba, Ba County, Yu State, Gong State). In November of the 26th year of the Republic of China (1937), the Government of the Republic of China promulgated the Declaration of the National Government's Migration to Chongqing. On November 16th, Lin Sen, the president of the national government, tasked civil servants and two officers of the army to count the important articles, such as the flags of the Republic of China and the flagships of the Republic of China. Lin departed from Nanjing and came first to Chongqing, and officially opened Interim government in Chongqing on December 1st. After becoming a wartime capital, Chongqing became the political, military, economic, and cultural centre of post-war China, the political arena of the Anti-Japanese National United Front, and the far east command centre of the World Anti-Fascist War, becoming well-known internationally as the City of Heroes and the Unyielding City. From the spring of 1938 to the winter of 1944, the Japanese Army and Navy Air Force jointly carried out a bombardment of Chongqing, known as the Chongqing bombing. Even after six and a half years of bombing, Chongqing did not fall. At that time, British Prime Minister Churchill, US President Roosevelt, Vice President Wallace and many other foreign politicians called or wrote to the people of Chongqing to encourage and praise their perseverance.

Picure 8. Monument to the People's Liberation, referred to as Jiefangbei, located in the centre of Jiefangbei Commercial Pedestrian Street, Yuzhong District, Chongqing. It is a spiritual symbol of victory in the WWII. It is the only monument in China that commemorates the victory of the Chinese nation in the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression.

Chongqing's economic construction shows a pattern of coexistence of large-scale agriculture, large-scale industry, large-scale transportation, and large circulation of goods. It is the largest economic centre city in the southwest and the upper reaches of the Yangtze river [15]. In 2018, the GDP of Chongqing was 203.319 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 6.0% at comparable prices. The primary industry realized an added value of 137.827 billion yuan, an increase of 4.4%, the secondary industry realized an added value of 832.789 billion yuan, an increase of 3.0%, and the tertiary industry realized an added value of 1,056.613 billion yuan, an increase of 9.1% [16].

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[15] People.cn: http://www.people.com.cn/GB/channel4/1002/20000613/101449.html

[16] Economic Operation of Chongqing in 2018, Chongqing Municipal Bureau of Statistics:
http://www.cqtj.gov.cn/xwdt/201901/t20190122_453877.htm

Chongqing culture mainly refers to Bashu culture. The Bashu culture originated from the Ba culture. The Ba people lived between the mountains and the rivers, a sinister environment, cultivating a tenacious, tough and awkward character. The Ba people are known for their bravery and warfare[17]. During the Second World War, with the relocation of the National Government, Chongqing became the wartime capital of the Republic of China and the centre of the inland schools. A large number of famous educators and scholars came to teach, and many celebrities in literary and art circles came to work and settle down. Chongqing became a cultural and educational centre in the southwest. The Shapingba, a cultural area in Chongqing, where schools gathered, became the famous Cultural Dam. A great deal of talent has been cultivated there, and the capital's culture in wartime became a cornerstone of Chongqing's cultural development.

Chongqing's diet is spicy, and the city is known for creating new dishes with eclectic use of ingredients. Chongqing is one of the birthplaces of hotpot. In March 2007, Chongqing won the title China's Hotpot Capital, given by the China Cuisine Association. There are 44 national intangible cultural heritages in Chongqing, including folk literature, folk music, folk dance, traditional drama, folk art, acrobatic competition, folk art, traditional art, traditional handcraft techniques, traditional medicine and folk customs[18].

Chongqing has natural scenery such as mountains, water, forests, springs, waterfalls, gorges, and caves. There are more than 300 natural and cultural attractions, including one World Cultural Heritage Site (Dazu Rock Carvings) and two World Natural Heritage Sites (Chongqing Wulong Karst Tourist Area and Chongqing Jinfo Mountain Karst), along with 6 National Key Scenic Spots. There are 24 forest parks, 6 national geological parks, 4 national nature reserves, and 20 national key cultural relic protection units.

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[17] Chongqing Municipal Government website: http://www.cq.gov.cn/zqfz
[18] Chongqing Municipal Culture and Tourism Development Committee Website: https://www.cqwhw.gov.cn/

1.7.3. *Administrative division of Chongqing*

According to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, there are three government levels: a) the country is divided into provinces (省), autonomous regions (自治区), and municipalities directly under the central government (直辖市); b) the provinces and autonomous regions are divided into autonomous prefectures (自治州), counties (县), autonomous counties (自治县), and cities (市); 3) counties and autonomous counties are divided into townships (乡), ethnic townships (民族乡) and towns (镇). Municipalities and larger cities are divided into districts and counties, and autonomous prefectures are divided into counties, autonomous counties and cities[19].

The current system has four levels: provincial administrative districts, prefecture-level administrative districts, county-level administrative districts, and township-level administrative districts. The provincial administrative regions that are the first-level administrative regions have four categories: provinces, autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the central government, and special administrative regions. Under the provinces and autonomous regions there are usually prefecture-level cities (including sub-provincial cities), regions, autonomous prefectures, and alliance-level administrative regions. Under the prefecture-level administrative regions, there are county-level administrative districts such as counties, autonomous counties, county-level cities, flags, autonomous banners, and municipal districts (with other special cases for forest districts and special zones). County-level administrative districts are divided into townships, ethnic townships, sumu, ethnic sumu, and sub-district administrative districts. Under the municipalities (Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Chongqing) there are no prefecture-level administrative districts, but they are directly divided into county-level administrative districts (including sub-provincial-level municipal districts) to form a three-level zoning system. Chongqing municipality has a three level administration system, the administrative divisions of Chongqing are as follows:

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[19] Central government website: http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2005-09/13/content_5043917.htm

Level one	Municipal government
Level two	County-level administrative divisions including 26 municipal districts, 8 counties, 4 ethnic autonomous counties
Level three	Township administrative level including 204 sub-districts, 611 towns, 193 townships, 14 ethnic townships

Table 1. Chongqing municipal administrative structure (Chongqing government website)

Covering an area of 82,400 square kilometres, Chongqing Municipality has jurisdiction over 38 administrative districts and counties (including autonomous counties) (Table 5).
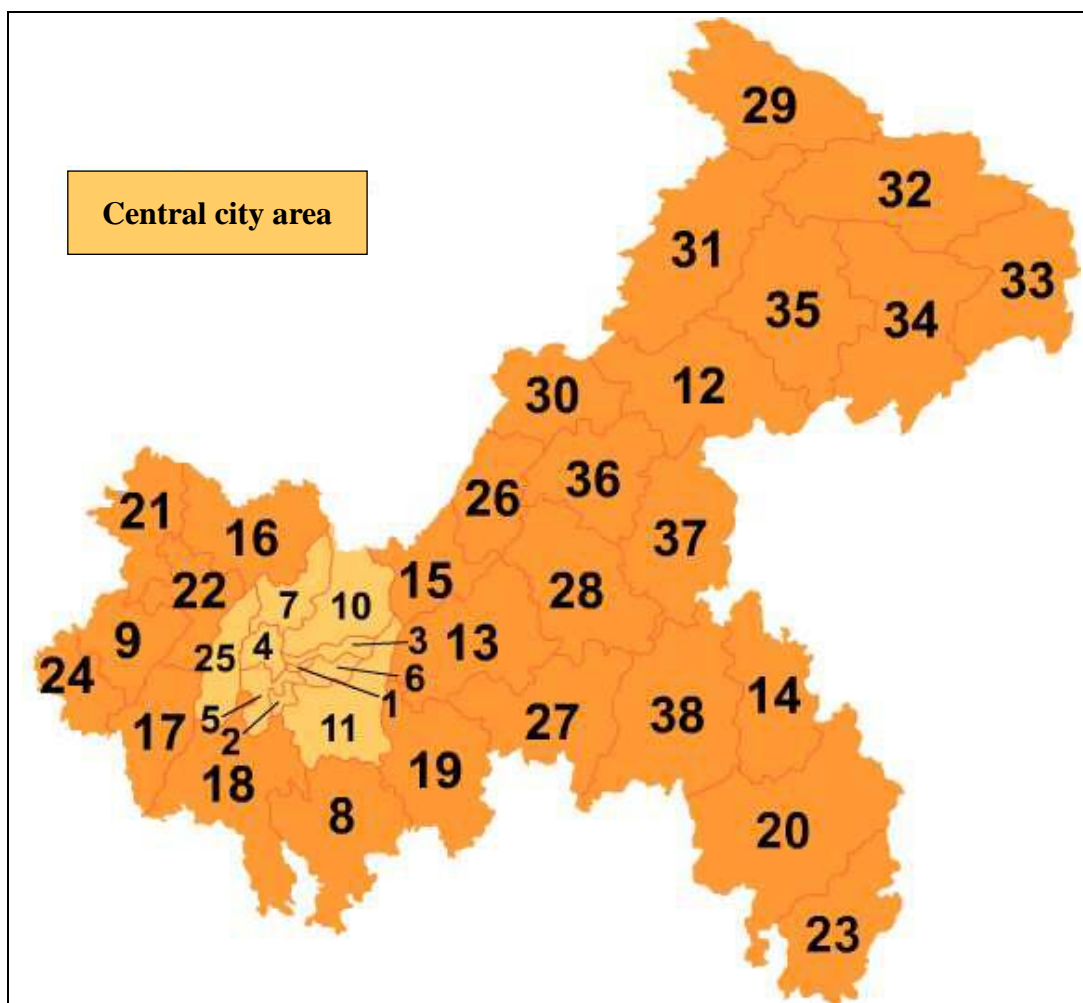
Number	Division name	Chinese pinyin	Number	Division name	Chinese pinyin
1	渝中区	Yúzhōng Qū	20	酉阳土家族苗族自治县	Yǒuyáng tǔjiāzú miáozú Zìzhìxiàn
2	大渡口区	Dàdùkǒu Qū	21	潼南区	Tóngnán Qū
3	江北区	Jiāngběi Qū	22	铜梁区	Tóngliáng Qū
4	沙坪坝区	Shāpíngbà Qū	23	秀山土家族苗族自治县	Xiùshān tǔjiāzú miáozú Zìzhìxiàn
5	九龙坡区	Jiǔlóngpō Qū	24	荣昌区	Róngchāng Qū
6	南岸区	Nán'àn Qū	25	璧山区	Bìshān Qū
7	北碚区	Běibèi Qū	26	垫江县	Diànjiāng Xiàn
8	綦江区	Qíjiāng Qū	27	武隆区	Wǔlóng Qū

9	大足区	Dàzú Qū	28	丰都县	Fēngdū Xiàn
10	渝北区	Yúběi Qū	29	城口县	Chéngkǒu Xiàn
11	巴南区	Bānán Qū	30	梁平区	Liángpíng Qū
12	万州区	Wànzhōu Qū	31	开州区	Kāizhōu Qū
13	涪陵区	Fúlíng Qū	32	巫溪县	Wūxī Xiàn
14	黔江区	Qiánjiāng Qū	33	巫山县	Wūshān Xiàn
15	长寿区	Chángshòu Qū	34	奉节县	Fèngjié Xiàn
16	合川区	Héchuān Qū	35	云阳县	Yúnyáng Xiàn
17	永川区	Yǒngchuān Qū	36	忠县	Zhōng Xiàn
18	江津区	Jiāngjīn Qū	37	石柱土家族自治县	Shízhù tǔjiāzú Zìzhìxiàn
19	南川区	Nánchuān Qū	38	彭水苗族土家族自治县	Péngshuǐ miáozú tǔjiāzú Zìzhìxiàn

Table 2. Chongqing administrative division map and district and county names

1.7.4. *National positioning and branding efforts of Chongqing*

In 1997, Chongqing became a municipality. With development, Chongqing's positioning has been enriched. On September 20, 2007, the State Council officially approved the Chongqing Urban and Rural Master Plan (2007-2020) (hereafter referred to as the Master Plan). For the first time, the Master Plan defined Chongqing's five major positionings: one of China's most important central cities, a national historical and cultural city, the upper Yangtze economic centre, the country's most important modern manufacturing base, and the comprehensive south-western transportation hub. On January 16, 2009, the State Council issued the Several Opinions of the State Council on Promoting Urban and Rural Reform and Development in Chongqing, and identified Chongqing as a National Integrated Urban and Rural Comprehensive Reform Pilot Zone. This was the first time that China set up a pilot zone for the coordinated reform of urban and rural areas. In February 2010, Chongqing was selected to be in the first batch of national central cities by the National Urban System Planning Outline (2010-2020) issued by the Ministry of

Housing and Urban-Rural Development. On June 18, 2010, the third sub-provincial new district in China and the first national new district in the central and western regions, Liangjiang New District, was formally established. The area covers 1,200 square kilometres, and includes Chongqing Yubei District, Jiangbei District and Beibei District. Part of the area, the exploitable area, is about 650 square kilometres. Liangjiang New Area is the focus of a new round of global industrial transfers, the hub of the Eurasian international logistics channel, a hotspot of China's development transformation strategy, and the core area of the emerging inland market. It is a pioneering area at the national strategic level to become an inland open portal, a scientific development demonstration window, a comprehensive urban and rural reform experiment, an advanced manufacturing and modern service industry base, an economic centre, a financial centre and an innovation centre in the upper reaches of the Yangtze river. On March 14, 2011, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress approved the "promotion of the development and opening up of the Liangjiang New Area" in the national Twelfth Five-Year Plan. Inland China, which is larger than the Yangtze River Delta, the Pearl River Delta, or the Bohai Economic Circle, is at the forefront of the reform and opening up. In 2014, concerned about the Yangtze River Economic Zone Development Plan to upgrade national strategy, Chongqing participated in the formulation of proposed major development objectives, including, by 2020, the basic completion of the Yangtze River Economic Belt Hub and opening of the Yangtze River Ecological Barrier. Previously, Chongqing had been "an important growth pole in the western region, an economic centre in the upper reaches of the Yangtze river, and a municipality directly under the central government". The new positioning adds references such as "the central hub of the Yangtze River Economic Belt", "the core area of the national central city", and "the main engine that drives the east to the west". On May 1, 2017, Sun Zhengcai, Secretary of the Chongqing Municipal Party Committee, on behalf of the Fourth Committee of the CPC Chongqing Municipality, delivered a report titled Close Solidarity in the New Journey of Socialist Modernization Driven by Defending the Comprehensive Well-off Society around the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the Core. This report

proposed making Chongqing into a "modern international metropolis" by around 2030. In the report, Sun Zhengcai said it was necessary, based on General Secretary Xi Jinping's strategy, to position Chongqing as: a strategic fulcrum for the development of the western region; the link between the Belt and Road and the Yangtze River Economic Belt; the optimization of the national central city for urban and rural development; the economic centre of the upper reaches of the Yangtze river; the country's most important modern manufacturing base; an important domestic functional financial centre; the western innovation centre; the inland open highland; a beautiful landscape city and other functional positionings. Constructing a convenient and smooth open channel, strengthening the function of the shipping centre on the upper reaches of the Yangtze, accelerating the construction of an international aviation hub, and building an inland international logistics hub are all proposed in order to build Chongqing into a "modern international metropolis" by around 2030. At the first meeting of the Fifth People's Congress of Chongqing held on January 26, 2018, Acting Mayor Tang Liangzhi made a government work report. According to this report, General Secretary Xi Jinping's requested Chongqing adopt "two points (a strategic position), two places (a strategic goal), and four solids (a strategic path)". Chongqing plays a unique and important role in the development of the country and the pattern of opening up to the outside world. It is necessary to fully integrate the construction of the Belt and Road with the development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt. The starting point is to build an inland open highland, which will make a great contribution to the national and overseas links between the land and the sea. It is necessary to firmly establish the concept of green development and protect the mountains and waters of Chongqing. The construction of Jiangcheng Mountain City has made a beautiful place with beautiful scenery, admired both at home and abroad.

1.7.5. *"One-hour economic circle and two wings", Five Chongqing, and Chongqing Five Functional Areas*

"One circle and two wings" is the development strategy proposed by Chongqing

Municipality in November 2006, meaning the construction of an urban economic zone with the main city at its core and the radius being a commuting distance of about one hour, with Wanzhou at the centre. The two wings would be the Three Gorges Reservoir area town group (the northeast wing) and the southeastern town group (the southeast wing) centred on the Minjiang river. The one-hour economic circle would be equivalent to the area under the jurisdiction of the original city of Chongqing, and Changshou, Fuling and Nanchuan areas would be under the jurisdiction of the original Fuling city. The northeast wing of Chongqing is equivalent to the area under the jurisdiction of the original prefecture-level Wanxian city plus the Fengdu and Dianjiang areas under the jurisdiction of the original-level Liling city. The southeastern wing of Chongqing is equivalent to the area under the jurisdiction of the original Minjiang area plus the Wulong area under the jurisdiction of the original prefecture-level Liling city.

The Five Chongqings refers to Liveable Chongqing, Smooth Chongqing, Forest Chongqing, Safe Chongqing and Healthy Chongqing, positionings proposed at the third session of the Third Committee of the Municipal Party Committee, on July 20, 2008. Forest Chongqing aimed to improve the environment and make the people more healthy; Smooth Chongqing aimed to improve traffic conditions; Safe Chongqing aimed to enhance the security of the people; Healthy Chongqing aimed to make the residents' lives healthier overall; and Liveable Chongqing aimed to improve the living conditions and environment.

Chongqing's Five Functional Areas is a policy for the division of Chongqing's functional areas proposed in September 2013. It divides Chongqing into an urban functional core area, an urban functional development area, an urban development new area, the northeastern ecological conservation development area, and the southeastern ecological protection development (see Attachment 1). The core areas are Yuzhong and Jiangbei Districts, Nan'an District, Dadukou District, Jiulongpo District and Shapingba District. The urban function expansion area covers Yubei District, Beibei District,

Banan District, some of Jiangbei District, Nan'an District, Dadukou District, Jiulongpo District and Shapingba District. The urban function expansion area covers Yubei District, Beibei District, Banan District, some of Jiangbei District, Nan'an District, Dadukou District, Jiulongpo District and Shapingba District. The scope of the new urban development zone is equivalent to the one-hour economic circle outside the main urban area in the "one circle and two wings" strategy. The scope of the northeastern ecological conservation development zone is equivalent to the northeast wing of the "one circle and two wings" strategy. The southeastern ecological protection development zone is equivalent to the southeastern wing of the "one circle and two wings" strategy. (To give reader a better understanding of the context of China, please see attachment 5 for government administration system and political ideology)

1.8 Structure of this dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters, as illustrated in Figure 1.

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┌─────────────────────┐
│    Introduction     │
└─────────────────────┘
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           ▼
┌───────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              Literature Review                 │
│                                                │
│  Western Theories  Chinese place Branding      │
│                    Practice    Framework       │
└───────────────────────────────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│    Methodology      │
└─────────────────────┘
       │
       ▼
┌──────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Place Branding in    │ ─────▶ │ The Role of          │
│ Three Aspects        │        │ Government           │
└──────────────────────┘        └──────────────────────┘
           │                             │
           ▼                             ▼
        ┌──────────────────────┐
        │  Reframing Chinese   │
        │  Place Branding      │
        └──────────────────────┘
                   │
                   ▼
        ┌──────────────────────┐
        │     Conclusion       │
        └──────────────────────┘
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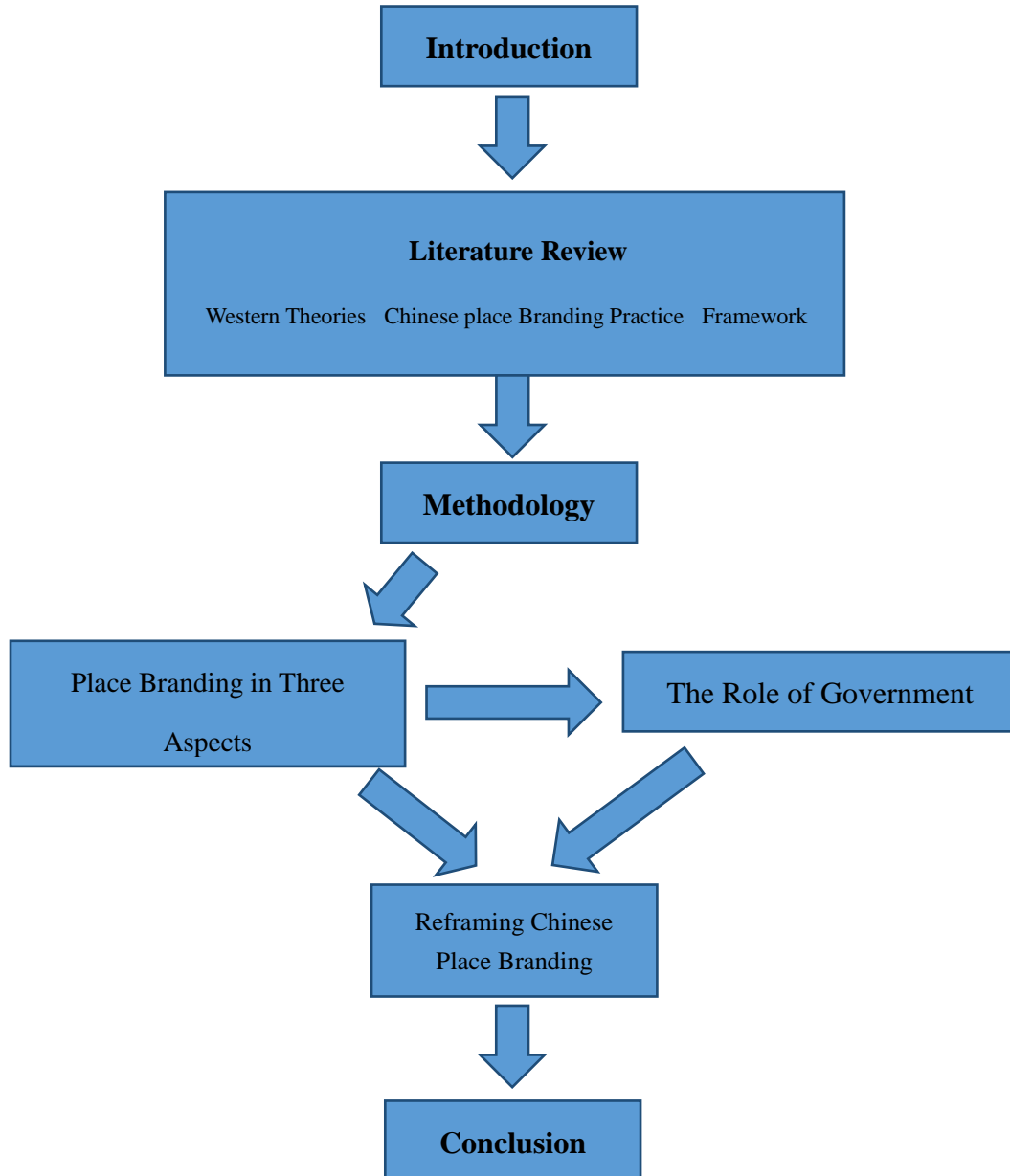
Figure 1.   Structure of the dissertation

Chapter 2 presents a holistic review of place branding theories including theoretical development, discussion of definitions and the rationale for place branding. It then presents a literature review of current Chinese language place branding research. There is

an increasing interest in Chinese place branding research, yet the language barrier hampers effective communication between western and Chinese researchers. Even though abundant Chinese research shows clear constructivism and pragmatism, the lack of conceptualization and a research paradigm is seen. The public goods attributes of place branding provides a new perspective for this research, combining government process theory with current place branding theories. A theoretical framework is presented to guide the study.

The methodology chapter (Chapter 3) refines the research objectives and research questions, then clarifies the research approach, and case selection. In order to give the reader a clear understanding of the case study city and research context, a lot of space is dedicated to introducing China's current development context, government management and structure, and the history, culture and city branding attempts. Finally, the detailed case design and data collection methods are presented.

Chapter 4 focuses on the three major aspects of place branding: tourism, business development, and resident identity construction. These are all represented in the case city and are highly recommended by government officials. Each aspect is given an in-depth inspection in terms of place branding practice in this particular field. In combination with the case analysis in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 discusses the role of government in place branding, place branding projects and plans, and the decision making process.

Combining the findings in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, the three major research questions are answered in Chapter 6. The place branding process, the functions of place branding, and the nature of Chinese place branding are discussed. The conceptual model of Chinese place branding is presented and developed in this chapter. Finally, Chapter 7 summarizes the main conclusions and contributions of the study, wrapping up the study by highlighting some future research directions.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory is fulfilled in a people only insofar as it is the fulfilment of the needs of that people.

------Karl Max (1844),

In Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right

This chapter offers a comprehensive review of current place branding research. With decades of development in theory and practice, there are still many unsolved issues that need further clarification. This chapter adopts a theoretical perspective on reviewing the literature. Following a presentation of the development route, fundamental questions about definitions, rationales and management are discussed, as these issues are "in need of clarification, refinement and even reconsideration" (Kavaratzis, Warnaby and Ashworth, 2015). A sub-chapter of the literature review focuses on the Chinese literature, as there is growing attention on place branding in developing areas such as China (Wai, 2006). Most research cites English literature only, which results in a gap between international research and China's domestic research. By combining English and Chinese literature, this research proposes a new perspective on place branding as public policy, as they incorporate the same characteristics. A new conceptual framework is constructed based on existing place branding models and public policy models to act as a theoretical foundation for the research.

2.1 Theoretical origins and development path of place banding

Originally coming from product branding, marketing, urban policy and tourism (Hankinson, 2010), place branding research is relatively new and still developing (Dinnie,

2011; Kavaratzis, Warnaby and Ashworth, 2015). However, the phenomenon itself has a long history (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010). Arshworth and Voogd (1994) present a settlers recruitment case from the 8th century that aims to attract customers, investors and residents.

Kavaratzis (2008) summarizes three phases of place branding, namely place promotion, marketing mix, and place branding according to neoteric research. The first stage includes fragmental promotion activities such as "smokestack chasing" (Bailey, 1989), agricultural colonisation, urban functional diversity, selling the industrial city (Ward, 1999) and selling the existing part of the city (Barke, 1999). The second stage is marketing mix, which includes target marketing (Bailey, 1989), advertising and marketing cities (Barke, 1999), and selling the post-industrial city (Ward, 1999). The last stage is place branding, which focuses on the communicative aspects of marketing (Kavaratzis, 2004). The contents and goals increase, from the first stage to the place branding stage. At the beginning, limited and simple activities and measures are adopted, such as subsidies to attract companies, promoting low operating costs, and differentiation of specific urban functions. These serve a goals including generating manufacturing jobs, attracting immigrants, and luring industry (Bailey, 1989; Ward, 1999; Kavaratzis 2008). These goals becomes diversified to, for example, attracting manufacturing and service jobs, attracting investment and tourists while being responsive to local residents, and urban regeneration (Bailey, 1989; Ward, 1999). More marketing and advertising methods along with physical infrastructure and public-private cooperation are applied as marketing means. The last stage, place branding, aims to create and manage the emotional and psychological associations with a place, which requires a broader range of marketing interventions (Kavaratzis, 2008).

In researching the theoretical origins, Hankinson (2010) proposes a clear place branding domain (Figure 2), to identify the relationship between city branding and several other relevant theories.

33

Domain origins	Domain deepening	Domain widening

Product branding
-Brand image
(Gardner and Levy, 1955; Boulding, 1956)
-Positioning
(Ries and Trout, 1972)

Brands as assets
-Brand endorsement
(Aaker and Keller, 1990)
-Brand extensions
(Whan Park et al., 1991)
-Brand equity (Keller, 1993)
-Brand architecture
(Aaker and Joachimstaler, 2000)
-Brand identity
(Kapferer, 1997)

Corporate branding
(Balmer, 1995; Ind, 1997)

Services branding
(de Chernatony and Siegel-horn, 2001)

Non-profit branding
(Hankinson, P., 2000)

Internal branding
(Ind, 2001)

Place branding
-Destination branding
(Morgan et al., 2004)
-Nation branding
(Dinnie, 2008)
-Regional branding
(Caldwell and Freire, 2004)
-City branding
(Kavaratzis, 2005)

Urban policy
-The urban image
(Pocock and Hudson, 1978; Burgess, 1982)
Tourism
Destination image
(Hunt, 1975; Pearce, 1977)

Place promotion
(Ward and Gold, 1994)

Destination branding
(Morgan and Pritchard, 1999)

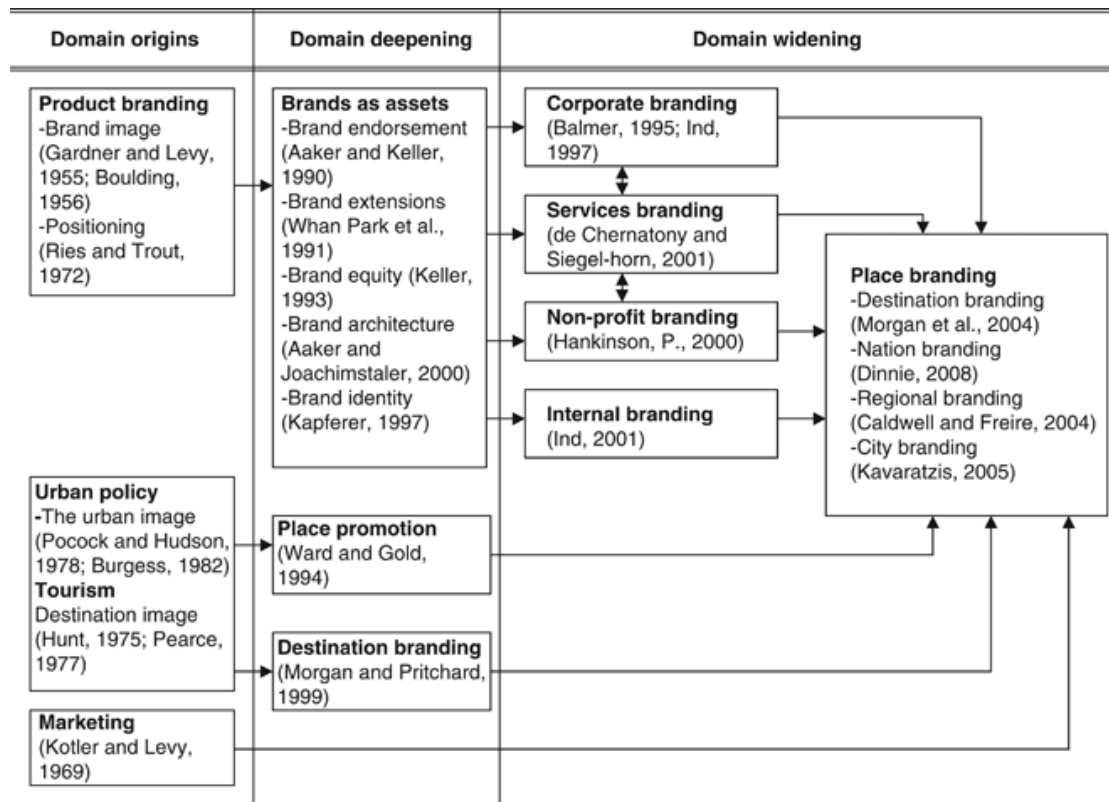**Marketing**
(Kotler and Levy, 1969)

Figure 2.   Development of the mainstream and place branding domains (Hankinson, 2010)

Hankinson (2010) categorizes three phases of place branding domains, origins, deepening, and widening, and it is clear that place branding originates from three theories, product branding, urban policy and tourism promotion, and marketing. It can be seen from the figure that place branding theory has its origins and development path in various related research areas. In the urban policy domain there is more focus on economic development than in the tourism domain, where places are merely considered destinations (Hankinson, 2010). In the marketing domain, marketing techniques and activities are applied to all types of location (Hankinson, 2010).

Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010) mention place of origin branding and culture or entertainment branding as supplements to the tourism domain and integrated domain. The use of a place's image, quality and even stereotype to brand a product is a common

strategy in place of origin branding, yet the practice itself does not directly constitute a place branding strategy (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010). Place of origin branding can be further reduced to region, cluster or industry branding and geographic agricultural product branding. It is hard to say whether these branding processes benefit the construction of a place brand, and therefore the mutual construction of place of origin brand and place brand needs further exploration. The application of culture and entertainment branding is, sometimes, similar to destination branding as the same elements, such as cultural & historical heritage, leisure & entertainment facilities, are applied (Björner, 2017). Place branding however, requires more involvement in place planning and the urbanization process (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010).

2.2 Definition of place branding

Based on different approaches to the place branding phenomenon, many scholars propose their own definitions of place marketing (early age) or branding.

Place marketing for Kotler (2002) is a marketing process in which place is considered a market-orientated company, and future development vision is considered to be the product to meet the need of the existing target market and attract a potential market. Kotler (2002) does not offer any specific definition of a place brand, but a parallel inference can be taken from his marketing theory that brand is "a product or service that adds dimensions that differentiate it in some way from other products or services designed to satisfy the same need" (Kotler and and Gnertner, 2002). This is similar to the American Marketing Association (AMA) definition of brand, "a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers"[20].   In this context, a marketer creates a brand when they create a new name, logo or symbol for

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[20] American Marketing Association Dictionary. Retrieved 2017-06-29. The Marketing Accountability Standards Board (MASB) endorses this definition as part of its ongoing Common Language in Marketing Project. Available at: https://www.ama.org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=B&dLetter=

a new product (Keller, 2003).

Anholt (2007) incorporates the idea that a brand is "a product or service or organization, considered in combination with its name, identity and reputation" and branding is the "process of designing, planning and communicating the name and the identity of (a product or service), in order to build or manage the reputation". Anholt (2007) himself, however, notes that a place cannot be branded in the way that a product, service or company is and even uses the word "brand", but his research has little to do with marketing or public relations (see *Competitive Identity* by Anholt, 2007).

According to Gold and Ward (1994), place promotion is defined as "the conscious use of publicity and marketing to communicate selective images of specific geographical localities or areas to a target audience". In this definition favourable images are selected and applied in the marketing process to target an audience, however this means ignoring or hiding the negative images of a place (Avraham and Ketter, 2008), which may impact the perception or brand experience. Short et al. (2000) offer a new place image definition, saying that "place promotion involves the re-evaluation and re-presentation of place to create and market a new image for localities to enhance their competitive position in attracting or retaining resources". This definition, similarly to Ashworth and Voogd (1990), emphasizes attracting resources.

Zenker and Braun (2012) define a place brand as a "network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design." This definition highlights the characteristics of the place brand, the complexity with which the concept is perceived by people (Kavaratzis, 2008), the multiple associated structures, and the combination of a variety of actions and objectives with multiple stakeholders (Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013; Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015).

Most recent research elaborates on the above definitions and offers further supplementary information. For example Jones and Kubacki (2014) define place branding as a process that combines the physical attributes of a place with intangible elements to influence the perception of the audience. There are also several scholars who draw parallels between corporate branding and city branding (Anholt, 2003, Kavaratzis, 2004), as it is widely accepted that the development of branding theory is relevant to place branding (Rainisto, 2003, Kavaratzis, 2008, Kavaratzis, 2005, Kavaratzis, 2010).

Some scholars note the lack of clarity in the definitions and concepts of place branding (Braun et al., 2013), since the definitions of product branding, corporate branding, destination branding and marketing are quite narrow to apply to the field of place branding (Kavaratzis, 2008; Hankinson, 2010; Zenker and Braun, 2012). There are a variety of concepts related to place branding, such as city marketing, place marketing, city branding, destination marketing, urban branding, destination branding, etc. Place branding, as a social phenomenon, like other social science terms, is hard to define as definitions can vary from case to case.

Along with these various perspectives and theoretical origins, it is widely recognized that there is a shift from the marketing domain to branding both in practice and academic research (Kavaratzis, 2007; Rainisto and Kotler, 2007; Berg and Björner, 2014). Despite this consensus, there is a critical argument about place marketing and place branding.

Some researchers believe city branding incorporates marketing activities including promoting and positioning the city (Kavaratzis, 2004; Kavaratzis, 2007; Berg and Björner, 2014), and it is connected to urban planning and the city governance process (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990; Kavaratzis, 2004; Lucarelli and Berg, 2011). Others, however, argue that city branding is only part of the city marketing process, as branding was originally considered a marketing activity (Rainisto, 2003; Avraham and Ketter,

2008) and brand is an umbrella term defined as a "name, term, sign symbol (or a combination of these) that identifies the maker or seller of a product" (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). The marketing approach can be seen as involving techniques or processes of selling, promoting and strategically positioning the city, including place marketing, destination marketing, promoting cities and urban marketing (Lucarelli and Berg, 2011). A branding approach, on the other hand, can be seen as providing a holistic combination of all the communicative aspects of marketing processes (Kavaratzis, 2004) and as a continuous process linking all marketing efforts with planning practice (Kavaratzis, 2008).

Different theoretical origins and research perspectives result in limited agreement on the place branding definition. Further exploration of the broader place branding concept is necessary for today's cross-disciplinary place branding research.

2.3 Rationale for place branding

Early theoretical research on place marketing/branding proposed a number of explanations for why a city would conduct marketing/branding activities.

Ashworth and Voogd (1994) describe three reasons for place marketing: 1) a change of economic or political climate which includes the non-industrialization of cities, change of produce organization and the diversity of city consumption; 2) a change of urban public planning with low efficiency; and 3) a change of intercity competition which includes image positioning, ranking and international competition in national planning. This comes from an urban planning perspective.

Kotler and Gertner (2002) identify the emergence of "places in trouble" as the root cause of place marketing. For the internal and external reasons shown in Figure 3, "a large and growing number of places — cities, regions, and entire nations — are on the sick list",

with various problems under various cultural and economic condition (Kotler and Gertner, 2002). This is similar to Avraham and Ketter's (2008) argument that places only tend to market themselves when they fall into crisis.
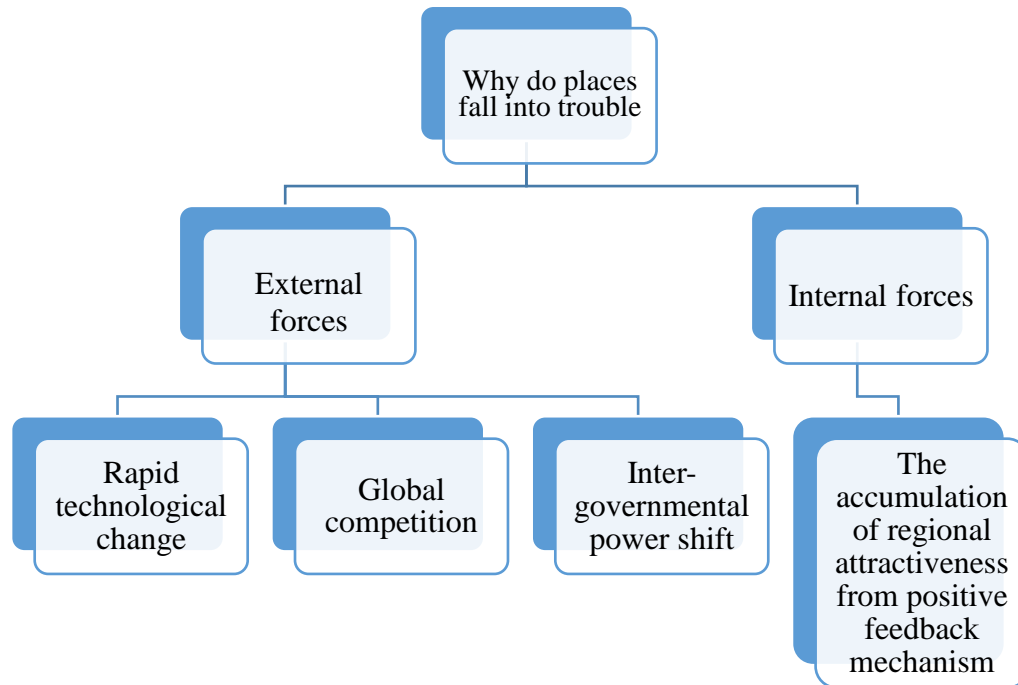

Figure 3. Places in trouble (generated by the author, adopted from Kotler and Gertner, 2002)

Berg and Braun (1999) analyse the rise of place marketing from a city dynamics and regional competition perspective using the three stages of European city development, the stage of urbanization, the proliferation of functional urban regions, and the information era (Hall and Hay, 1980, Van den Berg, 1987). The proliferation of urban areas leads to increased interaction among cities and stimulates urban regions to transform to a multiple spatial mode, and the development of information technology reinforces this trend, pushing cities to use place marketing competition (Berg and Braun, 1999).

Further similar rationales are given by researchers such as Jones and Kubacki (2014), who consider place branding a tool to solve social problems.

There is no unified opinion, since different cities conduct branding activities for different reasons, thus place branding, as Berg and Björner (2014) point out, should be studied based on its own premises. But one common thing can be concluded, which is that place branding/marketing aims to solve problem, both internationally and externally within place development. As Kavaratzis et al. (2015) summarize, a place conducts place branding to compete with other places, guide place development, provide a basis for stakeholder cooperation, solve practical and functional place-related problems, and maximise positive place experience (Kavaratzis et al., 2015).

2.4 Chinese literature on place branding

After the first publication by Kotler in 1993, researchers have made great efforts to clarify the nature and communication of place branding, by identifying the stakeholders, its cultural and political aspects, and the measurements of place branding, and by constructing place branding models. The literature about place branding covered above mainly focuses on western places, which results in dominance of the developed countries (Wei et al., 2006, Yulong and Hamnett, 2002). There is increasing research on Chinese place branding, yet it remains marginal from an international perspective (Wai, 2006), because of the language barrier. Therefore, this section critically reviews place branding literature in the Chinese language in order to reduce this gap, which is one of the contributions of this study.

Using the open database of the China Knowledge Network (CNKI), the author searched "city branding", "place branding", "place image" and "city image" as keywords, and used the number of references as an exclusion criterion to filter the papers. The search returned 440 papers, including 339 journal papers and 102 degree dissertations, which were cited more than 5 times. It can be seen that the research results for place branding are rich in China. Due to the large number of journal papers, this study reviews only the

literature on the basic characteristics, research approach and conceptualization.

2.4.1. *Overview of Chinese literature*

Firstly, research on place branding in China is still a small field. The total of 440 articles from 235 journals, and the number of publications in each journals are low. Place branding is still marginalized in Chinese social science research and does not form a concentrated research environment or atmosphere. However, it is worth noting that 20 papers were published in City Issues, accounting for 6%, and 16 were published in the Tourism Tribune, accounting for 5%. City Issues and the Tourism Tribune are the core journals of humanities and social sciences in China. There are a total of 36 academic papers published in the core journals. In a certain sense, the development of research in this field has been affirmed by major social science research in recent years.
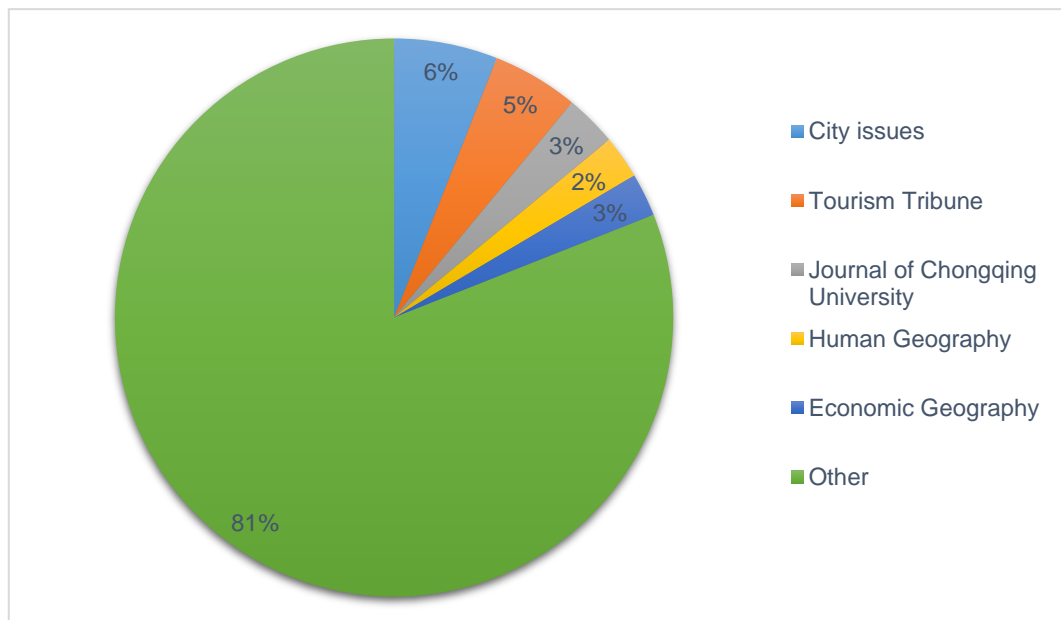

Figure 4. Distribution of journals

Secondly, the research horizon covers a wide range of topics, mainly based on communication and marketing. The 440 research papers are written by 364 writers

(counting only the first author). Given the background statistics of the writers, the perspectives on place brand research in China include communications, economics, architecture, urban planning, brand marketing, tourism, physical education, public management, cultural studies, environmental studies, geography, among more than 20 other disciplines. The number of authors from a communications background is the highest, 69, followed by regional economy, 43, urban planning, 38, and brand marketing, 35. It can be seen that Chinese place brand research covers a wide range, accurately reflecting the comprehensiveness and complexity of urban development (Kavaratzis et al., 2015). According to the topic statistics, 86 papers focus on brand communication, accounting for 20%, and 60 papers focus on place branding strategies, accounting for nearly 14%. This shows that place brand communication strategy research and place brand construction dominate the current research.
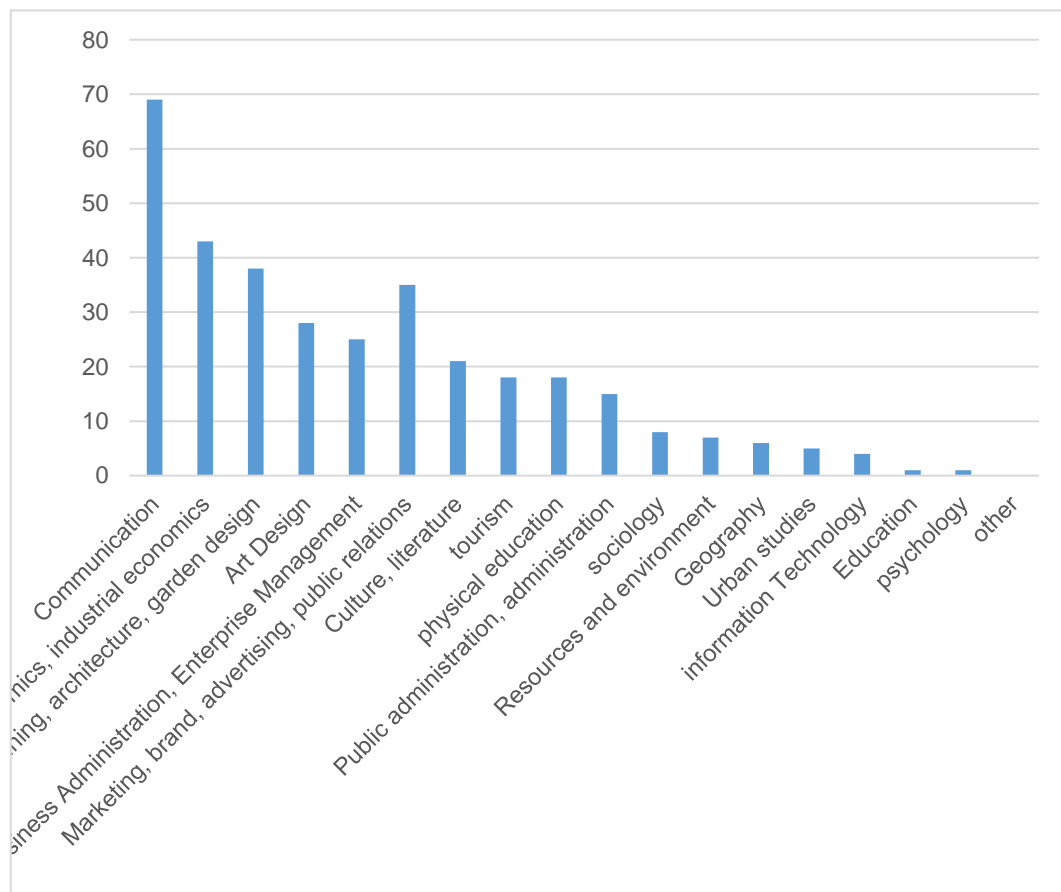
Figure 5.   Authors' backgrounds
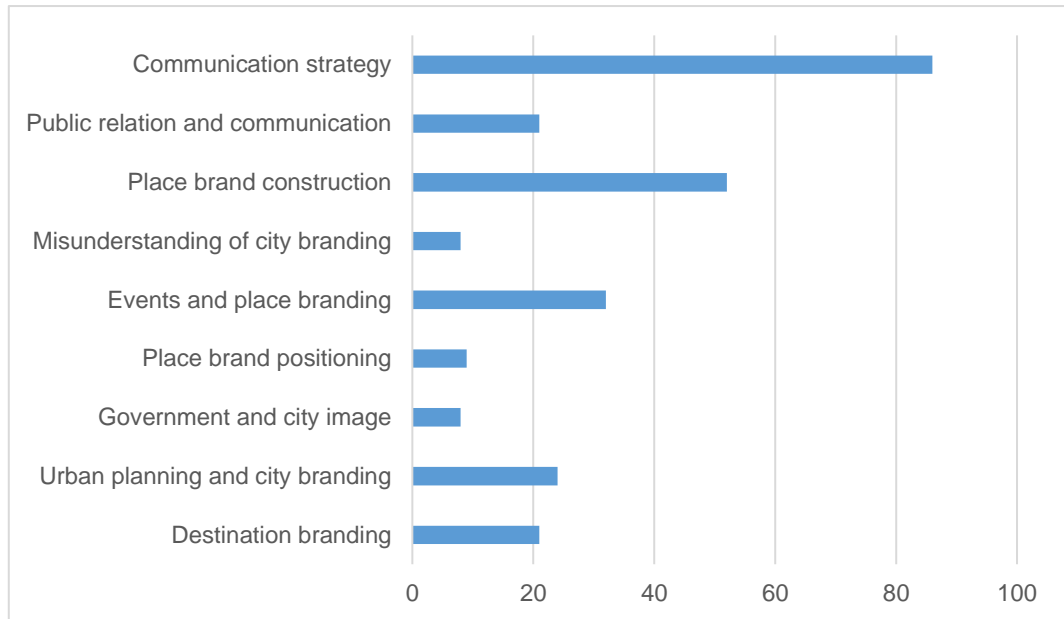
Figure 6.   Research topics

Thirdly, using the research method statistics, the author directly encoded the papers that explicitly state which research method was used; for the papers that do not explicitly mention the research method, the author follows the principle of recognisability. On this basis, of the 440 papers counted, 50 used questionnaires, and 42 used literature analysis methods, but more than 300 did not explicitly mention their research methods. The articles do not all have rigorous research norms or methodologies, and most contain the authors' personal perceptions with research methods seriously absent.
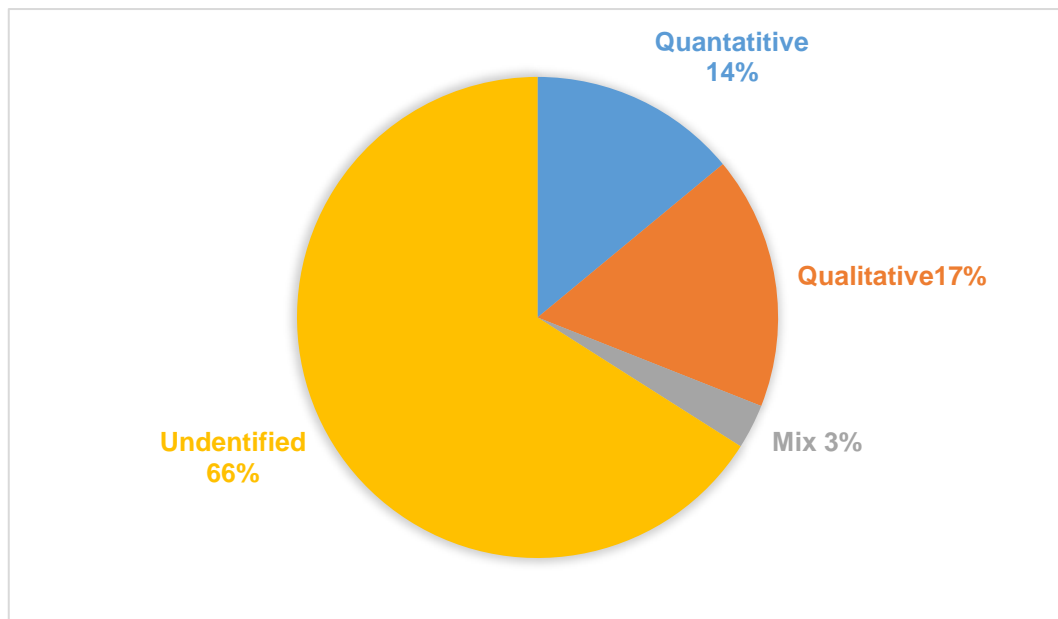
Figure 7.   Research approaches
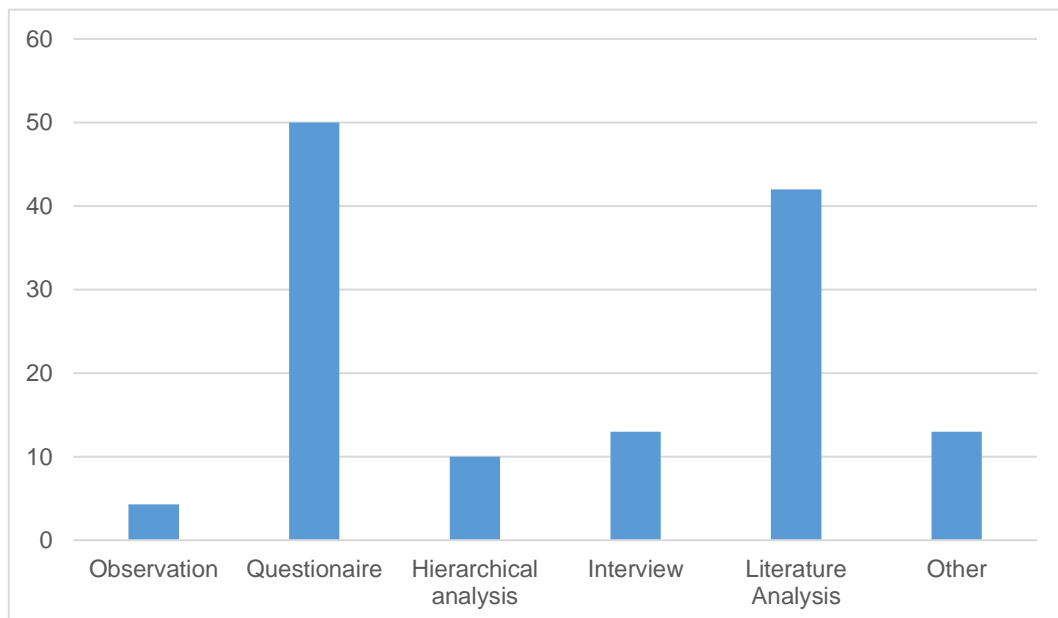
Figure 8.   Research methods

Fourthly, given the number of papers published, there are no clearly dominant researchers or opinion leaders in this field in China. Li Zongcheng of Xuzhou Normal University published the largest number of papers, a total of five. The main research topic of his papers is city image advertisement and city image communication. The paper *The Comprehensive Analysis of the Status Quo of City Image Advertisement* analyses the basic situation of three aspects of China's city image advertising campaign, advertiser,

media and advertising content. The advertisement positioning of the city image proposed in the paper *On Advertising Position of City Image* is using advertising to establish favourable psychological area locations such as the impression and evaluation position of the city image in the mind of the public, inside and outside the city. He believes that the positioning of city image advertisements needs to emphasize the principles of dominance, identity, context and comparativity. Liu Yanping of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Zhuang Delin of Hefei University of Technology both published four articles on the list. Liu Yanping is a scholar active in the field of city branding research in China in recent years. Liu and his team published the *Report on Chinese City Competitiveness* for 10 consecutive years, focusing on city brand marketing, based on the perspective of urban economic development. According to marketing theory, Zhuang Delin proposes urban marketing strategies such as urban marketing audit, urban target market segmentation and selection, transfer of urban customer value, urban branding management and urban marketing governance to provide an effective adjustment mechanism, and organizational guarantee for urban sustainable development (*City Marketing: Strategic Choice of Urbanization Road with Chinese Characteristics*). At the same time, he emphasizes the importance of customers and marketing entities in urban marketing (*City Image Segmentation Based on Customer Perspective*).
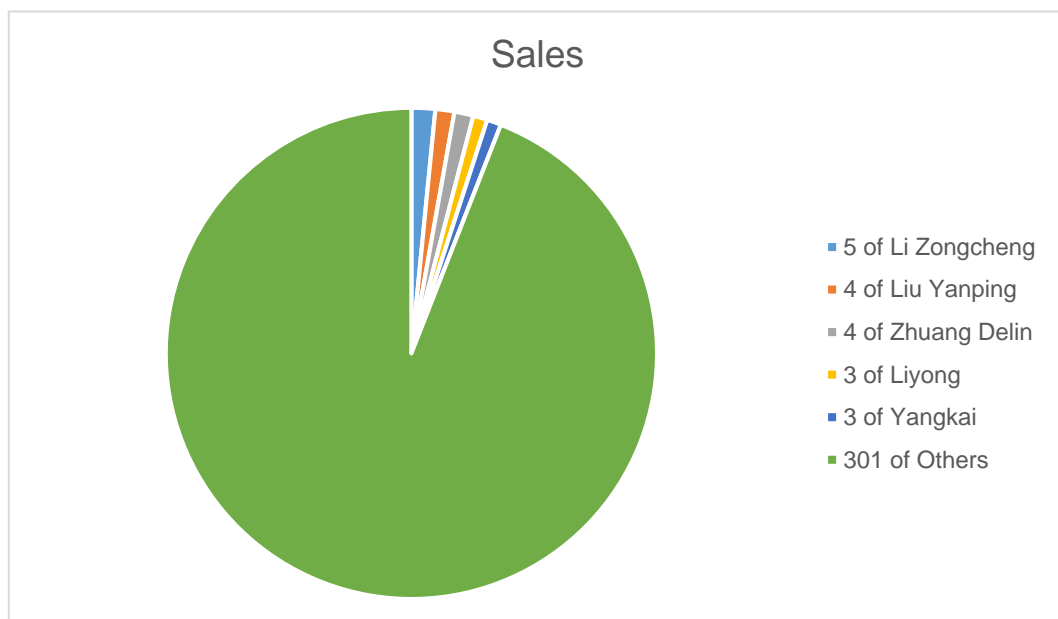

Figure 9.   Publications by author

Three phase of Chinese place branding research and theoretical development

Some scholars believe that China's place brand practice has a phased character. Wen (2005) proposes that city image communication can be divided into three eras based on changes in the media environment. In the 1.0 era, the image of the city is mainly based on art works, such as Lushan Love, Liu Sanjie, etc. The theme, location, lines and music unconsciously become a channel for the spread of the city or place image. In the 2.0 era, with the rapid development of the urban economy, increasing competition in the city, and rapid changes of the mass media, although there is no continuous and professional city image communication strategy, image communication develops from single publicity to a pluralistic communication. At present, with the advent of the Internet, the image of the city has begun to enter the 3.0 era. Tao (2013) points out that the development of place brand practice is closely related to the process of urbanization in China. After the 1990s, the concept of city image design was proposed in China. Compared to the discussion of city image in architectural planning and aesthetics in the 1980s, the scope of research was greatly expanded.

City/place branding, as a research field, is strongly dependent on practice, and has the same stage characteristics as its practical development. The annual distribution of the papers shows that in the mid-to-late 1990s, scholars began to expand their horizons to place image and place development. In 2002, the number of place branding papers exceeded 20, and since then, many papers have sprung up in the field. In 2006, a peak of more than 50 papers were published. After 2010, the number of papers published began to fluctuate.
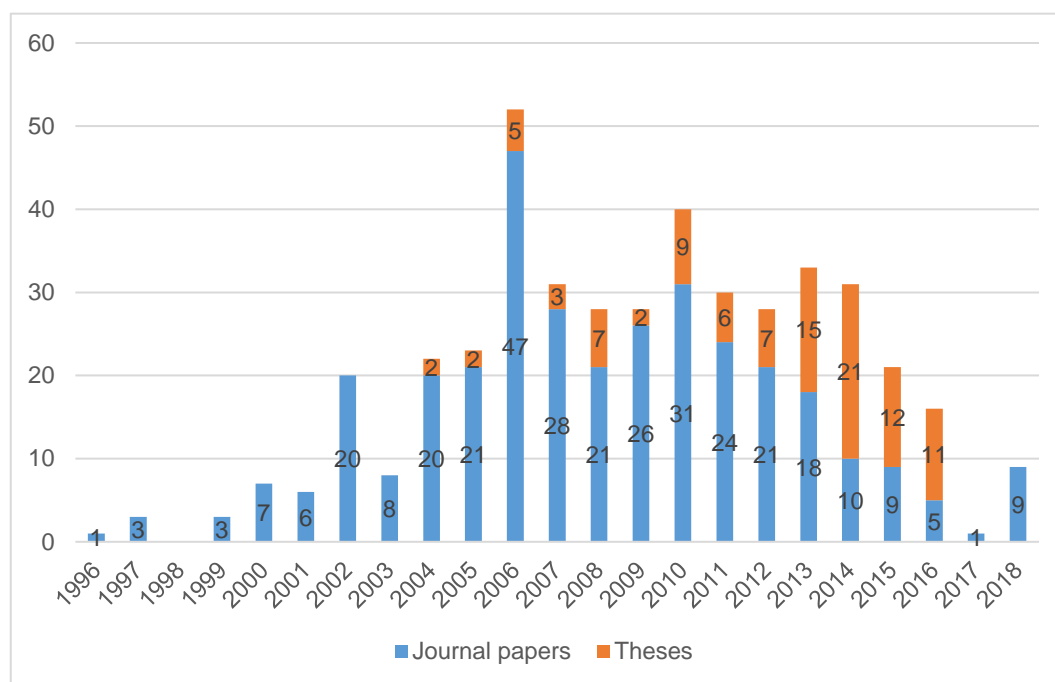
Figure 10.   Annual publications

Given the distribution of the journal papers, we divide China's place branding research into three stages: the first from the mid-late 1990s to 2001, the second from 2002 to 2009, and the third from 2010 to the present. By collating the literature, we summarize the research perspectives, themes and main features of the research methods across the three stages.

Stage	Number of papers	Research perspective	Research topic	Research method characteristics
1990s-2001	20	Administration, tourism, urban planning, and geography	1. The role of the government in the construction of city image 2. Urban tourism resources and urban image promotion	Most case studies are based on observations

			3. The application of CI strategy in urban image	
2002-2010	212	Communication, place economy, brand marketing, administration, tourism, urban planning, and sport	1. Concept analysis: from "urban image" to "urban brand", the authors explore the connotation and extension of urban brands, and analyse the differences between "urban image", "urban marketing" and "urban brand" 2. Shaping research: by classifying urban brands, the authors propose urban systems from various perspectives, and refine the influencing factors shaping urban brands 3. Event research: the authors explore the role of special events such as exhibitions, festivals, and sports activities in the urbanization process 4. Research into communication strategies: city image construction in urban image propaganda videos, literature and visual arts, image communication strategy in mass media, etc.	A large number of case studies are used, and questionnaire survey, interviews and other research methods are adopted.
2011-present	209	Communication, place economy, brand marketing, administration,	1. Research into urban brand effect 2. Construction of urban brand theory 3. Urban brand communication in the new media environment	Big data research is introduced

		tourism, urban planning, sport, sociology, psychology, and information technology			

Table 3. Phased characteristics of the research

Early scholars mostly incorporate city image construction into the administrative planning of local governments. Fan (1999) proposes that the city needs to build a city image from the perspective of resident spiritual civilization construction. Liu (1996) and Zhang (1999) suggest that local governments should learn from international place branding practice. In China, the government plays a very important and even dominant role in urban development. The study of Chinese place brands originates from administrative management and is an accurate reflection of this.

Subsequently, place brand research came to draw on classic brand theory, functionalizing and commercializing the city, and begins to explore topics such as city modelling, city positioning theory, and city communication strategies. Ma (2009) proposes the SIC model of city brand positioning (space positioning, industry positioning and category positioning). Zhang (2008) says that the elements of the city image tetrahedral model include resource image, spatial image, resident image and opportunity image. Each element has direct relevance, cross-cutting subjectivity and long-term relationships. Wang (2009) proposes two important elements of Xi'an city image construction based on the actual situation of Xi'an: historical and cultural markers and high-tech industries. Zhang et al. (2009) extract five main categories of city image positioning by using the grounded theory, and propose positioning Chongqing city as a Passion Capital.

In recent years, place brand research has focused on evaluation and measurement, combining city development and city residents' needs. Qi (2013) constructs an objective index system including the development of human settlement, tourism development, investment and comprehensive development. Gao (2012) cuts through the perspective of consumer behaviour, using structural equation method to analyse the city brand attachment mechanisms of stakeholders (residents, potential immigrants, tourists, and investors). Yang (2010) believes that the evaluation system needs to include periodic assessment and irregular assessment.

2.4.2. *Constructivism and pragmatism place branding research*

China's place branding research generally uses constructivism as the main research path. It is thought that a regional or urban brand can be shaped through in-depth interpretation and professional planning, and its facets can be recognized and perceived by the audience. Such an approach is mainly embodied in the elemental place brand definition and deconstructed place brand construction.

In the early days, researchers attempted to classify cities based on their political, economic, or cultural roles, as well as the city's personality. Peng (2001) divides cities into scientific and technological knowledge cities, economic cities, characteristic boutique cities, ecological cities, and cultural cities. Yin and Wei (2003) divide city brands into political, economic, transportation, cultural and tourism. Hu (2008) believes that cities can choose their own characteristics and brand building targets according to the brand types, such as the human-style city brand, tourism-type city brand, product or enterprise brand-type city brand, industrial city brand, and comprehensive city brand. The classification of cities lays the foundation for later place branding research.

In most studies, place brand is defined, mostly with direct reference to the definitions of scholars. For example, for place branding definition, Hankinson's (2004) *Relational*

Network Brands: towards a Conceptual Model of Place Brands summarizes four mainstream ideas about city branding from existing English literature: brand is a communication tool; brand is an entity of feeling or image; brand is a value adder; and brand is a relationship. The definitions given by Chinese researchers can mostly be divided into two types: the sum of cognition, that is, the place brand can be identified and evaluated; and the comprehensive image, that is, the place brand is the representation of the place or essential urban attributes. Unlike Hankinson's induction, the definitions of place brand in China (see Table 3) generally show that urban or place brands are composed of elements or factors, including the essential elements of the city (natural endowments, history, culture, etc.), functional elements (urban architecture, facilities, economy, level of development, etc.), and emotional elements (city values, spirit, reputation, recognizable symbols, etc.).

Cognitive sum		
Proposer	Definition	Source
Fang Li	A city name and tag contain the city's unique personality and audience utility. They refer to the overall impression and actual evaluation of various factors constituting the city in the eyes of the urban public. It is the external manifestation of the nature, function and civilization of the city, with identifiability, acceptability and difference.	*Research and Empirical Analysis of City Brand Elements* (2005)
Fan Chuanguo	City brand refers to the city name and tag that contain the city's personality and audience utility. It is the public's perception, association and recognition of the city's overall characteristics.	*Effective Means to Improve the Image of the City Brand* (2006)
Bai Changhong; Hao Shengyu	The true urban brand exists in the heart of the city's stakeholders. It is the experience and evaluation of the "urban consumer" of the city, and the overall impression and association that the city can bring to the urban consumer. It is widely recognized by the public and can reflect the unique personality of the city, and meet the utility of the urban audience. It is also the external	*City Brand from the Customer's Perspective* (2007)

	manifestation of the nature, function and civilization of the city.	
Li Chengxun	City brand is the most typical kind of meaning of a city's historical culture, geographical resources, economic technology and other factors, widely recognized by the public under the conditions of the commodity economy and market economy.	*A Preliminary Study On City Brand* (2003)
Ma Ruihua	A city brand is an exclusive category symbol that can achieve a long-term balance of interests with target customers and reduce the cost for the target customer to select the city. Simply put, a city brand is an exclusive reason for outside investors and consumers to choose the city.	*Research on City Brand and City Competitive Mechanism* (2007)
Integrated mirror		
Du Qinglong	The city brand refers to the use of various brand elements such as unique factor endowments, historical and cultural precipitation, and industrial advantages, by city managers to provide sustainable and reliable commitments to target audiences so as to improve audience response to the city's effectiveness, and enhance the city's accumulation efficiency, scale benefits and radiation effects.	*Theory Research and Empirical Analysis of Chinese City Brand* (2004)
Sun Lihui; Shi Xiaofei	The city brand is used by the city to determine its core value, and convert the historical tradition, regional culture, folk customs, citizen style, city logo, urban characteristics, economic pillars and other elements of the city into added value of both form and spirit, based on the functional orientation of the city.	*The Background And Theoretical Traceability Of City Brand In China* (2005)
You Chen; Qiu Zhenyu	All the representative resources and construction achievements that represent the city are city brands.	*Tourism City Brand Construction Based on Modern Marketing Concept* (2007)
Chen Jingxin; Yan Moqiu;	The city brand is the unity of urban style and personality, city image and strength. It condenses and embodies the city's functions, concepts, overall value orientation, and the radiation from the inside to the outside and the	*Strategic Thinking on Building Urban Brand* (2005)

Liu Wei	attraction from the outside to the inside.	
Li Haiying; Zhai Yunkai	The connotation of city brand refers to the features of the city, formed through systematic construction, able to condense the city's connotation, and differentiate it from other cities. It is a combination of facilitates such as urban architecture, roads, greening and spiritual heart like the quality, consciousness and lifestyle of the citizens.	*On Urban Branding* (2004)
Sun Xiangming; Xu Jiao	City brand is a special identification symbol habitually generated in the development of the city. It is a concentrated expression of the unique resources of the city and explains the unique competitive advantages of the city.	*Analysis of Urban Brand Identification* (2005)

Table 4. List of the definitions of two types of place brand

Chinese researchers conduct urban positioning based on the division of urban types, or the extraction and influencing factors which form the place branding. The main logic is to deconstruct urban or place brands. Based on the actual situation of the city, the researchers attempt to structure and model the place branding.

In terms of specific brand positioning, the researchers support differentiated place brand positioning. Zheng (2011) proposes a city marketing strategy based on the overall positioning of Five Chongqing and the geographical environment and industrial advantages of Chongqing. Wu (2009) believes that the orientation of city culture has a great impact on the shaping of city image. The orientation of urban culture should be based on the material, spiritual and behavioural culture of the city. Ma (2009) believes that the ultimate goal of brand positioning is to enable the city to obtain a brand premium, and as a guide he proposes a scientific process of city brand positioning. Li (2003) gives the five principles of city brand positioning as, identity, reputation, orientation, specificity (characteristics) and authenticity, and proposes a theoretical tower-shaped framework for city brand positioning.

In addition to the positioning research of large cities, city brand positioning of small and medium-sized cities is also a subject of research for scholars. Zhang (2011), based on the development of small and medium-sized cities in the Three Gorges Reservoir area combined with national, provincial and municipal preferential policies, proposes a brand development strategy for small and medium-sized urban agglomerations with opportunities for eco-city construction. Qian (2013) repositions Liuzhou's city brands as City of Rare Stone and Happy Clown City. These two positionings are quite unique in domestic city branding, but the creation of Happy Clown City has not achieved the expected results, and no specific reason is given.

The positioning of a place or a city brand, on the one hand, should be based on the brand's attributes. On the other hand, it should based on the preferences of the target audience, that is, extracting the influence factor from the audience perception. In most research this is called place brand influential factors. Yu (2007) and Fang (2005) both believe that the factors of place or city brand formation include politics, the economy, humanity and location. Zhang and Chen (2008) construct a tetrahedral model of city image, which includes elements of resources, spatial image, population image and opportunity image. Zhang (2009) divides the factors affecting the formation of city brand into two aspects, subject and object. The subject factors include the economic environment of the city, the science and educational environment, the political and legal environment, urban planning and the natural environment. The object factors are the audience including the internal stakeholders, and external viewers.

In terms of place branding processes and management, there are many current models. Ma (2009) proposes the SIC model for city brand positioning, (space positioning, industry positioning and category positioning). According to the arrangement of these three positioning, Ma (2009) proposed three types of positioning, unrealistic, undesirable and desirable. Cities of all levels can be effectively positioned according to

the actual situation of their own space, industry and category. Qian and Li (2010) construct the city brand success factor model (ISE) by combing the successful factors of city branding. The ISE model (index, support, execution) is divided into three levels from the inside out: the brand index (based on the Anholt City Brand Index), the support layer (collaborative organization, cultural atmosphere, talent quality and management system) and the executive layer (brand recognition, brand structure, brand positioning, brand communication and brand audit). The ISE model contains comprehensive and specific elements, but the logical relationship is not specified. Therefore, in practical applications, it can be better used as a city brand evaluation model. The specific brand management process needs to be discussed in depth. Guo (2011) constructs a competitive component model for marketing small and medium-sized cities, which specifically includes marketing ideas based on marketing concepts, urban strategic planning, integrated marketing capabilities and marketing execution and control. The main body of city marketing is divided into public level and private level. This division is conducive to distinguishing the power and responsibility of city marketing and a clear division of labour.

Another obvious feature is that China's place branding has a clear pragmatic tendency. Place branding research is mostly strategic and effect research, and depends largely on experience. The research results reflect the hope to be translated into practice, and ultimately serve urban development decision-making. The research orientation of pragmatism is reflected in many papers.

Firstly, there are many case studies (see Figure 11). Of the 440 articles, 200 are single-city case studies and 7 are studies of multiple cities. Overall, the case studies account for 47% of papers. Among other papers, there are many chapters mentioning individual city brand cases. The research objects cover 63 domestic cities, including metropolises such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing and so on, along with small and medium-sized cities such as Xiong'an New District, Heihe, Xingtai and

others. Of these, research on Chongqing city brand is the most common, 17 papers, followed by Guangzhou and Nanjing, with 12 each.
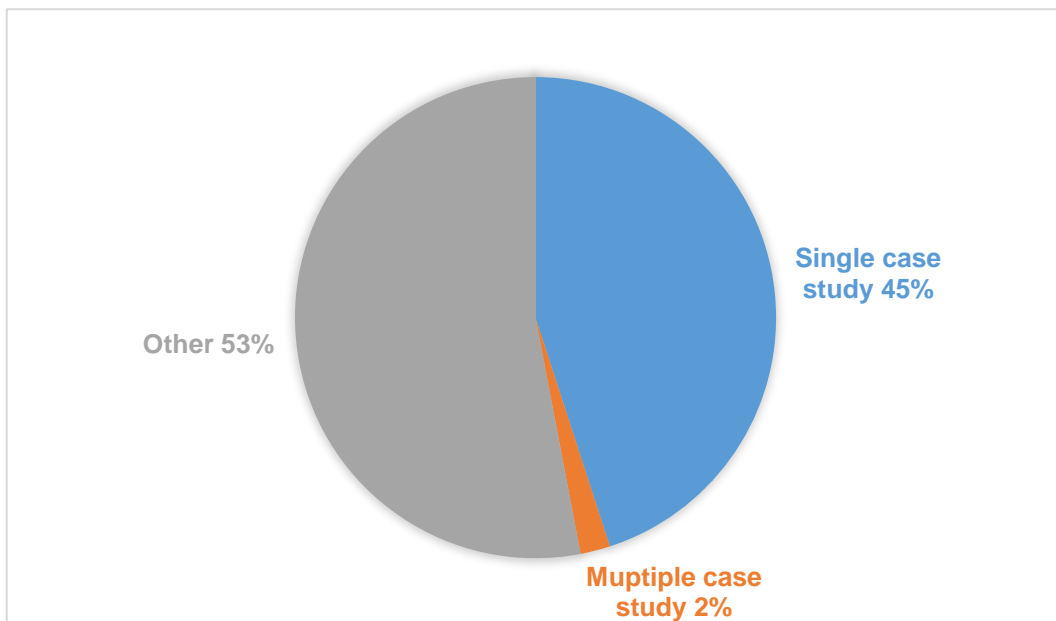
Figure 11.   Distribution of case study papers

Secondly, the papers emphasize changes in the media environment. As the media environment continues to change, the boundaries become blurred, media convergence intensifies, and place branding research begins to emphasize these changes. The research on place branding in the new media environment appears in the third stage of development of place branding research in China. Young researchers (mostly master and doctorate dissertations) pay greater attention to this topic.

Thirdly, many papers are dedicated to effectiveness research. Yang (2007) establishes an evaluation model based on the principle of popularity, credibility, competitiveness and development potential, using the principle of tomographic analysis and fuzzy evaluation. Qi's (2013) objective index system of city achievements (mentioned above), covering 21 cities above the prefecture level in Guangdong province combined with questionnaires for empirical analysis, explores the relationship between city development achievements and city brand. The results of Qi's study show that city

development achievements, especially those that are closely related to people's lives and work, generally have a significant positive impact on the perception of city brand. At the same time, the public perception of a city brand is a relatively complex process influenced by many factors, and therefore the relationship between the achievements of certain cities and city brand is not clear. Yang (2004) uses the analytic hierarchy process to propose the city image evaluation index system with 13 sub-factors and 30 environmental, economic and social factors. Zhang (2010) uses a questionnaire survey method to investigate the residents of Jinan, and uses factor analysis to extract 26 aspects of education, culture, technology, shopping, diet, medical care, housing, transportation, recreation, and government services, to construct the city brand evaluation indicator system.

Fourthly, there is a lack of theoretical research. At present, the main theories are semiotics, stakeholders, CI theory, and brand equity theory. However, the current purpose of the reference theory is still to serve strategic research, and the actual research has not risen to a theoretical level.

2.4.3. *A lack of conceptualization and a research paradigm*

Having reviewed the existing Chinese language place branding literature, this section clarifies the basic situation of place branding research in China and summarizes the three main stages and characteristics of the existing literature. A lack of clear conceptualization of place branding or a normative research paradigm is seen.

As can be seen from Table 2, definitions of place brand appear in the 2002-2010 phase, but the early and recent research is based primarily on the existing western definitions of Kotler, Zenker and Braun, and Kavaratzis. At this stage, a large number of case studies have led to the emergence of definitions based on the characteristics of China. There is a significant practice-oriented characteristic of Chinese place branding research. Place branding research based on certain cases are common, however, strategic

conclusions are pervasive. Therefore, such research focuses more on actual place branding practice and its improvement measures rather than the investigation of theories. This may be because, firstly, the place branding concept and practice were introduced in the early 2000s in China. The amount of literature has risen from 2000, as an increasing number of places have participated in marketing and branding activities, which draws the wider attention of researchers. The significance increases in literature after 2008 and 2012 are related to two mega events, the 2008 Olympic Games and the 2012 World Expo. Even with attention paid to place branding, researchers require time to generate theories based within China's context. The second reason is that there is clear research project classification in China, with the funding of projects categorized into horizontal[21] and vertical[22] projects. There is no particular national project and few provincial or ministerial projects on place branding. Some city councils and government departments recognize the importance of place branding and have established their own research to address certain problems, but these projects are not official vertical projects. Therefore, the research outcomes are normally practical guidance. This leads to the obviously regional characteristics of the conclusions. As a result, the definitions are quite one-sided and narrow. As the definitions are based on specific cases, there is no clear conceptualization process, and it is difficult to form a consensus from among these definitions.

In the research after 2010, scholars elaborate on and improve their research designs, investigation methods and sample selection, but, on the whole, normative research methods are still missing. Of the 440 studies retrieved, 50 explicitly mention using the

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[21] A horizontal project is one in which the funding company and the researcher are equal, such as tasks entrusted by government functional departments at all levels, enterprises, institutions, and social organizations (excluding those recognized as national-level projects, provincial-level projects, and school-level topics), including scientific research, technical research, decision-making, design planning, software development, etc. Horizontal projects are an important way for schools to expand external ties, serve local economic construction, and to improve scientific research and visibility.

[22] A vertical project is one undertaken by a scientific research administrative institution designated by the government at all levels, such as the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Provincial Department of Science and Technology, the Municipal Science and Technology Bureau, the National Social Science Association, the Provincial Social Science Association, the Municipal Social Science Association, or the Ministry of Education.

questionnaire method, and most did not have a clear research method. Although case studies are used extensively, there is no clear research design or data collection process, so the conclusions tend to be self-talking and unconvincing. Another obvious problem is the lack of theoretical research on place branding. In as many as 42 of the papers analysed, place branding related issues are fragmented. Generally, they present an analysis of part of place branding or a factual summary, lacking any theoretical construction or systematic framework. The core issues of place branding such as the rationale, nature or constructing subjects of place branding, or the brand management or its mechanism of action are rarely mentioned. Therefore, it is impossible to summarize a sound theoretical system.

Several problems are identified by the review of the Chinese place branding literature. Firstly, it is necessary to determine the practicality of western place branding theory in China and its flexibility in other social, cultural and economic contexts. Secondly, even though many papers mention the importance of the government in place branding, the relationship between the government and other stakeholders and the role of the government in place brand management need to be clarified. The conceptualization of Chinese place branding, including clarifying the definition, constructing a place branding model (or at least examining western models' suitability in China), and summarizing the brand management structure and process, all need further in-depth research.

2.5 Public goods and place branding

From Chinese, and some western, place branding theories and practices, place brand has always been (or partially been) built by the government. However, the existing research does not conceptually clarify the connotations of such place branding formed by the government. There is no discussion based on place brand producers alongside the direct reference to traditional marketing/branding, tourism, and urban policy theory.

This study believes that place brand has a clear quasi-public goods attribute, so the discussion of place branding is mainly based on the perspective of public goods supply.

The ground-breaking paper *The Pure Theory of Public Expenditure*, published by the American economist Samuelson in 1954, which is well-known in the economics field, is supplemented and developed by several economists with the same research inclination (Samuelson, 1954). In this paper, Samuelson divides goods into personal and public goods, defining public goods as goods that are non-competitive, that is, where any consumption will not lead to a reduction in the consumption of others. Samuelson discusses the effective supply of public goods, giving the "Samuelson condition" for the optimal supply level of public goods, widely quoted by the economics community, where the sum of the marginal rate of substitution of all consumers equals the marginal rate of conversion. According to Samuelson (1954) the Pareto optimal state of supply and consumption of public goods cannot be achieved by spontaneous decision-making or a decentralized market price mechanism. Rational individuals are likely to conceal their true preferences for public goods and create "free riders", because of their personal interest. This is a metaphor for the non-exclusiveness of public goods and public goods that need to be provided by the government through public expenditure. Musgrave's Public Finance in Theory and Practice (1989) explicitly introduces non-exclusiveness into the definition of public goods, making it a basic defining standard for public goods along with non-competitiveness (Musgrave et al., 1989).

Samuelson's analysis involves only two poles for all goods. Purely public goods, as a definition object has a high degree of abstraction and the concept range is very narrow. Such a definition not only covers a large number of goods in real life from purely public goods to purely private goods, but it is difficult to explain the other government functions, except corrective market failures, advocated by neoclassical economics.

Some scholars have revised, supplemented and expanded the expression of goods classification of Samuelson. Musgrave (1989) uses the "three-point method" for goods, and divides non-private goods, as opposed to private goods, into public goods and beneficial goods, thereby enriching the categories of goods that need to be provided by the government. Public goods are non-competitive, non-exclusive goods that consumers can choose to consume according to their own preferences. Beneficial goods are items that can force personal consumption without considering (or even violating) personal preference. By forcing individuals to consume these items, the government achieves satisfaction with what it believes to meet social needs and achieve overall welfare goals. Ver Eecke (1998) subdivides the beneficial goods into three categories: goods necessary to achieve minimum government functions, such as national defence, public security, etc.; goods necessary to maintain a freely competitive market and improve economic efficiency, such as the legal system, public infrastructure, etc.; and goods necessary improve people's ability to use rationality, such as various forms of education (Ver Eecke, 1998).

Another approach is to expand and continue the classification of goods according to Samuelson's objective interpretation, in accordance with competitive and non-competitive, exclusive and non-exclusive criteria, to relax conditions and extend the concept of public goods. Atkinson and Stiglitz (2015) use the highway as an example to illustrate the middle part of the Samuelson bipolar model, revealing more general non-pure quasi-public goods. Based on similar logic, Brown and Jackson (1985) classify goods into purely personal goods, blend goods, and pure public goods. Savas (2000) divide goods into personal goods, chargeable goods, shared resources, and collective goods in a vertical and horizontal two-dimensional coordinate format according to whether they are competitive or exclusive. After various amendments and expansions, researchers have adapted the overly simple and pure classification of Samuelson's public goods, to form a lineage between public goods and private goods, and the popular quasi-public goods and mixed goods concept.

According to Samuelson's definition, public goods must have non-rivalry and non-excludability. Another important attribute that should not be overlooked is the organization of public goods. Buchanan (1966) argues that the goods or services provided by any group or association through collective organizations for any reason should be defined as public goods. To affirm this view, Buchanan (1968) further emphasizes that any goods or services can be considered purely public as long as they are supplied through an organization with extreme public characteristics. In other words, public goods do not belong to everyone, but belong to a particular organization or group. For example, the scope of national defence as a public good is not unlimited (Buchanan, 2001).

2.5.1. *Quasi-public goods attributes of place brand*

Based on the above discussion of public goods, this study considers that a place brand has a clear quasi-public goods attribute. A quasi-public good refers to an item that has only one of two attributes, non-competitive or non-exclusive, including public resources and toll items (natural monopoly items). First, the use and consumption of place brand is non-competitive. The use of the item by a consumer does not affect other consumers. For example, the attractive investment effect of a good city brand directly benefits all areas of the city, and the investment attracted by any single area does not affect the profitability of other areas within the city. Second, place brand has the benefit of exclusivity. For example, a good place brand can promote industrial investment and tourism development, but it does not benefit other local industries (such as agriculture), depending on the scope of the benefit of the place brand. Therefore, place brand can be considered a quasi-public good, and place branding is the process of providing a place brand as a quasi-public good.

In addition, there is academic debate on the supply of public goods. Samuelson (1954) believes that public goods provided by private individuals cannot satisfy the pursuit of efficiency because of the non-competitive and non-exclusive nature of public goods, so

they can only be provided by the government. The neoliberal school believes that even though there is a failure in the market, it should be adjusted through the market's own mechanism. The government should not interfere with market operations. Therefore, public goods should also be provided by the market. There are three main types of supply modes for public goods, government supply, market supply, and diversified supply. In contrast to Samuelson's government supply model, Atkinson and Stiglitz (1992) argue that the cause of market failure is government intervention, and the market's infinite problems can only rely on the power of the market itself to complete the adjustment. Moreover, the government itself has insurmountable defects. Therefore, the government is not likely to provide a cost-effective solution for the supply of public goods. The multi-supply model refers to the joint supply of public goods to society by at least two of the government, the market, the third sector or the public (Zhou and Liang, 2006). This theoretical view emerged in the context of the failure of both government supply and market supply. Many scholars have studied the multi-supply model, which is the mainstream view of the current supply of public goods. Therefore, if the place brand is considered a quasi-public good, then the discussion of its supply model helps researchers clarify the stakeholders and their involvements in place branding.

2.5.2. *Government process*

Viewing place brand as a quasi-public good, the place branding process can be considered a public goods supply process. It is also a government decision making process in which the government needs to decide what and how to supply. In politics research, government process research aims to find the answer to the government decision making process. Before reviewing the government process literature, there are some terms that require explanation.

Generally, "the government" refers to the sum of national mechanisms. It also refers to the sum of the state institutions and the ruling party(ies) (Bealey and Johnson, 1999). In

some religious countries, government also includes the religious leaders' group.

Government process, as a research field of politics, is the process of government decision making (Hu, 1998). Bentley firstly proposes the term "process of government" in 1908. As the founder of behaviourism theory, Bentley's ground-breaking use of "group"(the later "interest group"), as the basis of his research and the basic concept of theoretical expression, separates his research from traditional politics research, in which the concepts of "nation" and "government" are the main subject. He believes the original materials of a government are the behaviours of individuals and groups (Bentley, 1967). Through the government process, these behaviours are presented in administration, legislation and judicature. Since all social activities and government processes are the interactions of various groups, there are three components of the government process: "group" refers to a party that holds a certain opinion or attitude; "interest" refers to the target of the group; "pressure" refers to the group's strength or energy (Bentley, 1967). Bentley's theory and research forms the basic logic of government process research, that is group, interest, and pressure interact with each other (as pointed by Lasswell et al., 1950). There are other theories, such as pluralism, totalitarianism and authoritarianism.

However, the above theory is based on its western political background and thus cannot be directly applied to China's context, as the government process of China has five particularities (Zhu, 2002).

First, the major problem of Chinese government process is not the conflict between interest groups but regulating the relations between the Communist Party of China and the government. The separation of the Party and the government has functioned since the 1980s, mainly because, as a socialist political country, China has, for a long time, adopted a "Party ruling replaces government ruling" management system. Therefore, many national political and economical affairs tangle with the relationship between the Party and the government. It is obviously impossible to separate the Party and the

government entirely, therefore, straightening out the relationship between the Party and the government is a key point of Chinese government process research.

Second, as a unitary country, China has a large population with vast lands, so the regional differences are huge. Centralization of power, on one hand, is the prerequisite of a unitary country, but on the other, it raises problems in central and local relations. The local government obeys the central government strategy, policy and decision-making, while the local government constrains central government decisions. What's more, strategy and policy from the central government are unified, but the local governments each have different situations.

Third, Chinese government processes are made more complex by the administrative system. For example, at city level, there are municipalities (province level), municipalities with independent planning statues (deputy province level), provincial capital cities, prefecture cities (with districts), and county-level cities (with no districts).

Fourth, there is a special link in the Chinese government process - the working unit. Western government processes can be seen as "individual-interest group-party-government" processes. In China, most Party and government functions are realized through the working units where citizens work and live. This includes administrative establishment, staffing of government-affiliated institutions, public welfare, state-owned enterprises and private enterprises. According to Party regulations, any unit that has more than three party members must establish a Party organization. Therefore, citizens in China are mostly related to local government through the unit or other residents' autonomous organizations such as street, neighbourhood or village committees, and the Party and the government implement their impact through these countless autonomous residents' organizations. Chinese government processes are more like "individual-Communist Party of China-government-unit" processes.

Fifth, since the opening-up and reform of the 1980s, the Chinese government has experienced significant change, especially in recent years when the central government launched comprehensively deepening reform. The simplification of administrative institutions is a target of this reform. Government function adjustment, administrative region change, new regional management and city-controlled counties and cities have raised new problems for the Chinese government process.

The above characteristics of the Chinese government process require understanding in the context of China.

There have been several perspectives on politics research in China in recent years. The first is theoretical derivation based on the mature theoretical model. This school proposes models and conclusions based on game theory (Shirk, 1993, Nathan, 2017) and formal theory (Gehlbach, 2013). The other is based on empirical study. Data sources include official documents (Cao and Li, 2010) and data mining (King et al., 2013). The first type of research studies the politics of the past, while the second emphasizes non-institutionalized expressions of interest. Fragmented authoritarianism is another school of Chinese government process research. Lieberthal and Oksenberg (1990) argue that the early rational model and power model cannot explain bureaucratic decision-making, and thus examine fragmented authoritarianism in bureaucratic decision-making in order to build a new understanding of Chinese government process (Lieberthal and Oksenberg, 1990). There are three basic characteristics of Chinese policy making:

(1) The fragmental structure of power: Any bureaucracy lacks the ability to independently propose and adopt a new policy, so the new policy must be generated in consultation and cooperation among bureaucrats.

(2) Consensus establishment: The negotiation process is a process of constant bargaining between horizontal and vertical bureaucracy, with the aim of establishing a basic consensus on a certain policy.

(3) Diffuse policy process: As the establishment of consensus is dependent on bargaining rather than the constraints of the legal system or power, each step of the execution of the policy need to repeat this process. Thus, even if the policy is adopted and identified at the highest level of decision-making, specific policy implementation still requires constant coordination and facilitation at the central (or higher) level.

Proponents of this theory keenly observe the changes in China's political system including rational decision-making and central and local government relations. There are two main inferences from fragmented authoritarianism theory: there are coordination difficulties between government departments with fragmented power and power decentralization, which tend to pursue their own interests rather than strictly following central government policy; and actors within the political system have the ability to influence policy making, assuming that social forces have no effect on the decision-making process. Thus, a large number of potential policy stakeholders are excluded from the analysis. Oksenberg (2001) reviews this theory and proposes that the theories of the past do not predict the changes that have taken place in modern China; the rise of pro-market forces and political system adjustments that make it impossible to use a single concept to describe today's political system. Recent research supports his opinion that many factors, including government departments, related state-owned and private companies, residents (Yu, 2004), NGOs and the media (Mertha, 2009), influence policy making.

Criticizing fragmented authoritarianism, Wang and Fan (2013) propose a new framework to explain Chinese government processes. Based on a case study of healthcare

reform, Wang and Fan categorize decision-making agencies into internal and external, and a six level "policy circle" (Figure 12). The internal circles represent the highest level policy makers, inter-ministerial coordinators and functional ministries, which are groups of decision-making discourse. The external circles refer to policy research groups, organized interest groups and ordinary people, who are participants in the policy process, but do not have the ability to directly influence policy making. The internal and external circles connect and interact with each other through two specific mechanisms, referred to as "open the door" and "running-in".
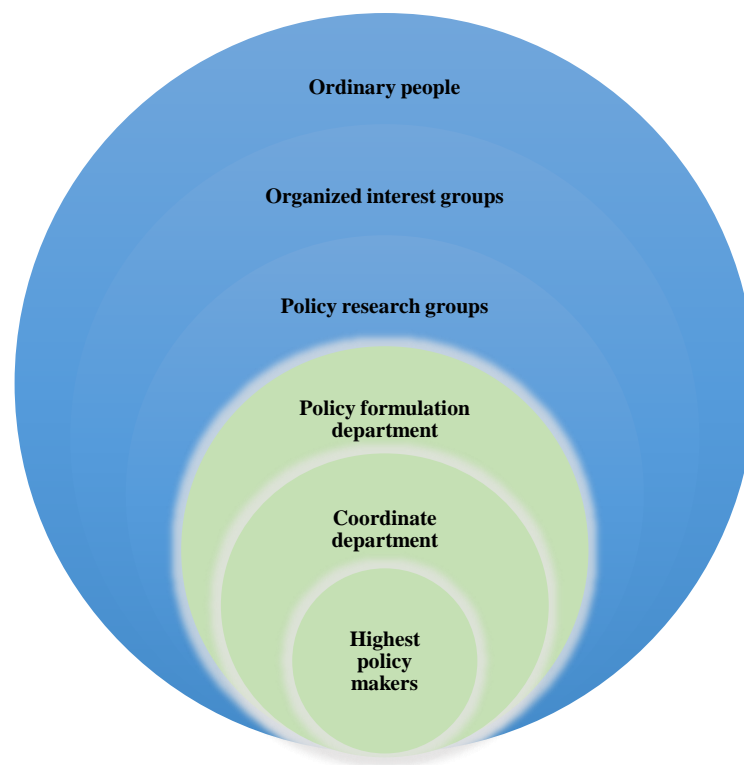
Figure 12.   Chinese government process (Wang and Fan, 2013)

"Open the door" refers to communication and interaction between policy makers and the external audience (Wang and Fan, 2013). Due to the political system, Chinese residents or stakeholders outside the system have various ways to connect to government policy makers. Under the "open the door" mechanism, external audiences do not interact with policy makers through representative democracy or purely political participation. The process is completed in three ways, referred to as "break in", "invite

in" and "go out", each applying to specific social groups. Interest related groups normally "break in" to the policy making process. "Invite in" refers to experts, normally policy researchers, being consulted. "Go out" means the policy makers visit grassroots organisations or listen to public opinion. Compared to the others, "go out" is considered the most efficient way to acquire first hand information and experience. For ordinary people, this is the most reliable way that policy makers can perceive their opinion. From this viewpoint, the structure of China's government process is similar to that of the United States (Kong, 2009).

Unlike "open the door", "running-in" only happens within internal circles. There are three ways of "running-in", lower level negotiation, upper level coordination, and top level agreement. Specifically, policy is generally proposed by lower level government, and thus the bureaucracy attached to various functional areas needs to communicate so they can reach a partial consensus. For areas where there is no consensus, the higher level of government can establish a certain coordination team to balance this non-consensus. Since conflicts between policy-making subjects are generated by differences in judgment, or cognition, rather than conflicts of interest or value, these contradictions can be solved through negotiation and coordination.

Wang and Fan (2013) believe that this mechanism offers social groups an opportunity to take part in policy making. The most important part of this mechanism is that "running-in" leads to negotiation and coordination in making policy, which is different from the western checks and balances system. Since all the bureaucracies are affiliated to the State Council, they do not have the power to reject each other, and are obliged to narrow the differences between them and resolve conflict through coordination.

Wang and Fan's (2013) theory presents a recent situation in China's government process and responds to some problems in fragmented authoritarian theory. There are, however, some problems to be resolved. The first is how the policy maker knows the

interests and demands of a huge number of ordinary people, and how public opinion influences the formation of policy. The second is that the theory assumes no conflicts of interest among bureaucracies, which allows a "running-in" mechanism to work efficiently. Shirk (1993) proposes that there are definite interest preferences among bureaucracies. To come to a final consensus, the highest level decision maker has to balance the interests of bureaucracies and avoid certain departments suffering too much loss. However, Wang and Fan's research does not respond to Shirk's research. What's more, Wang and Fan's research only explains the decision making process without mentioning the execution, feedback mechanisms or policy adjustment. As the government process is dynamic, in practice, the execution processes, including funding, personnel, communication and feedback mechanisms, are integrated parts of it.

2.5.3. *Government at play*

Under different political systems, place branding can be divided into place branding activities under national policy supervision, place branding as public policy, and place branding with government participation and investment (Dastgerdi and De Luca, 2019). Because cities and regions require significant investment to improve their infrastructure to create or enhance their brand, the role of governments as supporters and investors of strategic projects is crucial (Dastgerdi and De Luca, 2019). The government as a supporter and investor for mega-events and place making projects is mainly because the government tends to associate itself with a positive image and cite its symbol (Trubina, 2019; Levine and Kim, 2019).

Place branding is considered as kind of public sector planning (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2018). Trends in image-based governance processes and the impact of more general "intermediation" and information overload are the reasons why places first turned to branding. Place branding is generally considered to be a government tool (Rizzi et al.,

2018) or part of place governance (Redaealli, 2018). Scholars focus on the role of place branding in government management (Eshuis and Klijn, 2012).

The core stakeholder group of place branding is the local government (Parkerson and Saunders, 2005), and there is a close relationship between place branding and urban governance (Anholt, 2008), which is why place branding is becoming a popular place governance practice. (Eshuis et al., 2014).

Considering the various motivations for improving the image of the place and creating the place brand, the support of decision-makers and government participation in the place brand project are crucial to domestic decision making (Ye and Björner, 2018). The government participates in and influences place branding through the development of local development plans. These plans help to generate a series of discourses that meet the requirements of place development, echoing the primary and secondary communication of a place brand (Kavaratzis, 2004). Around such a plan, many places have carefully planned various promotion activities (both international and domestic) to attract wide media attention, increase local pride and establish more conscious urban brand events (Shin, 2014; Zhang and Zhao , 2009).

The concept of place branding as a form of governance has a strong state-dominated character and a multi-level governance structure, which is particularly evident in the case of China (Ye and Björner, 2018). In the case of national and provincial guidelines, local governments will follow the instructions to develop and implement place brand strategies and practices. Place brands maximize the growth potential of Chinese cities through proactive economic, social, and institutional policies, which are set by senior government officials.

Following the reasons of Anholt (2006),place branding in the Chinese context is a form of urban governance, rather than a separate communication or promotion method (Ye and

Björner, 2018). Eshuis et al. (2014) reviewed the research on place branding and place governance and concluded that all views on place governance emphasize the process of governance and limitations of government power rather than the structure of government. This supports the shifting trend of modern government-"from organizational and uni-centric power to multi-centered processes of interaction between actors through which outcomes are achieved" (Eshuis et al., 2014). The existing research paid more attention to the role of place branding in place governance but lacked the discussion of the role of government in place branding and ignored the discussion of government structure. Above ideas provides a new path of this research, which is based on the existing rich government process research, examining the government structure, so as to reveal the role of government in place branding more deeply.

2.6 A theoretical framework

2.6.1. *Place brand management*

Stakeholders in place branding

Stakeholder involvement in place branding is addressed in almost every piece of place branding research, despite the different research domains.

Rainisto (2003) suggests "public-private partnership and leadership" in his successful place marketing model, which requires brand leaders to integrate all levels of stakeholders in the branding process. Hankinson (2004) asserts that place branding, in essence, is a collection of stakeholder relationships. Therefore, the co-ordination of stakeholders in place branding is a core part of the place brand (Hankinson, 2004). For Baker (2007), maximizing stakeholder support and cooperation are key to maintaining a coherent place brand. Stakeholder engagement, together with physical infrastructure,

regenerates a brand within the brand infrastructure relationship and leadership (Hanna and Rowley, 2011). Some researchers even build their theories based on stakeholder relationships, such as Aitken and Campelo (2011). The four Rs (rights, roles, responsibilities, relationships) model of place branding is based on reinforcing the four elements, suggesting that these elements are the means to establishing or changing a brand.

Most mainstream research highlights the importance of stakeholders in place branding, but identifying specific stakeholders is complex. Compared to product or corporate branding, places fulfil multiple functions rather than merely being sold or marketed (Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015). What's more, the wide range of participants, including individual people, groups and organizations, and the different ways they are involved in place branding, are often characterised by complexity (Berg and Braun, 1999; Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015).

Kotler (2002) identifies three target stakeholder groups in place marketing activity, visitors, residents, and business and industry. Later research elaborates on this idea and offers further exploration. The roles of residents, for example, are identified as the presenters of the place brand through their characteristics and behaviours, communicators of information, ambassadors, and instrumental in the political legitimization of place branding (Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015). Businesses are divided into two categories, direct indirect involvement groups (Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015). Businesses with direct involvement such as hotels, tourism companies and restaurants, benefit directly from place branding, while the indirect group (geographical product companies, etc.) are less active in place branding. The objectives and engagement of the indirect group are not always clear, and need to be considered on a case-by-case basis (Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015).

Another two major stakeholders in place branding are identified: educational

organizations and academic researchers; and government departments and organizations. Educational investment, such as research, is a means to increase human capital in the long-term (Ward et al., 1999). These investments are the fundamental components of post-industrial construction and a creative economy (Ward et al., 1999; Florida, 2002). It is an intensive for companies to choose a location with highly developed educational establishments (Charles, 2003). One missing point about education is what role academics play in place branding. Should place branding researchers be considered normal practitioners, or separate stakeholders, since they are involved in place branding in various ways? Government departments and organizations are the planners (Kotler, 2002) responsible for the place product they deliver (Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015). In some cases, place branding is implemented, or at least highly controlled, by the government (Berg and Björner, 2014). Under this circumstance, the government becomes the main subject of place branding with discretion in many aspects. Since places are political entities, place branding cannot be separated from politics, or from the government administrative process (Jorgensen, 2015).

Place brand management

One common agreement on place brand management is that place brands are influenced by promotional and marketing activities that aim to attract place users (Kotler, 2002; Kavaratzis, Warnaby and Ashworth, 2015). This means place branding is a strategic marketing or branding process to appeal to target groups. There are two major strategies in this process, place promotional strategy and place image strategy (Kotler, 2002).

Place brand management can be considered a place image or reputation management process. This view holds that the ultimate goal of place branding is to create a favourable place image or reputation or improve a negative image or reputation (Kavaratzis et al., 2015). A positive image or reputation affects the behaviour of the target audience and can achieve place branding purposes. Logically, it is a wider view to consider place brand management as a promotional or marketing activity (Kavaratzis,

2014) since the ultimate aim is to influence the behaviour of the target audience. This type of place branding research is often associated with concepts such as country of origin, brand origin, product-national image, or the broader product-regional image, which means a regionally based image associated with a product by the purchaser or seller (Papadopoulos, 1993, Clifton, 2014).

Another point of view is to consider place brand management as community building or place identity construction for residents. In this view, the main purpose of local brands is to identify common ideas and directions for the future of the community and generate shared local stories and visions (Insch and Florek, 2010).

These differences in understanding place brand management come mainly from the conceptualization of place branding. Therefore, discussion of the above arguments requires a deep understanding of place branding theory (Kavaratzis et al., 2015). Despite these different understandings, one fundamental question in place brand management is how to build long-term commitment among various stakeholders, especially those who provide key place products or services (Hankinson, 2010). A central issue that impacts long-term cooperation among stakeholders is how to accommodate their conflicting needs, priorities and expectations (Hankinson, 2007). To address this issue, more effective organizational structures and the role of coordinating parties need to be identified (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008). Unfortunately, there is no research fully exploring the above issue.

2.6.2. *Three major aspects of place branding*

Places use place branding as a competition method for "inward investment, tourism revenues and residents at various spatial scales" (Kotler, 2002). There is a clear tendency to focus on exogenous investment and tourism development in place branding (Kavaratzis, 2012) and the importance of residents as an integrated part of place branding has been noted (Braun et al., 2013, Klijn et al., 2012, Aitken and Campelo, 2011). Dinnie (2011) divides the aims of place branding into attracting new residents,

tourism, and inward investment. In both practice and theoretical research, tourists, businesses and residents are the main target audiences of place branding. Adapting the work of Anholt (2006), Dinnie (2011) and Temporal (2000), the value of building a positive brand for a place can be subdivided into: 1) attracting inbound investment; 2) attracting inbound tourism; 3) increasing the credibility and confidence of investors; 4) increasing political influence internally (nationally) and externally (multinational); 5) encouraging better and more productive global partnerships with other cities, public or private research and university institutions, and private sector organizations; 6) establishing a place of origin effect for products or services; and 7) bolstering civic pride, local harmony, confidence, and resolve.

Tourism branding

The inspiration for the definition of destination branding comes from marketing, because the concept of branding can be successfully extended to tangible and intangible factors (Aaker, 2009, Clifton and Maughan, 2000, Hart and Murphy, 1998, Ward et al., 1999). Tourism destination brand definition reveals that tourists regard destinations as a whole products, and perceive destination characteristics through emotional and cognitive processes (Boo, 2006). Therefore, branding is crucial in the decision-making process of destination selection, and the brand becomes a key part of destination marketing (Morgan et al., 2002). In particular, Pride et al. (2002) point out that destination branding is the most advantageous marketing weapon for contemporary destination marketers, because branding increases productivity, differentiation and competitiveness.

Ooi (2004) proposes four functions of destination branding: forming the public perception of the tourist destination; packaging the destination by its aesthetic; making the tourism destinations stand out in the global market; and forming a tourism

experience. Gnoth (2002) divides the role of a destination brand into functional, symbolic and experiential categories. Pride et al. (2002) believe that brands have individuality that enhances product effectiveness, satisfaction and quality, so that all successful destination brands have social, emotional and identity value. In terms of experience features, a destination brand can guide the interests of tourists and shape the tourism experience. A destination brand can lead destination products by both image and attraction (Ooi, 2007). Studies show that tourists have different understandings of their destinations, so branding is a process that enriches their travel experience (McIntosh and Prentice, 1999, Moscardo, 1996, Prentice and Andersen, 2003, Waller and Lea, 1999). The preconceived notions and impressions formed before a visit not only become the basis for the tourists' perceptions of the destination, but also lay the foundation for the reinforcement of the tourism product consumption experience during their visit (Shafranskaya and Potapov, 2014). In summary, the tourism brand helps tourists form a brand experience with a consistent and valuable perception of the destination's identity and brand identity.

There is also academic controversy about the classification of tourists. Kotler (2002) divides visitors into business and non-business visitors. Business visitors are those who come to a place for a business meeting or convention, along with visiting the tourism sites and shopping. Non-business visitors are tourists and travellers visiting family or friends. Even though Dinnie (2011) does not offer a specific definition of tourists in his research, tourists are attracted to places through the tourist gaze. That is to say, visitors to a place look at the particular features of the place, such as "a famous cathedral, beautiful landscape or another attraction" (Dinnie, 2011). However, visitors or tourists, as a targeted group in place branding practice, are specific and complex. They can be divided into business and leisure time visitors (Hankinson, 2005) as well as professional visitors such as archaeologists or architects.

Business attraction

Attracting business, industry and economic investment constitutes another major part of

place branding (Kotler, 2002). Whether it is heavy industry or clean industry (assembly, hi-tech, service companies, etc.), the most direct benefit for a place is that new businesses and industries provide jobs for residents. Places create or maintain their business attractions through the best mix of the following strategies: retain current business; devise plans and services to help existing business expand; create an easy atmosphere for entrepreneurs to start new businesses; and aggressively attract outside companies to reallocate (Kotler, 2002).

Investments benefit a place by creating jobs, expanding the tax base, helping manage budgets and credit ratings, and funding education, infrastructure and services (Dinnie, 2002). A place brand is a decision-making criterion for determining investment-related information (Dinnie, 2002). Dinnie (2002) and Clark (2007) maintain that an attractive place brand for investment must include three tiers: economic factors including innovation, creativity, investment, human capital, and connectedness (real and virtual transportation and communication); socio-political factors including economic diversity, quality of life, decision-making, and governance; and infrastructural factors including quality of place (for example, quality and availability of education), the range, quality and affordability of housing, parks, green spaces, safety and walk-ability.

Kotler (2002) says that a good place brand increases the local export market, to both other localities within the domestic market and the international market. This assertion is similar to the idea that a place brand helps formulate the place of origin effect, since, as Kotler clarifies, "cities, regions and nations can project an image that helps their manufacturers' ability to sell goods elsewhere" (Kotler, 2002). In summary, the function of a good place brand is not only forming investment attraction but also increasing local business competitiveness.

Resident recognition

Residents have always been considered an important element in place branding. Kotler (2002) divides them into professionals, skilled workers, wealthy individuals, investors,

entrepreneurs and unskilled workers. Apart from the economic advantages of urban concentration, gathering in a place such as a city offers residents "social and emotional benefits, including opportunities to share information, form close social bonds, and engage in a range of activities matching their interests" (Dinnie, 2011). Merrilees et al. (2009) states that that the most important community attributes influencing residents' city brand attitudes are social bonding, comparison to nature, cultural activities and shopping.

The importance of residents in place branding is emphasized, as they live and breathe the city's brand identity. Their attitudes and attachment to the city where they live, work and play can influence the perceptions of tourists and visitors through their recommendations and complaints (Dinnie, 2011). Zenker's (2011) definition of place brand shows that brand perception can be vary for different target groups, since the information possessed by the target audiences are different and they have different demands from a place. Braun et al. (2013), focusing on internal residents, clarifies three roles of residents in place branding: a component of the place brand, ambassadors for the place as citizens; and having the political power to participate in political decisions. Even though residents can be separated into an internal (current residents) and an external group (potential residents), current research focuses on internal residents rather than external. Despite the segmentation of residents, the fundamental benefit of place branding is simple and clear, resident satisfaction (Dinnie, 2011, Braun et al., 2013, Kavaratzis, 2012). Place branding needs to "consider the motives, expectations and needs of current and prospective residents and ensure their needs are being met" (Dinnie, 2002). Therefore, place branding essentially establishes resident recognition.

2.6.3. *Theoretical framework of the study*

Following the discussion of the literature review, a theoretical framework is proposed.
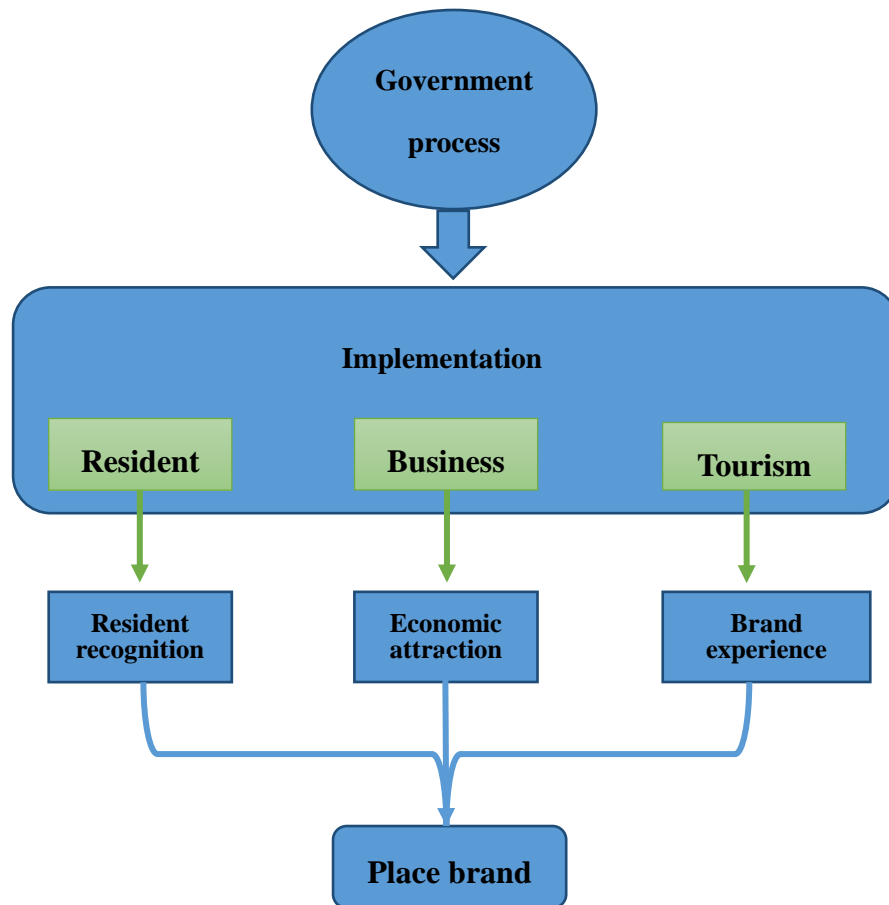
Figure 13.   The theoretical framework of the study

The implementation of place branding projects or plans needs to be clarified. The marketing strategies of Kotler's strategic place marketing model are image marketing, attraction, infrastructure, and people. Specifically, infrastructure directly related to place development and people (who live in a place) is considered an image communication method, which works similarly to word of mouth. In his city image communication model, Kavaratzis (2005) constructs three levels of communication of a city brand: primary communication which consists of city behaviour, infrastructure projects, organizational and administrative structure and landscape strategies; secondary communication which refers to formal and intentional communication such as advertising, public relations, graphic design, logos, etc.; and tertiary communication which is world of mouth. Rehan (2014) proposes a more detailed branding strategy

model, summarized in six categories, media generated image (logos, slogans and websites), signature architecture, urban projects, city life (events and cultural activities), city form (public spaces, parks, landmarks, libraries, museums and modern streets), and historical buildings.

Hanna and Rowley (2011) combine former research and divide infrastructure into tangible and intangible parts. The tangible part includes infrastructure strategies and landscape strategies, which generate functional attributes, and the intangible part includes symbolic traits such as culture and services, which generate experiential attributes. Verbal and visual identity (place name, logo, colour palette, photographs, etc.) in place branding communication, are categorized as brand articulation (Hanna and Rowley, 2011).

The theoretical framework (Figure13) illustrates the structure of the relevant theories that support the study. It is based on the discussion of the literature, current mainstream research and theory, as well as the arguments introduced which explain why the research problems under study exist (Abend, 2008, Swanson and Chermack, 2013). The fundamental function of this framework is to offer the researcher a clear, logical basic structure of place branding research and guide the field research systematically, instead of creating a dogmatic model. Therefore, the author offers an extensive discussion in order to build a comprehensive model.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

There is no method but to be very intelligent.

Thomas Stearns Eliot

3.1 Objectives and research questions

Following the literature review chapter, the research gap in current place branding research, especially Chinese place branding research, which is the motivation for this study, has to be clarified in order to understand Chinese place branding. The literature review shows a lack of clarity of place branding concepts. Even though many researchers have made an attempt to understand Chinese place branding based on western theories, domestic researchers have come to a consensus that Chinese place branding is managed and controlled to a large extent by the government. Therefore, it is important to find out how the government understands place branding. Meanwhile, the branding process, stakeholder involvements, and the interactions between stakeholders need to be clarified. The specific aim of this study is to have an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of Chinese place branding based on existing research, enriching place branding theory and Chinese practice. The research questions of this study are:

Why is place branding important?

How does the government understand place branding?

How is place branding managed in China?

In order to answer these research questions intuitively and comprehensively, guide the field research and construct the study logically, several research objectives are defined:

- To critically review place branding literature to clarify the basic theoretical issues.
- To describe the components of place branding and the elements used in Chinese place branding, to find how these elements are applied in place branding.
- To clarify the process of place branding in China, the role of government departments and other stakeholders, revealing the nature of place branding.
- To describe and analyse three chosen districts separately focusing on tourism, commerce and resident identity.
- To integrate the findings from the field research into the existing theoretical framework to build a new Chinese place branding framework.
- To reveal the similarities and differences between Chinese and western place branding practice.

3.2 A case study based on interpretivism philosophy

The guiding philosophy of this study is interpretivism. The ontology of interpretivism is that the real world is the product of human interpretation, behaviours and conditions, that is, the truth of the real world is constructed by human subjectivity rather than being objective or unique (Myers, 2019). The social world forms an orderly and meaningful order through the experience and interpretation of actors. Meaningful actions are subject to rules. Social reality has local characteristics and a time dimension, and is the common, if artificial, construction of the participating parties, here and now (Collins, 2018). Interpretivism's epistemology advocates the perception of the complex world being achieved by studying the experiences and perspectives of the people living in the world. Researchers should go deep into real life to understand and reconstruct its concepts and meanings, through scientific means and language (Macionis and Gerber,

2011). Interpretivism holds that the purpose of research is to clarify the meaningful order of the social world and explore the mechanism of its occurrence and persistence. People's understanding of phenomena can only be partial. Understanding is always an interpretative understanding, and is the construction of the researcher of the researched.

The research shares the assumptions and characteristics of interpretivism summarized by Pizam et al. (1999): a) the research phenomenon is socially constructed; b) the goal of the research is to understand rather than predict; c) the desired information is people's thought and actions, what kind of problems they are confronted with, and how they deal with them; and d) the researcher interacts and participates in researching the subject.

Firstly, despite the various theoretical origins in tourism, marketing, service/product branding, public administration, and advertising, place branding is a social activity built on people's actions and ideas. Place branding is not a natural phenomenon from which human interests can be eliminated, as in positivism research. Secondly, the aims of this research are to explore and understand the phenomenon rather than to make predictions, that is this research is inductive, which is also a characteristic of interpretivism (Carson et al., 2001). Thirdly, the study aims to find out how the government understands place branding, and such an understanding is mainly based on feedback from government personnel, therefore, the main information this study contains is the opinion of the government's place branding managers. Lastly, and most importantly, the researcher's participation in the study does not only include the choice of methods and cases, but also the selection, analysis and presentation of the data. The entire study is based on the researcher's preferences and perceptions of the research subject.

According to the research objectives, this study starts from the observation and review of existing literature and facts. The theory is proposed at the end of the study. Nevertheless, this study does not neglect the importance of theory in formulating the research questions

and objectives. On the contrary, existing theory guides this study and lays the foundation for the research questions (Saunders, 2011).

The most appropriate research method for this investigation is a case study strategy. Case studies analyse specific issues within the boundaries of a specific environment, situation or organization (Dudovskiy, 2016).

According to Yin (2003) there are three conditions that determine the research strategy: the type of research question posed; the extent to which the investigator has control of the behavioural events; and the focus on contemporary or historical events. Yin (2003) argues that the case study approach is relevant when "a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control" (Yin, 2003). The most important research question is a "how" question, and we see city branding activities as contemporary events. As Yin (2003) explains, "case studies are the appropriate strategy to follow when examining contemporary events, when the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated, that is when the researcher has little or no control over the set of events studied". What's more, a case study approach is the most appropriate method for this research since it is useful when a research phenomenon is complex or must be studied within its natural context (Bonoma, 1985).

Various research methods, according to Yin (2003) (Table 3), can be used to carry out exploratory research (questions based on "what"). But questions of "how" or "why" are more appropriate to an interpretative (or causal) inquiry, which is more likely to be experimental, historical, or case-based. If the phenomenon is currently happening and there is little control, the case study method can be used.

Strategy	Type of research questions	Requires control over behavioural events?	Focus on contemporary events?
Experiment	How, why	yes	yes

Survey	Who, what, where, how much, how many	no	yes
Archival analysis	Who, what, where, how much, how many	no	yes/no
History	How, why	no	yes
Case study	How, why	no	no

Table 5. The applicability of strategies (Yin, 2017)

Yin (2003) distinguishes case studies into three types, exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. However, Yin does not give an accurate definition of these three types. From the point of view of this study, case study contains the components of interpretation. Case study, as a research method, is not just a report reflecting the state of the research subjects, but should include the logic behind the phenomenon in order to form a theory (Yin, 2011). Therefore, the case study should undoubtedly contain the components of the explanation. In this sense, there is no absolute descriptive case study. In fact, no research is purely descriptive. It should reveal the more-or-less certain nature of the phenomenon, or its cause or effect, which both fall within the scope of interpretation. At the same time, this study is also exploratory. Only empirical research emphasizes a clear assumption before the research, chooses the sampling method, and finally confirms or falsifies the hypothesis. In case studies with a small sample size, it is difficult to confirm a hypothesis. In the context of social science statistical methods, it is difficult to falsify hypotheses with a small number of cases, and some of the methods of a case study, such as interviews, are hard to repeat. Therefore, from a research question, objective, and process standpoint, this study not only includes the theoretical and practical exploration process, but also a description of Chinese place branding, and the essential interpretation of this phenomenon.

The main purpose of case study is to construct theory, which is one of the research objectives of this research. Both Yin and Eisenhardt point out that the essence of case study is to create constructs, propositions and theories (Yin, 2011, Eisenhardt, 1989). Theoretically constructed case studies are often the most interesting studies (Bartunek et al., 2006) and are valued by high-level international journals (Gephart Jr, 2004). Tsui (2006) believes that researchers can build a Chinese management theory by exploring and understanding important phenomena related to China, through case study.

3.3 Defining the analysing unit and case selection

'Place', in the Cambridge Dictionary, is defined as an area, town, building, etc. Yin (2003) proposes a method to define the unit of case study analysis, based on existing literature. In place branding studies, various forms of place are included: countries, large urban agglomerations or areas containing cities, cities, towns, and even streets. In this study, the researcher's main considerations are based on two criteria: the selected place should not be too small, containing at least the three common elements of place branding, tourism, business and resident identity; nor should it be too large for the researcher to be able complete the field research on time. Based on these criteria, the study selects the city as the research unit, and there are a large number of cities in China that could potentially be used as the case study.

It is always difficult to put cities into categories. Van Winden (2008) categorizes cities as world stars, national stars, metropoles in transition, and the rest. World stars (big cities such as Shanghai or Hongkong) or national stars (leading cities in their national context such as Beijing) are excluded from the research since these cities usually have strong brands and sometime even a stronger image than a nation. Small cities in the rest category including tourism destinations (for example Lijiang) are also excluded because in these cities tourism dominates city branding. Metropoles in transition is the most interesting category as these cities usually pursue economic specialization (in developed countries) or experience urbanization (in developing countries) (Van Winden, 2008). These cities

actively stimulate the service sector and other knowledge-intensive economic activities to strengthen the local economy, and therefore have a strong demand for city branding. According to the research question, information such as the city branding policy and city branding activity report (from the government) of the selected case city should be well documented and easy to access. Chongqing is chosen as the case study city for this research, firstly because it fits the size criteria and secondly because "the city of Shenzhen symbolised China in the 1980s and Pudong (the new part of Shanghai) symbolised it in the 1990s, many people now see Chongqing […] as the embodiment of China in the first decade of the twenty-first century" (Leonard, 2012).

3.4 Research design

3.4.1. *Case design*

Because the selected case city, Chongqing, is large and there are too many research subjects to be considered, this study splits the overall case study into three aspects, commerce, tourism, and resident identity. It can be seen as a multiple case study. Multiple case studies follow the principle of replication rather than statistical sampling. The basic principle is that each case is carefully selected, and the selected cases can produce the same result (literal replication) or, for predictable reasons, different results (Yin, 2003). The overall situation of Chongqing is split. Since the context of the case is basically the same, splitting the overall case allows the researcher to have a different focus, the case's identity can be observed, and the difference can be guaranteed. This division into a multiple case study not only provides more evidence and results, but also enables the researcher to examine the specific issues of place branding more deeply and accurately (Yin, 2017).

According to Yin (2003), multiple case study begins with an individual case report, within-case analysis, then cross-case analysis based on the interpretation of each

particular case. Through systematic comparison, the similarities and differences between cases and their influence on the research results are revealed, then the theoretical development is promoted (Ridder, 2017). The specific steps are considering each case as independent to conduct a comprehensive analysis and extract concise information that best reflects the research problems, prepare for the next case comparison, then based on all the case analyses make an abstraction and induction.

3.4.2. *Data collection*

The data collection for this research has two parts, which overlap and complement each other. The first part is the collection of secondary data about the branding activities in each area. One source of secondary data is the academic literature on the city, along with reports on similar or relevant research undertaken in the past. Another is the literature published by the city authorities and marketing or branding agencies, such as promotional brochures, advertising campaigns, development plans and other reports on strategies adopted and methods implemented by the city government.

Primary data is collected through semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions. There are four reasons for this choice:

1) It provides a flexible structure for research to deal with different participants by offering correct evaluation under different operational environments (Kavaratzis, 2008).

2) It allows the researcher to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

3) The inclusion of open-ended questions maximizes the opportunity for researchers to acquire information from the respondents (Kent, 1981).

4) Since the research topic - place branding - "suffers from a lack of clear and unanimous definitions of its components and other related concepts" (Kavaratzis, 2008), it is a requirement of this research to use highly flexible methods, for the

researcher to provide explanations of terms and concepts and get a clear understanding of the participants' perceptions of the various concepts.

Observation is also used as a supplementary data collection method in order to capture what happens (current event), materials that are unspoken (not available through interview) and relatively real.

All the above methods are used to generate the conclusion of this study. The evidence that constructs the facts of the study are triangulated as shown in Figure 14.
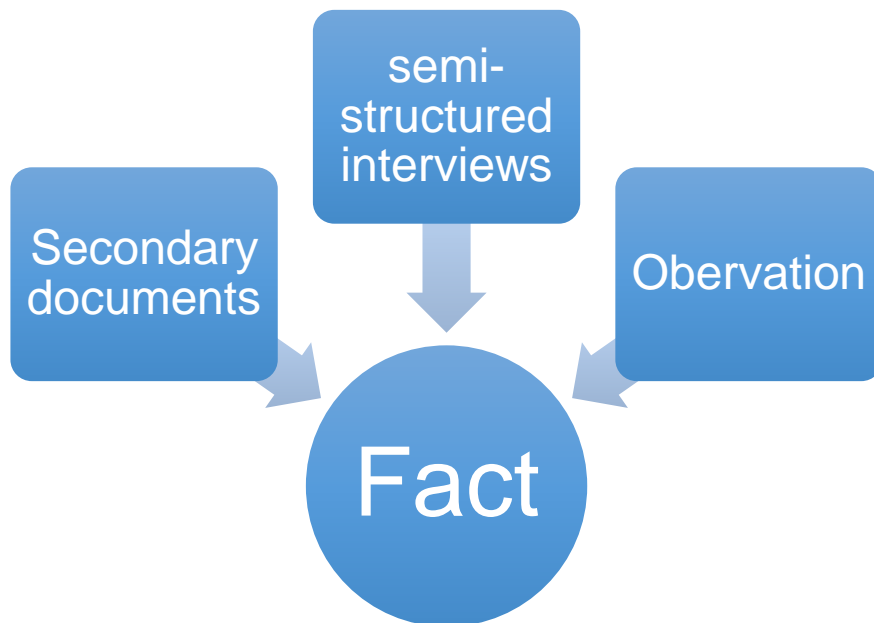
Figure 14.   Evidence fusion triangle

A total number of 21 interviews were conducted. The research population consists of leaders, directors, and spokespeople in key-positions in each of the selected cases. Because the Chinese government adopts a linear management approach, the interview process also uses a top-down approach. According to the administrative structure of the government and the direction of the three sub-cases, Chongqing is divided into three levels, the municipal level, district & county level, and township level. At the district & county level places with mature brands are selected, Yunyang County (commerce), Wulong District (torusim), and Qijiang District (resident identity). In order to enrich the

cross case analysis, under the recommendation of the municipal level government, cases of other regions are considered and explored by researcher. The data are mainly used as supplementary materials in the preparation of the cross case conclusions in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of the overall case of Chongqing. The main interviews are listed in Table 6.

Administrative level	Commerce	Tourism	Resident identity
Municipal level	Principal from Chongqing Municipal Commission of Commerce	Chongqing Tourism Bureau	Chongqing Municipal Culture Commission and Spiritual Civilization Office
District and county level	Yunyang County Government, Agricultural Bureau, Development and Reform Commission, Government Office, Poverty Alleviation Office; Qijiang District Government Office, Business Committee,	Wulong District Government, Wulong Tourism Department, Qijiang Tourism Department	Qijiang District Office of Spiritual Civilization, Qijiang District Government Office

	Development and Reform Commission, Poverty Alleviation Office		
Township level	Guanyinqiao Business Area, Jiefangbei Business Area, Nanping Business Area	Yunyang County, Qingshui Tujia Township, Panshi Town	Nanhu Community

Table 6. Main interviews of the study

Interviewees were selected based on the Chinese government's linear management structure. According to the competent government departments involved in the three aspects of place branding (commerce, tourism and resident identity) in the theoretical framework, potential interviewees have been selected at the municipal level, district level and township level. Before determining the interview, the researcher had confirmed with these departments in advance that the interviewees were responsible for the relevant brand work. Municipal level government departments are in charge of the city's work, so the work involved is more macroscopic and has summary reports. The district level and township level have many departments in Chongqing (as mentioned in the context of Chongqing), so when determining subcases, municipal government departments recommend them as the areas that they think best represent Chongqing's brand building. In this way, the comprehensiveness of the data source is guaranteed at the municipal level, and the data at the district level and township level are guaranteed to be representative.

The interviewees of the study also include a person in charge of a local branding company in Chongqing, a university researcher who participated in the planning and

design of the Chongqing place branding project, the Wulong Karst Company (state-owned), several managers of Yunyang County companies, and some informal interviews with local residents of Chongqing. These interviews with place branding stakeholders were mainly undertaken to improve the understanding of the overall case.

The above interviewees were selected based on the purpose of this study: how the government understands and builds a place brand. Interviewees at all levels of government are the heads of departments. They have a comprehensive understanding of related work and can better answer questions in interviews. The supplementary interviewees are those who participated in the government branding projects and can get more objective practical ideas about government work from their feedback. . An Interview guide including Interview questions were developed based on the research objectives and the literature review before the data collection. Interview questions is divided into two sections: general and in-depth questions. General questions refer to: demographic content, the main work content of interviewee, general views and attitudes towards place branding.

The in-depth questions are those the research needs to solve. It is mainly divided into two parts based on literature review and research purpose: government process and place branding process. Basic principal of asking interview questions is from the general to the specific and from the easy to the difficult. In the actual interview, the interviewer makes specific questions for specific cases according to specific departments. For example, in an interview with Wulong tourism department, the researcher first started with simpler issues such as when Wulong tourism began to develop, and the areas that were important in the early stages of development and construction; then it gradually deepened into the main responsible persons and leaders. The work is undertaken by various government departments and departments also includes specific content such as departmental conflicts in the government process, place brand dissemination, and decision making; finally, in-depth inquiries about the meaning of place branding,

including why it is important to place branding, why it is important, how is place branding integrated to place management and government work etc. The entire interview is a process from shallow to deep, from easy to difficult. Finally, it will end with a relatively open question, which mainly involves the interviewees' personal feelings about the case they have experienced, the lessons learned from other successful cases, the guiding significance of local cases to other places, and even the future development of case cities. Directions, local policies, etc. This will not only make it easier for respondents to end the interview but also balance the breadth and depth of the entire interview to get more detailed data. The research also remained flexible to the responses of the interviewees. Government work reports, plans and summaries are also other sources of data for this study. A total of 89 government documents were collected in field research. The purpose of collecting this data is to supplement the interview.

3.5 Data analysis process

The data analysis process of this research can be divided into four parts: coding, affinity diagram, forming model, and filling in references. After transcribing all interviews into word documents, the date was encoded using Nvivo11 software. This study combines top-down and bottom-up coding. Top-down coding refers to when coding, part of the coding items are already available before coding, that is, a codebase is built in advance (mainly derived from the literature and research objectives). This codebase is actually research expectations and what to expect from this interview. Bottom-up coding means that all codes are extracted from the original material when coding. The reason is that when the researcher is doing research, he has prejudgments and cognitions about the researched content. Based on these prejudgments and cognitions, some information that may be collected may be estimated. At this time, the coding items can be compiled in advance, that is, from top to bottom, so that the research process can be better grasped, and more structured and purposeful. For qualitative research, its biggest advantage over quantitative research is that it can find some information that the researcher did not

know before during the research. At this time, new coding items can be added, that is, bottom-up.

After the coding is completed, these codes need to be comprehensively analyzed according to their similarity classification to reorganize the data. This process is also based on the maps feature of Nvivo 11. By categorizing encodings to visualize data, you can better find the logical relationships (sequence, causality, time, space, correlation, etc.) between data. By performing affinity graph classification on the encoded data, the researcher can derive the processes and framework related to place branding.

After modelling the core data, the core of qualitative data analysis is complete. The next step is to fill the model with padding references to make it justified. There are two reasons for this: making the model fuller and more attractive and persuasive. The filled references mainly include the user's original quote from interviews (marked as I1,I2…in this dissertation, see attachment 2 for full list) and the collected government work report, planning and summary (paper materials are marked as P1,P2…, see attachment 3 for full list; electronic materials are marked as W1,W2…, see attachment 4 for full list). This process is also the second review of the data by the researcher, which allows the researcher to check whether some views of the interview have been missed. Because the government work report, planning and summary are not the main data sources of this study, this part of the data is only used as supplementary materials in this study without coding. It is mainly based on interview data to find the same, different and supplementary content in these documents to improve the overall data analysis.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Acquiring ethical approval is an integral part of research. It can protect both researchers and participants. As mentioned, interviews are the main method of data collection. The human participants in the research are: 1) government officers in charge of place branding; 2) place branding researchers; 3) private entrepreneurs involved in place branding and managers of branding companies in charge of place branding activities.

There are two ways to recruit interviewees. The first is through the social relationships and personal contacts of researcher. The researcher himself worked in a branding company, and therefore private entrepreneurs involved in place branding and the managers of branding companies can be contacted through his personal contacts. The second method is to approach government officers through their open contact information by email or phone. The government departments offer contact information for social Q&A, so there are professionals to respond to interview request. However, not all the officers of government departments are willing or have time to take interviews. Therefore, the researcher contacted as many departments as possible and there are a total 20 government officers willing to be interviewed. Luckily, all interviewed government officers covered all the departments involved in the study, ensuring the integrity of the research design.

After acquiring the approval to interview the participants, a consent form and interview guidance is sent to the participants, clarifying the aims of the research and the interview questions. Signing the consent form means the participants are satisfied that they fully understand the research and the content and therefore approve the interview. The researcher directly contacts the participants so there is no particular gatekeeper from whom to seek permission for this research. However, an invitation letter was sent to the participants in advance, and accepting this invitation means the researcher receives permission to conduct the interview. A consent form and interview guide was sent to the participants before the interview to make sure they fully understand the research.

For the privacy of the participants, since the interviews were recorded with a voice recorder, two levels of confidentiality are maintained. First is the anonymity of the participants. People can be identified from information such as their job title, age, gender, length of service, membership of organizations, or department, so these are not recorded. Geographical information, combined with any of the information above, could quickly give away identity. Therefore, such information does not appear in the final work and all such information remains anonymous.

The second confidentiality issue is the security of the interview records. Records of all interviews are stored in a password protected mobile hard disk drive and only accessed by the researcher.

CHAPTER 4.   PLACE BRANDING IN CHINA: USING BRAND IN TOURISM, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND SPIRITUAL CIVILIZATION

[We must] adhere to seeking truth from facts, to proceed from reality in all it does, to integrate theory with practice.

Dengxiaoping

Speech on Central Working Conference Prepared for the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee on December 13, 1978

To give a thorough picture of the place branding of Chongqing, this chapter discusses the three most important aspects of place branding, tourism, commerce and resident identity building. The most representative case in Chongqing is selected for each aspect for in-depth exploration. Wulong County is selected as recommended by the Chongqing Tourism Bureau as the case for brand construction; Yunyang District is selected by the Chongqing Municipal Commission as the commercial place brand; and resident identity building is mainly about the construction of spiritual civilization, so Qijiang District and Nanhu community are selected as recommended by the Spiritual Civilization Office of Yuzhong District.

These cases are very successful, and can be considered representative of Chongqing and even the whole country. Officials from the Chongqing Municipal Government highly value the representativeness of these cases, and believe that these cases show the advanced experience of Chongqing. Meanwhile, the government encourages other

regions (within Chongqing or outside Chongqing jurisdiction) to learn from their success. Section 4.1 takes an in-depth look at the branding system of Wulong's tourism branding. Section 4.2 explores a new form of place brand - place registered brand. Section 4.3 reveals how the government builds resident identity through branding activities.

4.1 Heritage of nature, Wulong for the world: from zero to holistic tourism brand

In 1985, Wulong county[23] was defined as poverty-stricken by Sichuan (the former jurisdiction) Provincial Government. The per capita net income of all residents in the county was lower than 150 yuan, with a poverty rate of 70%[24]. Until the early 1990s, Wulong was a key county for national poverty alleviation and development, and was drowned by Sanxia Dam. The per capita annual income of the farmers was 333 yuan, and it was a typical western Chinese poverty-stricken county[25]. In 2016, Wulong district received 24.5 million tourists and realized a comprehensive tourism income of 7.5 billion yuan[26]. The per capita disposable income of all residents reached 18,105 yuan, and the per capita disposable income of year-round residents reached 10,700 yuan[27]. From May 1994 when the first scenic spot in Wulong officially opened, to September 2018 when the 15th Chongqing Wulong International Mountain Outdoor Sports Open and China Mountain Outdoor Sports Series were launched in Wulong, it went through 24 years of development. As the location of *Transformers 4*, the director Michael Bay praised Wulong national park as "the highlight of shooting", comparing it to the Egyptian pyramids and the NASA Space Shuttle[28]. In a little more than 20 years, Wulong has developed from a poverty-stricken county in Chongqing to a destination

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[23] Before the Chongqing municipality was set up, most of Chongqing was part of Sichuan province. In December 1998, Wulong County was directly managed by Chongqing Municipality. On November 24, 2016, the State Council officially issued the "Reply of the State Council on Agreeing to Adjust Some Administrative Divisions in Chongqing" (Guo Han [2016] No. 185), which revoked Wulong County and established Wulong District.
[24] This data is dictated by the respondent. Due to the age, there is no relevant data for research.
[25] Wulong tourism official website, available at: http://www.wlkst.com/wlxw/20131025/7874.html, accessed 20/08/2018
[26] 2017 Wulong Tourism Bureau Work Report
[27] 2017 Wulong District People's Government Work Report
[28] Sina Entertainment, available at: http://ent.sina.com.cn/m/f/2013-11-02/21414035576.shtml, accessed 20/08/2018

with a national and even world brand. The story of its success deserves to be known by each researcher and practitioner of place branding.

4.1.1. *Tourism transition and development of Wulon*

There are nine important points on the timeline of the development of Wulong's tourism, shown in Figure 15, and outlined below.

Figure 15.   Development phases of Wulong tourism

Tourism origin: Tourism in Wulong began with the discovery of the Furong Cave, in May 1993, when villagers in Jiangkou town found a large cave in the middle of Panjiayan in Jiangkou town.

Tourism model:, The Wulong Tourism Bureau was established on June 12, 1993. On June 23, Wulong Furongjiang Tourism Development Corporation was established and the deputy director of the Tourism Bureau acted as the general manager.

Tourism starting: By April 1994, the first phase of the development project of Furong Cave was completed. On May 1 Furong Cave was officially opened to Chinese and foreign tourists.

Turning point: Furong Cave was successfully listed as a World Natural Heritage Site in 2007, and Wulong Karst was officially included in the World Natural Heritage List as the Southern China Karst along with Yunnan Stone Forest and Guizhou Karst.

Second venture: The government repurchased the core scenic spot and formed a marketing group in 2008, Wulong Karst Tourism Investment Co. Ltd., a state-owned enterprise. They signed an equity repurchase and reorganization agreement with enterprises involved in the investment in Wulong's main scenic spots, taking ownership of the six major scenic spots in Wulong county. These spots were managed and operated by this company. At the beginning of 2009, Liu Qi, then secretary of the County Party Committee, delivered a speech at the county tourism promotion marketing meeting, demanding that all departments pay attention to tourism promotion and marketing. The meeting identified 16 marketing teams based on various governmental departments.

Product upgrade: In 2007, Wulong held the International Mountain Outdoor Sports

Open for the first time. This was the first international A-level sports event held in Wulong. In 2011, the International Tourism Administration awarded Wulong County the title of 5A scenic spot. At the beginning of 2012, Impression Wulong premiered at the Peach Garden Canyon of Fairy Maiden Mountain. This was the only large-scale alpine performance in China at that time, and was the first large-scale live performance of martial arts and Bayu culture. The launch of these three famous Wulong tourism products marks the upgrade of Wulong tourism.

Project upgrade: Fairy Maiden Mountain Resort has been upgraded from municipal level to a national-level resort, which marks the overall upgrade of the tourism project in Wulong dominated by the Fairy Mountain Scenic Area.

Green rise: In November 2011, at the county meeting, Liu Xinyu, secretary of the County Party Committee, proposed the strategic concept of Wulong Park, for which the working method was joint construction of five parks (Leisure Tourism Park, Eco-Industrial Park, Beautiful and Liveable Park, Fine Cultural Park, Pleasure and Harmonious Park), and by these methods the whole of Wulong County turned into a park city. On this basis, the County Party Committee and the government adjusted the original strategy of "tourism enriching the people and industrial strengthening the county" to "green rise, enriching the people and strengthening the county" in 2013. This new strategy had two goals, a recent development goal to build "a featured economically strong county, national ecological county and international tourist destination", and a long-term goal that "China Wulong Park" would be built, which is planned to be completed in 30 years.

Refined tourism: The foundation of this new strategy includes the construction of a new town with landscapes, gardens and squares, transforming industrial areas. It involves the construction and upgrading of public facilities, mainly to create the foundation for the construction of Wulong international tourism destination. It is a refinement and

upgrade of existing tourism resources.

Given the major events in Wulong's tourism development, it can be divided into five stages: 1) the establishment of the initial tourism model (1994-1998); 2) market-oriented reform (1999-2002); 3) success in world cultural heritage application, from Wulong in China to Wulong in the world (2003-2007); 4) the re-nationalization of the tourism industry (2008-2009); and 5) brand-led development (2010-present).

At the beginning of Wulong's tourism development, the model of state-owned enterprise management was adopted. Wulong's government invested in and established the Wulong Furongjiang Development Company. The planning of the initial major attractions, Furong Cave and Fairy Maiden Mountain, were completed on the spot by experts who were employed and funded by the government. The main work at this stage was the construction of infrastructure and preliminary planning and design. Over the past five years, Furong River Rafting, Three Natural Bridges, Furongjiang Hot Springs Resort and Furongjiang Crossing Speed Skating have been developed.

In the second phase, Wulong introduced market capital. This stage is closely related to the restructuring of state-owned enterprises in China at that time. Since Furongjiang Tourism Investment Co. Ltd. is a full-loan company, and most of its employees are government employees, the marketization degree is very low. At the same time, before restructuring, state-owned enterprises were not independent corporate legal persons, bringing a lot of problems. Many state-owned enterprises in China faced similar problems. In 1999, in order to adapt to the actual marketization process in China after the reform and opening up, Wulong government decided to reform the state-owned enterprises by introducing private enterprises via bidding, and separately managing and developing Wulong tourism in the sub-districts. In August 2001, the 50-year management right of Fairy Maiden Mountain National Forest Park was transferred to Chongqing C Company through open tendering, and the 50-year management right of

Three Natural Bridges was transferred to Chongqing H Company in the same way. In 2002, the development and management rights of Furong River Scenic Area were transferred to Chongqing H Company. Through this transformation, the former state-owned enterprise (Furongjiang Tourism Development Company) became the main body of the market economy. The government gained a huge amount of investment in the previous period and repaid the bank debt. Through pure market-oriented operation, Wulong government solved the funding problems in the construction of Wulong scenic spot and ensured its continued development. At this stage, Wulong had successively created three national 4A-level scenic spots, and developed the world's largest sinkhole - Zhongshiyuan sinkhole.

The third stage is marked by Wulong's preparation to apply for World Natural Heritage status. After years of hard work, in January 2006, the South China Karst was confirmed by the State Council as the only project in China to be a World Natural Heritage Site, and in 2007 it was officially listed in the World Heritage List. After this, Wulong county took the development strategy of "outstanding in Chongqing, popular over the country and famous around the world", with a view to building Chongqing Wulong into China's Wulong and the World's Wulong.

The fourth stage is marked by the re-nationalization of the Wulong tourism industry (the second venture mentioned above). After the successful application for national heritage status in 2007, Wulong began the re-nationalization of the tourism industry. According to the requirements of the State Council, the function and nature of World Heritage determine that sites must be managed by the government. The management of heritage is intended to protect the value of heritage resources.

Under the premise of protection, and ensuring it is convenient for the public to visit, and fully enjoy the leisure, education and scientific research services brought by World Heritage, in principle, the services should be non-profit-making. The second phase of

the state-owned enterprise restructuring of Wulong tourism resources led to its management by market entities without the guarantee of effective protection or sustainable use of Wulong Karst, the world natural heritage resource.

Therefore, Wulong county government funded the establishment of Chongqing Wulong Karst Tourism Investment Co. Ltd. in 2007, to carry out the repurchase of scenic spot management rights as well as the protection and development of scenic spots. In 2008, it completed the repurchase of 51% of the management rights to all six scenic spots in Wulong Karst, which changed the situation of ownership, management rights and development rights to the scenic spot, which were separated, realizing the unity of these three kinds of rights.

In 2009, Wulong started its most famous group marketing activities, with 16 county governmental departments setting up tourism marketing groups in China's large and medium-sized cities, as well as Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Macao and other regions to promote Wulong. At the same time, Fairy Maiden Mountain International Music Festival, Chongqing Wulong International Mountain Outdoor Sports Open, and the Furongjiang Dragon Boat Race were held for event marketing.

The fifth stage is marked by the transformation of the Fairy Maiden Mountain from the Chongqing scenic spot to a national resort in 2011. At this stage, Wulong County basically completed its infrastructure construction, restructuring and marketing work in the main scenic spots. It was also during this period that the government began to think about Wulong's future development direction and had a clear understanding of the planning of Wulong tourism brand building.

How is a tourism brand built? What is the role of tourism brands in tourism development? What is the system for Wulong's tourism branding? These issues became the main problems to be solved by the government during this period. We can find the

answers to these questions through the process of establishing and perfecting Wulong tourism brands.

4.1.2. *Brand system of Wulong*

In 2003, Wulong determined its tourism logo for the first time (Picture 9).

Picure 9. Tourism logo of Wulong. The top line is the slogan of Wulong: Heritage of Nature, Wulong for the World (自然的遗产，世界的武隆); the middle line is Wulong Tourism (武隆旅游); the bottom line is China Chongqing (中国重庆) (http://www.wlkst.com/)

Because it was designed early, there is no specific explanation for this logo in the interviews, but the logo is an artistic expression of Wulong's initial letters. The original meaning of the expression is Fantasy Wulong (I4). Wulong's tourism brand was basically established with the development of Wulong tourism. For the respondents from Wulong, the process of Wulong tourism development summarized above is the process of Wulong brand establishment. The official expression of the Wulong brand system in the true sense was summarized by Chen, former director of the Wulong Tourism Bureau. According to the interviews and government documents collected in Wulong, the Wulong travel brand Heritage of Nature, Wulong for the World, is made up of seven specific travel brands (see Figure 16).
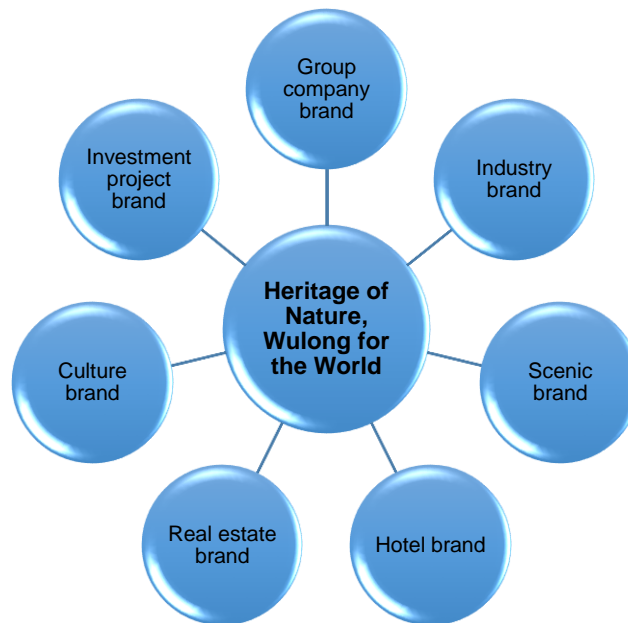
Figure 16.　Brand system of Wulong

Sub-brands in this system do not mean each sector has a different logo under the main logo or a confirmed brand name. According to the interviews, the reason the government considers these sub-brands part of the entire Wulong brand is that the subjects of each sub-brand form a certain brand effect and therefore together they form a sub-brand. The meaning of each sub-brand in this system is as follows.

Wulong's group company brand refers to the corporate brand of Wulong Karst Tourism (Group) Co. Ltd., and its brand effect in the tourism industry. The industry brand is the tourism industry brand of the whole of Wulong, including Wulong tourism, Wulong real estate, and the Wulong hotel industry. Scenic brand is the main scenic spots of Wulong, including Furong Cave, Baima Mountain Nature Reserve, Wujiang Gallery, Houping Sinkhole, Three Natural Bridges, Furongjiang Scenic Area, Fairy Maiden Mountain National Forest Park, etc.

The hotel brand refers to medium to high-end hotels in Wulong with a full range of services. The real estate brand refers to resort-style properties in Wulong including

Fairy Maiden Mountain Street (Commercial Street), Fairy Maiden Mountain Liuyun Villa, and other tourist resort real estate. The culture brand is mainly Impression Wulong performances, including large culturally based events such as Fairy Maiden Mountain International Camping Music Festival, and Furongjiang Dragon Boat Race. The investment project brand includes large-scale investment projects that have been built or planned in Wulong, specifically tourism and leisure projects (indoor ski resorts, etc.) and creative culture industries (theme parks, etc.). In the field research, the author found that the current rural tourism brand is to be added as a tourism brand in Wulong's brand system. However, since Wulong is still in the exploration stage, there is no clear official statement. What is certain is that the construction of rural tourism has begun to be implemented and the government's poverty alleviation work has been integrated. In the field research, these brand components are juxtaposed, but it is obvious that some brands are intertwined.

On this basis, the author reorganizes the brand structure as that shown in Figure 8.
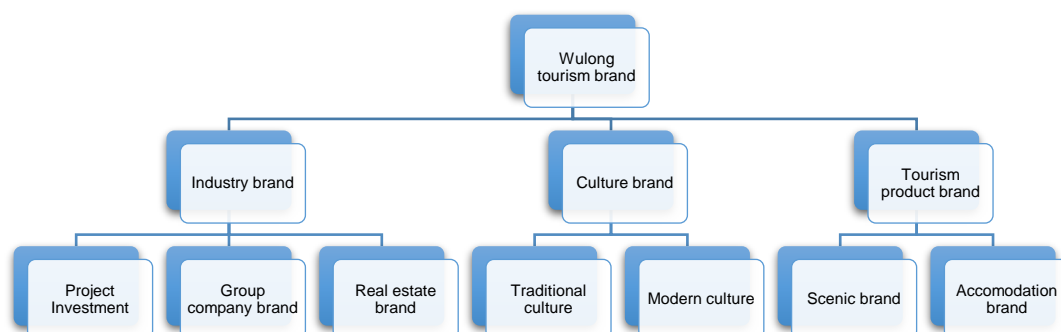

Figure 17.   Brand structure of Wulong

The Industry brand is for investors, while the culture brand and tourism product brand

are mainly for tourists. These three sub-brands are all carried physically. For example, Wulong's traditional culture includes local totem culture, Wujiang culture and folk religious culture. The Impression Wulong performance is a concentrated display of these cultures, while modern culture is shown through large events like music festivals held in Wulong.

The sub-brands also have intersections, such as Wulong's leisure and holiday real estate, which is an investment project for investors. The tourism audience is more concerned about the service of the hotel or the comfort of the house. Another example is the rural tourism brand that Wulong is building, which combines cultural elements and tourism products, and is also closely related to local rural poverty alleviation work.

Wulong's brand system is diverse and complex. The system was not formed at the beginning of Wulong's tourism development, but after nearly 20 years of development by the local government. After determining the brand system, Wulong government also clearly defined the ideas of developing local tourism and building an industrial economic system with branding. From a government perspective, the role of branding is to determine the goals and visions of local tourism development and determine the direction of regional development.

A brand is an abstract concept. It must be based on the physical form of the scenic spots and attractions that form the overall image of Wulong tourism. The scenic spots and other tourism products are the main attractions for people to travel to (I10). Therefore, after deciding which sub-brands to build, the government can decide what kind of tourism products to provide, and the tourism products are produced through various related industries. For example, tourism and scenic spots merge to form a tourism industry, and are integrated with holiday products to form a leisure and holiday industry. They integrate with agriculture to form sightseeing and leisure agriculture; integrate with culture to form a cultural experience industry; and integrate with real estate to

form a tourism real estate industry. These industries together constitute a well-established tourism industry system in Wulong, which promotes the development of local industries, and is the basis for tourism brands that promote regional development.

4.1.3. *Divided roles of market and government*

It can be seen that, in the process of Wulong's tourism development and branding, from the early construction of the scenic spots with government investment, to the marketization process in 2000, and re-nationalization in 2007, the government has played an important role in various ways. Talking about the successful experience of Wulong tourism, the former director of Wulong County Tourism Bureau said that the success of Wulong tourism was mainly due to the precise division of the role of the government and the market, with market entities and governmental departments performing their duties separately while coordinating with each other, in line with the principles of market economy development.

In the development of Wulong tourism, the government has four main functions. The first is to establish a brand, which is reflected in the development plan and the strategic positioning. The strategic positioning of Wulong tourism development is clarified in the various plans promulgated by the government. Under the premise of mastering public resources, the will of various departments is coordinated to form a joint force of government departments. This is the primary prerequisite for the development of all regions.

The second function is building infrastructure and providing public services. Without a sound and systematic infrastructure, there is no way to develop tourism. The traffic problem is the first to be solved by Wulong. Before the completion of national highway 319, it took nearly five hours to drive from the main city of Chongqing to Wulong. With

the construction of Chongqing-Huaihua Railway and Chongqing-Hunan Expressway, the traffic between cities, between the city and the scenic spots, and between the city and townships has been greatly improved, laying a solid foundation for the development of tourism. While addressing tourist traffic, in accordance with their own responsibilities, various functional departments of the government have integrated their resources to provide comprehensive support services such as water, electricity, communications, television, healthcare, social security, and the infrastructure for tourism development.

The third function is building a market platform to promote effective allocation of resources, according to the development needs of the tourism market. The Wulong County Party Committee and the government set up three market platforms to clarify their respective roles and jointly build a tourism market. Firstly, Wulong Karst (Group) Company is responsible for planning, construction and management of the county's scenic spots; secondly, Fairy Maiden Mountain tourism resort management committee undertakes the planning, construction and management of tourist resorts, and provides comprehensive supporting services; and thirdly, Wulong Urban and Rural Investment (Group) Co. Ltd. is responsible for urban and rural infrastructure construction and construction management, and guarantees the urban and rural tourism plan. These platforms play an active role in the process of scenic spot building, urban construction, resource allocation, and the improvement of business, a prerequisite for tourism development.

Wulong has undergone the process of nationalization, marketization and then re-nationalization. The marketization was mainly used to adapt to the principle of a market economy, while the re-nationalization was not complete nationalization. Wulong government chose to repurchase 51% of the shares, which guarantees the government's decision-making power over the nature protection work in the scenic areas, and maximizes the space for the market economy to play its role.

The fourth function is building travel destination images, and using marketing strategies. In order to build, establish and promote a good tourism image, Wulong government attaches great importance to the construction of tourism brands. The annual cost of investment in tourism marketing exceeds 100 million yuan. These investments are mainly in mainstream media such as CCTV and Chongqing Satellite TV, and there have been a lot of publicity reports on the image of Wulong tourism. At the same time, the movies *Curse of the Golden Flower, Transformers 4*, the TV variety show *Dad Where Are We Going* and other brands promote Wulong's tourism image, and enhance the tourism brand value. The tourism marketing Wulong has adopted is a powerful means of making all county level departments in the county into 16 marketing groups (reduced to 11 in 2017 but the overall number and marketing capacity is higher). Travel marketing is carried out across China in various target markets. This does not completely replace the individual marketing of the company, but costs more for the company. Sponsorships, such as variety shows, are difficult for individual companies to bear, so are funded by Wulomg government and Wulong County Karst (Group) Company. The marketing group's approach is to ensure maximum coverage of marketing, which is difficult for companies to realize.

There is only one responsibility of enterprises in Wulong's tourism development, which is to rationally and effectively allocate resources according to market demand, produce based on market economy rules, and provide various products and services that meet market consumption needs. The government can only determine the development direction by constructing a brand system, but cannot provide specific tourism products and services, which require enterprises. Taking the Three Natural Bridges as an example, the government first made it clear that this was a natural sightseeing spot under the scenic brand, and improved the surrounding transportation facilities, water and electricity distribution, which attracted investment. However, the tourism products and services provided were completely determined by the enterprise. For example, the

vertical sightseeing elevator (Picture 16) at the first scenic spot of the Three Natural Bridges Scenic Area was built by the enterprise to help tourists reach the attraction as quickly as possible. The vertical height of this elevator is 80 meters. The Wulong County Quality Supervision Bureau set up a special equipment standardization signboard at the elevator gate to make public the contents, including the manufacturing unit, installation unit, inspection unit, maintenance unit, inspection personnel, operators, and maintenance personnel of the sightseeing elevator, thus creating a safe sightseeing environment for tourists.

In 2016, the Wulong government clearly defined the work of building the rural tourism brands. The Tourism Bureau's 2017 work report pointed out that the government determined seven rural tourism routes based on the agricultural development of the whole district and the specific conditions of villages and towns that needed poverty alleviation. At the same time, the main job was to invest in the infrastructure of these 17 townships and 30 villages. Policy support and funding for agricultural products (Hawk Beans, Furongjiang Wild Fish, Khanping Honey Pomelo) were also granted. The specific tourism products, including fruit picking, summering, leisure and sightseeing farmhouses were determined by local enterprises and farmers.

4.1.4. *Reflection on Wulong's tourism branding*

The Wulong tourism brand is based on the development of Wulong tourism, and has now become a beacon to guide that development. This phenomenon was not anticipated by the author before the field research. For the respondents from Wulong, Wulong has no uniform brand, except for a unified logo and slogan. The various sub-brands mentioned above are specific Wulong tourism brands. The words "brand" or "branding" do not occur frequently in government documents or in the interviews. Instead, "positioning" often appears. From the government's perspective, it is not a branding process but positioning that defines the tourism development plan and industry

guidance in the region. The government is more of a brand locator, marketer, regional public service and tourism investment provider, than a brand decision maker. The enterprise is the one that makes decisions. The decisive role of the government is mainly reflected in the public aspects of tourism and the lack of market regulation capabilities. The positioning of Wulong tourism is mainly based on two aspects. The first is the strategic positioning of Chongqing, specifically Wulong as the core scenic spot of Chongqing's tourism industry. According to the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Construction of Chongqing as an Internationally Famous Destination, Chongqing has three major tourism brands: urban tourism centred on Chongqing's main city; Dawuling ecological folk tourism destination covering Wulong; and a popular international travel destination with the Three Gorges of the Yangtze river as the main attraction. From the perspective of Chongqing, the centre of Chongqing tourism is in the main city, which focuses on the development of Wulong and the Three Gorges. It is characterized by the combination of mountains and rivers and the focus on rural tourism development. Differentiation is reflected in the ecology, and the cultural highlights are the local folk customs. The second is the strategic positioning of Wulong. Wulong's current position is "global tourism, landscape integration, cultural and travel integration, national tourism, international brand". It can be seen that this positioning of Wulong in combination with market requirements, tourism industry and local development conditions and characteristics is very comprehensive. Interviewees from the Karst Group mention that such comprehensive positioning is only available to Wulong among the districts and counties of Chongqing. This is mainly based on Wulong's perfect tourism industry. Among them, "all-for-one tourism" is a national level requirement. "Landscape integration, cultural and travel integration" is the tourism development requirement of Chongqing. "National tourism" mainly refers to tourism poverty alleviation work, which is based on the national requirements and Chongqing local requirements and the actual situation in Wulong. The creation of an international brand reflects the ambitions of the Wulong government.

The brand system mentioned is one of the three major parts of Wulong's overall tourism system. The other two are the market system and tourism platform system (shown in Figure 18), and the role of each system is clear in Wulong's tourism development.
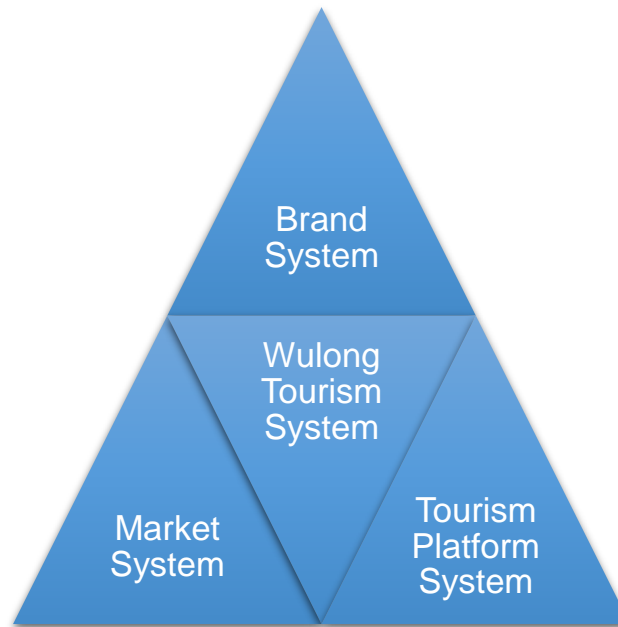
Figure 18.   Wulong tourism system

The brand system mainly refers to the brand and image. The government's understanding of the tourism brand system is a combination of several tourism product brands, so that the overall formation has the maximum overall benefit. For example, Wulong tourism brands must have a brand system combining accommodation brands, restaurant brands, entertainment brands, shopping varieties, and cultural brands which feature agriculture, rural tourism, animal husbandry, forestry, agricultural and sideline product processing industries, traditional handicraft industry, creative culture industry, and several brands that truly form brand benefits and highlight the value of Wulong tourism.

This system is a dynamic process. The government has not determined an unchanging brand system, but has continuously improved and supplemented it. The establishment

of the image is mainly based on the marketing system composed of the government and the market. Overall brand marketing is led by the government. The tourism brand image, at all levels of government, is used for publicity and promotion. Local, domestic and foreign public financial resources are used to enhance the visibility and honour of the local tourism brand image, improve the value of the tourism brands, and create brand-name products. Product marketing, which should be dominated by market players, turns the abstract travel brand images into rich and vivid specific tourism products, and then uses various marketing strategies and means to promote such brand images to the market. This is the fundamental purpose of conducting tourism product marketing.

The market system mainly refers to the industrial system that provides tourism products. It can penetrate a variety of, social, cultural, economic and natural fields and industries. Therefore, in order to develop tourism, it is necessary to allocate resources according to the characteristics of tourism and self-development, and form a complete tourism market system. A sound industrial system is more important because it not only covers the various elements of tourism, but also includes localized products such as specialty agricultural and sideline products, traditional handicraft products, cultural and creative products, experiencing sports products, holiday and leisure products, tourism real estate products, etc.

Cultivating a complete tourism market system and developing a tourism industry economy is the real purpose and significance of developing tourism. The market system includes the creation of a portfolio of tourism products. On the basis of sound infrastructure and sufficient income of residents, a single sightseeing tour can no longer meet the needs of tourists. Wulong's sound tourism product system is a response to this trend. How Wulong's tourism products fit into the combination of tourism products of surrounding districts and counties to form a cross-regional domestic and international tourism boutique, and how tourism products in the northeastern and southeastern

regions and counties of Chongqing fit into the product combination of the Yangtze River Three Gorges International Golden Tourism Belt in northeastern Chongqing, the Ecology Folk Cultural Tourism Belt in southeastern Chongqing, have become key issues for Wulong at this stage.

The tourism platform system provides financial support for tourism development. There are generally two platforms for investment in tourism. The first is a state-owned investment company led by the government, and the second is a private enterprise invested in by private capital. With the rapid development of tourism and the acceleration of industrialization and regionalization, a single investment entity cannot fully meet the needs of the market. The marketization and re-nationalization of Wulong tourism fully illustrates this problem. Therefore, to develop tourism, it is necessary to establish a state-owned platform company as a "banker", then introduce private capital according to market rules and requirements, and produce and promote tourism products and services that meet the various needs of modern tourists, thus achieving a complete tourism industry chain within a region.

For the author and the general manager of the marketing centre of Wulong Karst Tourism Investment Group, which is responsible for the overall marketing of Wulong, Wulong does not have a unified brand. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, when the Wulong government set up a marketing group to conduct large-scale marketing, it did not propose a certain brand because the government did not have good brand awareness at the time. The content of marketing has always been determined by the tourism development and tourism products of the year. This is the best choice based on the actual situation of Wulong. In the rapid development of Wulong Tourism over 20 years, the increase in tourism products has been great and there have been tremendous changes in marketing content. Secondly, corporate marketing takes a very market-oriented approach, following hotspots and what the audience specifically likes is what it spreads. Therefore, there is no unified marketing content. For example, when

Transformers 4 was released, Wulong Tourism Bureau put forward the slogan Chongqing Wulong, the Hong Kong Back Garden, and the company launched and promoted related products. When the marketing enthusiasm faded, Wulong did not mention Chongqing Wulong, the Hong Kong Back Garden for promotion. This kind of marketing behaviour leads to complexity in audience cognition. In addition to specific image cognition such as Wulong Three Natural Bridges, Fairy Maiden Mountain, etc., there are a thousand Wulongs in the hearts of a thousand tourists. But do travel brands really need to be uniform? The complex composition of Wulong's tourism brand has objective reasons for tourism development and marketing, but as with all destinations, the government tries its best to distinguish them through brand positioning, so that a thousand tourists have images of Wulong but those images are different. Isn't this also a success in brand building? This is a question worth being considered by place branding marketers and researchers.

4.2 Clarifying the ownership: a registered place brand practice

The previous section discusses Wulong's branding system over the 20 years of tourism development. The construction of this rich and thorough brand system was only possible due to the clear role assignments of government and market. The next section focuses on a commercial place branding process. According to the original research design, this section reveals how the government constructs a place brand to attract investment and thereby promote regional economic development. As the literature suggests, one of the major functions of a place brand is to attract investment to a certain place and this function is confirmed by the interviews with Chongqing city officials. However, during the field research, an officer from the City Commercial Department recommend a unique branding practice in Chongqing which has become a model even at national level. Such practice provides a possible answer to an unresolved argument in place branding research which is: who owns the place brand?

Yunyang County is located in the northeast of Chongqing City (Picture 10), 310 kilometres away from the 9th district of Chongqing's main city. It is an important hub for the Yangtze river economic corridor in the Three Gorges Reservoir area.
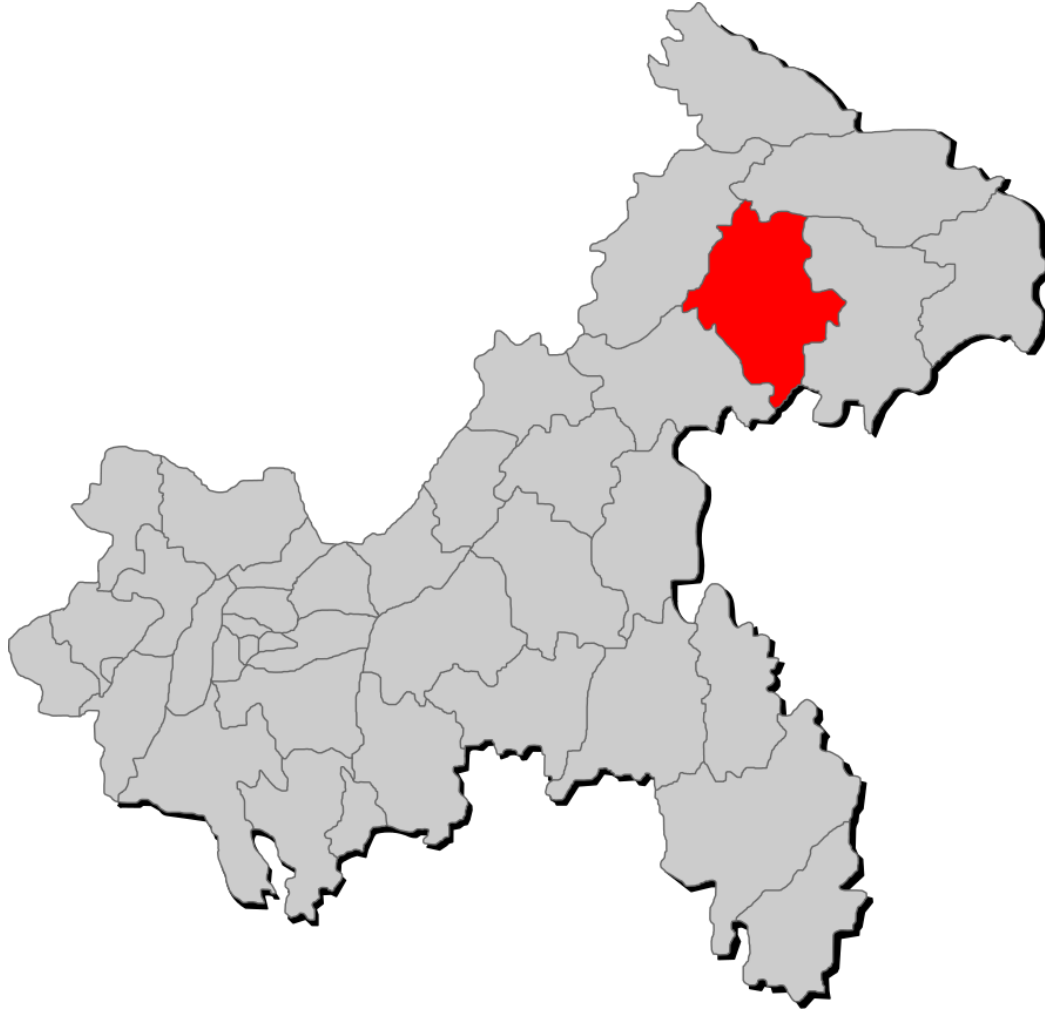
Picure 10.   Location of Yunyang Country in Chongqing

Yunyang County is connected to Fengjie County in the east, Wanzhou District in the west, Lichuan City in Enshi Prefecture in Hubei Province in the south, and Kaizhou District and Wuxi County in the north. The county is 99.5 kilometres long from north to south, 70.2 kilometres wide from east to west, with a total area of 3,649 square kilometres. As of December 28, 2015, Yunyang County administers 4 streets, 31 towns, and 7 townships (with 1 ethnic township). The resident population is 890,700, and the registered population is 1,359,600[29].

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[29] Yunyang county government website, available at: http://www.yunyang.gov.cn/lm/mlyy/index.shtml, accessed

On August 17, 2018, according to the assessment and inspection of the State Council Poverty Alleviation Office, Yunyang County achieved the exit conditions for poverty-stricken counties and was no longer listed as poverty-stricken. Since the national poverty line is based on the average annual net income of local people, removing Yunyang from the national poverty-stricken county list indicates that the economy has developed well. The economic development of Yunyang is the result of much effort, and the establishment and development of the natural Yunyang brand (天生云阳) has played a vital role (I21).

4.2.1. *Difficulties and challenges of agricultural product brand development*

Yunyang made certain achievements in the agricultural industry, mainly due to the abundant agricultural resources and good ecological environment. Of the county's 3,649 square kilometres, the cultivated land area is 2,743 square kilometres, the forest coverage rate is 51%, and the altitude is from 175 meters to 1,700 meters, which is suitable for growing various crops. Yunyang County successfully authorized certification as a National Ecological Origin Protection Demonstration Zone. Among the local enterprises, Orange Official Hall Citrus, Three Gorges White Honey, Three Gorges Chrysanthemum, Yufeng Gastrodia, and Bee Valley Mei Orange have obtained certification as ecological origin protection products. Another twelve products including citrus, alpine rice and gastrodia have won GAP certification. Yunyang Navel Orange was awarded certification as Chongqing Citrus Pollution-free Production Area (County), and Yunyang Red Orange was awarded the Chongqing Famous Citrus Selection Gold Award and National Agricultural Product Geographical Indication Certification. Yang Chrysanthemum obtained China Organic Certification, US FDA Organic Certification, and EU Organic Certification. Qifeng Gastrodia obtained organic certification and

National Geographical Indication Trademark Certification.

It can be seen that the agricultural products of Yunhang have a high quality and a certain reputation, but such qualifications and reputations are fragmented and generate several weak brands. From the interviews with government officers, it seems that the brand building of agricultural products in Yunyang has encountered bottlenecks in development, mainly manifest in three aspects. Firstly, there are large industries and small brands. Yunyang has abundant products on a large industrial scale, involving many farmers and enterprises. It is a veritable agricultural county, as the added value of agriculture accounts for 21.3% of the county's GDP (according to the interview with a local government officer). However, on such a scale, Yunyang agricultural products lack a unified brand symbol system, unified packaging design and distinctive brand value appeal. The second bottleneck is high quality and low value. The unique natural environment has created the characteristics of Yunyang's agricultural products, such as red orange, gastrodia, honey, tea and fungus, which are "deeply loved by consumers" because of their good quality and organic qualification (according to the interview with a staff member of the local e-commerce service station). But high quality does not result in a considerable selling price for the enterprise or the farmer. Due to fluctuations in the market, the product price is low compared to similar products and there is little added value. The third is new challenges but old ideas. A small-scale peasant economy has long dominated China's agriculture, and the agricultural practitioners' ideas and concepts are relatively conservative, which has become a major bottleneck for China's agricultural modernization process and the development of agricultural brands. In Yunyang, the agricultural industry faces the problem of aging farmers, and farmers, enterprises, and even related functional departments engaged in agricultural production still use the old management idea of focusing on production while despising marketing; valuing products and ignoring brands. As a result, the product development of Yunyang is difficult and updating technology is slow.

For local farmers, as they are only the producers of the products rather than the owners of the agricultural product brand, the difficulties and problems they discussed in the interviews are barely related to brand, but to production. Five major issues they face are lack of labour (or high labour costs), lack of funds, lack of technological support, poor infrastructure and difficulties purchasing agricultural materials. Although farmers as producers directly determine the quality of the product, ultimately affecting the brand of the product, there is no awareness on the part of farmers of brand building. For framers, it is the responsibility of the government and local enterprises to build place and product brands.

Unlike farmers, local enterprises have a strong willingness to construct a powerful brand as it adds brand premium to their products and promotes overall sales. Taking a famous local chrysanthemum production enterprise, Ran Juhua, as an example, the owner has planted chrysanthemums since 2010, and registered the brand Chrysanthemum Ran for her company. Although the chrysanthemum produced by Yan Xiuqing is already a city famous agricultural product brand, the brand influence does not exceed the range of Chongqing city, therefore the sales and prices are comparatively low on e-commerce platforms. There were only a few physical sales channels such as retailers in Guangdong and Beijing. She is aware that a good brand would expand her market and increase the price of the products, but typical rural entrepreneurs are "good at production, but know nothing of branding and marketing" (I21). This is not a unique case but a common phenomenon. In the field research, the majority of local enterprises mentioned that they were not clear how to market their products or build a brand. When brand building work is undertaken by a professional company, its costs exceed the company's ability to pay. Although companies want to rely on strong brands to expand sales channels and gain benefits, local governments are more concerned about regional economic growth. The consensus between local entrepreneurs and the government is that a strong brand definitely helps each party to achieve its aims (I21).

4.2.2. *Government endorsement: a registered regional public brand practice*

Picure 11.　Natural Yunyang (天生云阳)

In 2015, Yunyang County invested government funding in planning and establishing a regional public brand[30] - Natural Yunyang (Picture 11). The original intention of the brand building of Yunyang was simple, "promoting brand individually is time-consuming and costly, and it is impossible to form a regional industry competition" (I21). After two years branding, the brand was officially registered at the State Administration of Industry and Commerce in 2017. Yunyang's exploration of agricultural product brand building has experienced three stages. The first encouraged high-quality agricultural products to create individual brands. Since 2010, the county government has issued supportive and encouraging policies for the establishment of "three products and one standard" (三品一标)[31], GAP certification, and ecological origin protection. So far, there are 159 agricultural brands at city level and above, accounting for about one-tenth of the number of agricultural brands in Chongqing city.

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[30] 区域公共品牌 in Chinese. This term is strictly used in government reports, official media, and interviews.
[31] "Three products and one standard" is a term that includes four standards for agricultural products. Three products refers to the geographical indicators of pollution-free agricultural products, green food products, organic agricultural products; and one standard refers to the product meeting the standards of the Agricultural Product Geographical Indication System.

The second stage promoted the integration of similar products. Although there were many agricultural products and enterprises in Yunyang, individual enterprises used their own brands in the market, and the influence of a single company brand is quite limited. For example, Yunyang Citrus covers a general planting area of 1214 square kilometres, but there are a total of 12 separate brands, making it difficult to form an overall brand. In 2013, Yunyang county government vigorously promoted the brand integration of agricultural products such as citrus and black fungus, and created several communal use brands including Yunyang Newhall (middle maturity orange), Yunyang Late Orange (late maturity), and Yunyang Black Fungus. Such products use a uniform brand and trademark, effectively boosting the development of the industry (according to the interview with a Yunyang county government officer).

The third stage promoted the integration of all agricultural products brands within the region. In order to further enlarge and strengthen Yunyang's place brand as a whole, in 2015 the Yunyang county government integrated high-quality agricultural product brands into a regional brand, Natural Yunyang, that covers all categories of agricultural products in the county. The government and companies jointly developed the market. The place brand of Yunyang and the enterprise brands combined, forming a "mother and child" brand structure (I21).

4.2.3. *Role of government in branding Natural Yunyang*

The brand management of Yunyang can be summarized as follows (Figure 19).
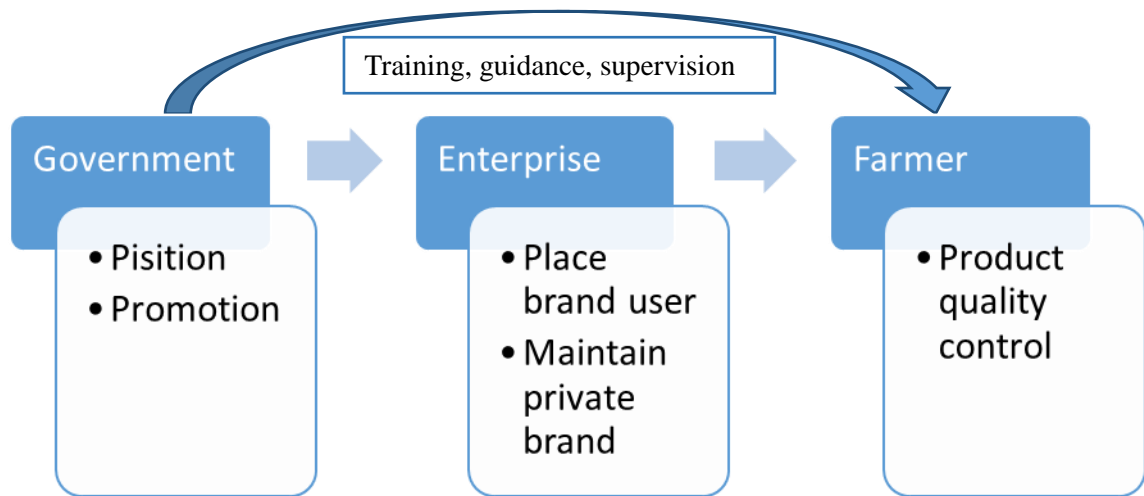
Figure 19.   Brand management model of Yunyang county

The role of the government in Yunyang's brand management is twofold: brand positioning and brand promotion. The core idea of the positioning of Yunyang is differentiation. Combining the ecological characteristics, industrial profile and cultural basis of Yunyang, the government deeply explored the core brand value of the brands, and finally determined the brand name and brand slogan, then reshaped the brand. The imagery of the original, pure and simple connotation of "Natural" (天生) symbolizes that Yunyang's environment is inherently excellent and free of industrial pollution. Yunyang's agricultural products are naturally grown, high quality, and follow the laws of nature. Taking "a thousand miles Yangtze river, a natural Yunyang" (万里长江, 天生云阳) as the brand slogan, implies that the natural quality of Yunyang's agricultural products is derived from Yunyang's natural environment in the hinterland of the Three Gorges. This positioning and promotion is for a brand that covers all the agricultural products of the region.

In order to accelerate the development of the Natural Yunyang brand, Yunyang county government established a government leadership coordination mechanism, and built a regional public brand construction leading group (区域公用品牌建设领导小组), with the county government mayor as leader, and other leaders and staff members from the County Agricultural Committee, finance, business, quality supervision, food and drug, supply and marketing, publicity, tourism, departments of industry and commerce, public security, the Economic and Information Committee, and the Poverty Alleviation Office. This is a joint mechanism to coordinate the relevant departments and regularly reports work development. An office was established in the County Agricultural Committee called the Natural Yunyang Brand Office, responsible for the overall brand management, and guiding the creation of the series of sub-brands (sub-brands here refers to separate product and company brands). In addition a long-term investment mechanism was established. According to the needs of brand building and promotion, the county finance arranged special agriculture-related funds, specially for the branding of Natural Yunyang.

Authorized local enterprises can use Natural Yunyang in their selling and marketing, and therefore are the users of the place brand. As local enterprises are not required to build place brand, their main responsibility is to maintain their enterprise brand. To prevent abuse of Natural Yunyang, or free riding by local enterprises, the local government have established strict access standards and authorize limited use of the Natural Yunyang brand. An enterprise must meet all the requirements in terms of product origin, product quality certification, traceability, quality assurance, and brand packaging to use Natural Yunyang.

The government also provide training, guidance, supervision and funding for farmers. One on hand, this is considered a brand maintenance process since without good quality products a place brand cannot survive, but on the other, it is government work dealing with the "three rural issues"[32]. As mentioned, problems occurring in production are

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[32] A short term for the issues related to agriculture, farming and rural areas.

crucial and directly determine farmers' products. Enterprises guide farmers' production according to market needs so the government does not need to interfere in market operation.

In summary, the role of the government in Yunyang's place brand management is positioning and promotion. It guarantees the funding of the branding and is the authorizer of place brand use, to avoid brand abuse and the free rider problem. Local enterprise is the user of the place brand and their main responsibility is to maintain their enterprise brand and guide production according to market rules. The farmers are the producers of the products, and therefore they need to maintain good quality products with the help and support from the government. It is worth noting that even though enterprise brands fall under the Natural Yunyang brand in the branding structure, the umbrella brand and the umbrella branded brands mutually promote each other. At the very beginning of Natural Yunyang branding, strong enterprise brands outweighed the Natural Yunyang brand and helped the Natural Yunyang brand acquire market recognition.

4.2.4. *Role of place brand in Yunyang*

In the branding Yunyang county, the government put effort into constructing the Natural Yunyang brand. At the very beginning, it was considered an effective tool to increase market channels for local enterprises and thereby strengthen e-commerce development. The initial aim of constructing the Natural Yunyang brand was to build an alliance of local agricultural producers. The main purpose of this was to integrate local resources and form a unified brand, then increase corporate income through strong brand influence. This is mainly used in the field of e-commerce. From the government's point of view, the economic benefits brought by a successful place brand to local enterprises have led to regional development, which is why the government has made every effort in brand building.

According to the Yunyang government working report of 2017, in 2016 the e-commerce transaction volume of Yunyang County was 890 million yuan, with an increase rate of 58.3%. The online retail sales were 296 million yuan, with an increase rate of 162%. There were a total of 2.112 million online agricultural product transactions, with an increase of 93.7%, and a sales volume of 152 million yuan, an increase of 101.3%. Such an achievement is not only due to the Natural Yunyang brand but a trinity effort of the local government (I21), including infrastructure construction, financial support, and place branding.

Infrastructure construction is the foundation, and the primary guarantee is the efficiency of product circulation. According to the 13th Five-Year Plan of Yunyang County, there are seven projects involving infrastructure, as shown in Figure 20. These basic projects involve all aspects of agricultural production.

Project	Main construction content and scale	Covering area	Construction period (year)
Rural pedestrian access and machine farm construction	Newly built rural pedestrian road of 3,000 kilometres, and farm road of 1,000 kilometres.	42 townships (streets) in the county	2016-2020
Basic farmland construction project	1-2 million mu of high-standard farmland areas. High standard basic farmland of 340,000 mu.	42 townships (streets) in the county	2016-2020
Agricultural mechanization upgrading project	The purchase of agricultural machinery and equipment, the construction of mechanized demonstration bases for planting and breeding, the promotion of agricultural machinery, the construction of service systems, and	42 townships (streets) in the county	2016-2020

	the construction of cooperatives for agricultural machinery.		
Comprehensive Control of agricultural non-point source pollution in Tunxi river basin of Yunyang County	The prevention and control of non-point source pollution in farmland, pollution control of livestock and poultry, pollution reduction of aquaculture, and surface runoff sewage purification.	Township streets in the Tunxi river basin	2016-2020
Ecological radar monitoring station and stereo automatic observation system	Standardized phantom operation gun station, scorpion-affected ammunition storage centre, radar monitoring, astronomical science observation centre, meteorological monitoring centre.		2016-2018
Meteorological Disaster Early Warning and Prevention Management Centre, Information Release Platform, Meteorological Bureau Garage Comprehensive Reconstruction	Renovation of external wall 4,000 m2 and integrated service facilities, disaster early warning and prevention management centre, information release platform, comprehensive renovation of the Meteorological Bureau garage, standardized construction for agricultural services.		2016-2018

Disaster prevention project	A total of 112 sub-projects, including: 8,063 mu of basic farmland reconstruction, 2,430 mu of flood control river, 25,560 mu of canal remediation, 224,457 mu of mountain Pingtang remediation, 12,000 cubic meters of dredging, 61.03 kilometres of new rural roads, and rebuilt villages 136.13 kilometres of highways, 1.25 square kilometres of small watersheds, 8 sub-projects for comprehensive development of the area, etc.		2016-2020

Figure 20.   The 13th Five-Year Agricultural and Rural Major Infrastructure Project in Yunyang County

The financial support is twofold: private enterprise development fund support and rural economic reform. The former includes financial docking between enterprises and the financial sector, and helping listed companies resolve related administrative issues. The later has five aspects, the main aim being to guarantee farmers' rights and interests. Rural economic reform includes quantitative determination of rural collective assets, equity investment reform, rural land transfer, agricultural socialization services and the establishment of a rural financial insurance system[33]. Quantitative determination of rural collective assets aims to clarify farmers' property rights to collective assets and thereby establish a new type of rural economic stock cooperative, improve the corporate governance structure, and standardize the income distribution system. Equity investment reform aims to guarantee that agricultural investment funds are all used in

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[33]农村集体资产量化确权，股权化投资改革，农村土地转让，农业社会化服务与农村金融保险体系的建立 in Chinese, according to The 13th Five-Year Plan for Agricultural and Rural Economic Development in Yunyang County.

agricultural fields, promote industrial development, and construct the "leading enterprises + professional cooperatives + farmers (poor households)" industrial development model and interest linking mechanism to achieve industrial development, leading to income increase for farmers. Rural land transfer work integrates scattered land, poorly managed orchards, tea gardens and other resources into the open market, attracting leading enterprises in agricultural industrialization to invest in the construction of agricultural production bases. Agricultural socialization services work contains a pilot of government purchases of agricultural public service and establishes a long-term market-oriented social services system. The rural financial insurance system supports commercial financial institutions providing loan financing to new agricultural business entities and providing financial interest subsidies.

On the basis of this infrastructure foundation and rural financial support, Yunyang county government conducts place branding. Infrastructure foundation and rural financial support are combinations of measures to adjust the specific conditions of each village and town in the region, but place brand building is the overall action. Companies and products that intend to use the Natural Yunyang brand have to meet unified standards. The promoting and marketing of Natural Yunyang brand is a government act. The local government encourages and supports companies creating and building their own brands with brand creation incentives.

Natural Yunyang brand is an important component of Yunyang County's promotion of local agricultural economic development, and the brand's success is based on sound infrastructure construction and financial support (I21). After several years of brand building, Natural Yunyang is not merely a brand that applies to agricultural products but a comprehensive place brand that incorporates tourism, industry development and environmental protection. Place branding of Yunyang county is a dynamic process, which is, on one hand, continuous over the past five years, and on the other, playing an increasing role. Natural Yunyang has developed to integrate local enterprises resources

into a holistic idea that guides and influences local industry and agricultural development, infrastructure construction, rural area development, tourism, and environmental policies. This does not outweigh other government work, but the Natural Yunyang brand has achieved certain success and become very important, therefore the local government needs to adjust local policies to guarantee no harm or conflict comes to the place brand.

4.2.5. *Reflection of Natural Yunyang*

There are only a few theoretical or practical frameworks that can guide the government to conduct umbrella branding (Frost, 2004). The successful branding practice of Yunyang County not only provides a practical model for how to manage place brand and enterprise brands in an umbrella structure, but also helps identify the ownership of a place brand. From the government's perspective, a place brand is a public good that can only be delivered by the government. In Yunyang's case, interviewees from both the government and local enterprises used the term "regional public brand" instead of "place brand" as they all recognize the public characteristics of place brand. The public attributes of Yunyang's brand support the idea in the existing literature that place branding is a public administration process. The first justification in the existing place branding literature is that place branding aims to solve public problems (Kotler, 2002, Kotler and Gertner, 2002). The reason Yunyang county constructed its place brand was because local enterprises met a development bottleneck and place branding was considered a solution to help them over this development problem. The second justification is that place branding is incorporated within the urbanization process in China (Berg and Bjrner, 2014, Björner, 2017b). The natural environment of Yunyang County is the basis for its production of quality agricultural products, but its infrastructure ensures the circulation of those products. In the brand building of Yunyang County, the construction of its infrastructure, including rural roads, logistical support systems and key service stations,

was coordinated by other departments. The construction decision officially released by the Yunyang government was Implementation Opinions on Brand Construction of Natural Yunyang (关于"天生云阳"品牌建设的实施意见), approved by the County People's Congress and county government. Therefore, it had a legalization procedure. In this sense, the place branding of Yunyang has become an urban policy that affects other aspects, such as industrial development. The major lesson that can be draw from the practice of Yunyang County's place branding is that it clarifies the power and responsibility in place brand management. By registering Yunyang County as a commercial brand, the government becomes the legal owner of the place brand and enterprise becomes the user. Under an umbrella brand structure, both place brands and enterprise brands can benefit from each other's efforts. Since the Natural Yunyang brand and local corporate brands are in a parent-child brand relationship, any unilateral good brand building behaviour can benefit the other side. Meanwhile, any increase in sales and prices of products can benefit farmers, so they are willing to take on quality control responsibilities. Therefore, both parties have a motivation to get involved in brand construction and the division of labour is clear.

However, is the government the party responsible for the public brand intellectual property? In the case of Yunyang, the brand is registered by the government. Even if it is not registered, the name of the government includes the name of the place, and the name of the place is equal to the name of the brand. According to this logic, the government is the owner of this regional public brand. However, in the development of a place, the role of the government is industrial policy regulator and social affairs manager (Hughes, 1994). It does not produce any commodities itself, nor is it a direct participant in the market economy. This means the owner and user of the place brand deviate. The government has ownership but does not produce or sell products. Therefore, the local government is not strictly the main body responsible for a place brand. Because of the publicity of the place brand, the brand abuse problem, and the low willingness of the enterprises, in Yunyang's case, means market regulation is out of order, and government

intervention is needed. Constructing a place brand as a way of delivering public good increases the efficiency and profit of enterprises and the income of farmers, while the funds invested by the government are recovered through increased taxes. Therefore, the government is essentially the brand policy maker and taxation subject.

As a lower-level county in Chongqing, Yunyang's place brand construction is inevitably affected at the city level. As part of the ecological conservation development district in northeast Chongqing, Yunyang is an ecological function zone and the main agricultural production area of Chongqing. This is the reason Yunyang County develops industry based on agriculture. Nowadays, the Natural Yunyang brand is not only a place brand for agricultural products but also a tourism brand for Yunyang. Its tourism promotion slogan is "a thousand miles Yangtze river, a natural Yunyang" (万里长江，天生云阳) This slogan was interpreted by Yunyang's tourism department as an extension and localization of Chongqing's Water and Mountain City Beautiful Land (山水之城·美丽之地). Similar to Wulong, Yunyang's place branding involves a lot of place management activity rather than promotion of the brand itself. Natural Yunyang is a useful tool to implement a national policy- targeted measures in poverty alleviation (精准扶贫 in Chinese).

4.3 Harmony Qijiang: a branding practice or just another ideology product?

Sections 4.1 and 4.2 use place branding to provides an in-depth inspection of Chinese place branding practice. Despite its strong Chinese characteristics, such practice and application in tourism and business development are common worldwide. In the initial research design, citizen's identity was only a part of the study. However, as the field research went deeper, I found a unique case, Harmony Qijiang brand building. The uniqueness of this case lies in it being built by the Committee Office for the Construction of Spiritual Civilization, which belongs to the practical department of the

propaganda system of the Chinese Communist Party. Due to the complicated structure of the Chinese propaganda system and propaganda work, this case is totally distinguished from others. Since the competent department is the Party and its government departments, the brand building presents an obvious propaganda of ideology. Before studying this case deeply, we need a brief retrospective on the construction of Chinese spiritual culture.

4.3.1. *A brief history of China's spiritual civilization construction*

The construction of spiritual culture refers to the progress people make in the subjective world while reforming the objective world. It embodies developments in education, science and cultural knowledge as well as improvement in people's thought, politics and morality (W17). According to the official explanation, guided by Marxism, socialist spiritual civilization relies on material civilization and its development provides mental strength, intellectual support and an ideological guarantee of material civilization. As an important feature of socialist society, socialist spiritual civilization is indispensable and has Chinese characteristics. The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party has pointed out, many times, that while attaching great importance to modernization, we should also try our best to build a socialist society with developed socialist spiritual civilization as an important guideline.

The construction of the socialist civilization was discussed for the first time in the fourth plenary session of the 11th CPC Central Committee, which was held between September 25th and 28th, 1979. It was put forward by Ye Jianying on the 30th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. In Ye's speech, he said that, while building a developed material civilization, the socialist spiritual civilization should also be built to improve people's level of education, science, culture and health, along with

lofty revolutionary ideals and morality. These are important goals of socialist modernization as well as necessary conditions for realizing the "four modernizations" (W17). On September 26th, 1986, the Resolution of the Guideline on Construction of Socialist Spiritual Civilization by the Central Committee of CPC was passed during the sixth plenary session of the 12th Central Committee. Guided by Marxism's basic principles, the resolution elaborates on the strategic position, fundamental tasks and basic guidelines of socialist spiritual civilization construction combined with China's practical situation. The document points out that socialist civilization, guided by Marxism, is the main feature, and an indispensable part, of socialist society. The construction of socialist civilization is the way to solve the principal contradiction of socialist society and a requirement in order to realize its fundamental aims. It is an important guarantee to uphold the socialist road and conduct modernization. The construction of a socialist spiritual civilization should be beneficial to socialist modernization with an overall revolution and opening up. In this way, the "four principal principles" can be adhered to. The fundamental task of construction of a socialist spiritual civilization should be to adapt to socialist modernization so as to cultivate socialist citizens with ideals, morality, culture and discipline. Thus, the quality of the morality and scientific culture of the whole people can be improved.

In October 1996, the *Resolution of Several Important Problems about Enhancing the Construction of Socialist Spiritual Civilization by the Central Committee of CPC* was examined and passed on the sixth plenary session of the 14th CPC Central Committee. This resolution points out that the construction of socialist spiritual civilization is guided by Marxism, Leninism and Maoism as well as Deng Xiaoping's theories about building a socialist society with Chinese characteristics. Meanwhile, it should adhere to CPC's basic guidelines with an emphasis on ideal moral construction, education and scientific culture. Armed with scientific theories, led by correct public opinion, shaped by noble spirit and encouraged by excellent work, we can cultivate socialist citizens with ideals, morality, culture and discipline. In this way, the ideal morality and

scientific culture of the whole people can be improved. The country could become a powerful, democratic and civilized socialist modern country by uniting and mobilizing all peoples of the nation.

According to the sixth plenary session of the 14th CPC Central Committee, in order to create a civilized city, improving the quality of the citizens and the civilization of the city should be goals. To create civilized towns and villages, improving the quality of farmers striving for a relatively comfortable life, and building new socialist villages should be the goals. In carrying out civilized activities, we should aim to serve people and society. Advanced collectives and individuals during modernization should be encouraged to form a positive atmosphere for the whole society. The construction of spiritual civilization should be practical and efficient with an objection to formalism. The conference established a CPC Guiding Committee for the Construction of Spiritual Civilization, and corresponding institutes were established in provinces, autonomous regions and municipal cities. With a series of guidelines and policies formulated by the CPC Central Committee, the whole country joined in the construction of socialist spiritual civilization.

The construction of socialist spiritual civilization has two aspects, the construction of ideal morality, and the construction of education, science and culture. The former is the main content of developing advanced culture and the latter is the basis of the former, but both provide mental strength and intellectual support for social development. Almost every aspect of material civilization construction involves socialist spiritual civilization, including economics, politics, culture, and social life. Therefore, it is not only the duty of the Department of Ideology, Culture and Education, but a long-term task for all departments and all people (W18).

The construction of spiritual civilization has always been an important part of the CPC

Central Committee's propaganda work, and it is now a specific subject with concrete content unlike the vague concept described by Lewisl (2002). In the *Instructive Guidance on Deepening the Construction of Massive Spiritual Civilization* issued in 2017, seven directions and sixteen specific aspects are prescribed for spiritual civilization construction. These involve every aspect of daily life and production. The case of Qijiang is an example of how this works and the role that place branding plays.

4.3.2. *The complex components of Harmony Qijiang*

The idea of Harmony Qijiang was put forward as early as 2003. As the construction of spiritual civilization went deeper, the initial slogan became a brand, which has lasted for over ten years. Its slogan changes all the time, but its work has not changed. It only adjusts to government plans and documents. That is why Harmony Qijiang has complex components.

Taking spiritual civilization construction in Qijiang District in 2016 as an example, the construction of Harmony Qijiang includes three parts, selecting moral models, conducting volunteering services for city civilization construction, and carrying out comprehensive village work.

The selection of moral models has six aspects. First, formulating the selection and recognition method of "touching models"[34] in Qijiang District. With corresponding standards, the selection and recommendation of the "touching individual" and moral model became easier and more normal. The role of moral models is to set a good example to common people so that they can actively take part in moral construction. Meanwhile, they can actively practice moral demands and cultivate civic virtues in daily life and work (I14). The other five aspects are propagation of moral models such

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[34] The moral model is those people or collectives who sacrifice the interests (or happiness) of the ego, but maintain the interests of the big (or happiness). It can be understood as a model of doing good.

as photographic propagation, roadshows around various towns, delivery by new media, TV interviews and guidance of public opinion.

The photographic propagation aims to recruit dozens of volunteers to do photography in villages, fields, factories and offices, so as to present their real life and work situations. Through these views, people can see the moral models' truth, goodness and beauty. At a larger scale, the moral models can be publicized in an all-round way.

The roadshows exhibit the volunteers' photographs, for example in Ying Panshan Square. With the abundant cultural tourism resources in Qijiang, great importance should be attached to key seasons such as summer, leisure time, village tourism, and so on, with long-term stable propagation in Dongxi, Hengshan, Gaomiao and Huaba. The exhibitions are combined with countryside tours. According to official statistics, in 2016, there were 20 exhibitions with over 40,000 attendees (P28). New media needs to tell micro stories of moral models, whose touching deeds are presented on new media platforms such as Qijiang Micro Release, Qijiang Micro Life, Qijiang Weibo, WeChat Official Account of Civilized Qijiang, Qijiang Forum, Beautiful Qijiang app and so on. So far, over 30 phases have been released at one phase a week. The Qijiang government is planning to enlarge its propagation channels by printing the micro stories and giving them out in middle and primary schools, villages and hotels. With one in each hand, the moral models' advanced stories can be promoted comprehensively.

TV interviews mainly refer to small interview programmes, such as *Nice People Around You in Qijiang*, which is produced by Qijiang TV station. According to the manager of the Spiritual Civilization Office in Qijiang district, this is a brand programme with a huge social influence. Besides reporting accidents, the local news media also organize small interviews, choosing backgrounds similar to the stories, such as a rural courtyard, barn, residential building or workshop, when moral models are invited to tell their stories, directly facing local people. Educating people about the

people around them is a really effective method, and this special programme has been broadcast 25 times since 2015.

Guidance of social public opinion means giving moral models noble treatment, so that other people believe that good people are well treated. On one hand, they should be well treated politically. For example, moral models are invited to many activities, such as the spring delegation worship meeting held annually by district committee and district government, Qijiang spring festival gala and massive Qijiang Yuanxiao art show. Representative models visit the city and the recent developments are introduced to them. On the other hand, their life is guaranteed to some extent. For example, some caring enterprises, complemented by local financial capital, donate a subsidy, and a district morality foundation has been established. Those moral models with tough lives and difficult entrepreneurship are assisted with capital ranging from 3,000 to 30,000 yuan. Overall, 103 moral models are donated to every year, and so far, 530,000 yuan has been collected and 220,000 yuan released.

The six aspects above are the main work contents of Harmony Qijiang in the district. The construction of the city's spiritual civilization mainly focuses on volunteering work because it represents a positive work attitude and reflects a sound image of social progress, indicating the deepening innovation in spiritual civilization construction (I14). As for the city's spiritual civilization construction, it has three aspects, the establishment of a volunteering work platform, volunteering programmes and the planning of work systems. Establishing a volunteering work platform can be further divided into three aspects. Firstly, Qijiang Volunteering Work Guidance Centre, Qijiang Volunteering Home, which covers an area of 200 square meters, with one office and three rooms (salon room, hatching room and training room), along with the library, meeting room and activity room of the district literary federation, serves as the guidance centre for the volunteering work in the whole district. The centre also takes charge of coordinated command, registration consultation, activity planning and

external exhibition. Meanwhile, it offers a platform for volunteer communication and training so that volunteers can have a base. Secondly, the streets, communities and villages in the whole district are to be covered with volunteering stations, and these demonstrative volunteering service stations established and perfected with a standard operation using the five standards, which are organs, system, team, activity and account. Some volunteering stations with these characteristics have already been established, such as Zhou Shuming Volunteering Station, named after the vice-president Zhou Shuming, Love Online Volunteering Station in Datong town and Yang Jiawan Community Volunteering Station in Wen Long Street. All the volunteers and service providers are community residents, so their relationships can be brought closer together. Thirdly, expanding the volunteering service to civilized companies would give play to their demonstrative functions. Different kinds of volunteering stations would be established according to their function. For instance, the Municipal Gardening Administration Bureau has established an urban volunteering service post and the District Transportation Bureau has established a green-path volunteering station, which offer volunteers the conditions to carry out their activities.

The volunteering projects have turned into normal projects organized by the government, from symbolic activity where the government just gave guidance and suggestions. Qijiang Spiritual Civilization Office has organized a series of volunteering service projects, such as Taking Art into Schools, Showing Qijiang City to Children from Poor Villages, Realizing Peoples' Small Wishes, Caring about the Urban Builders and Spreading Noble Traditions from Beautiful Villages. Many leaders have actively taken part in these project along with cadres and community residents. It is said that 32 leaders have taken part in the volunteering service activities, for ten hours each on average. By taking an active part in volunteering activities, government officials set a good example to common people. The top ten volunteering service projects include Visiting Left-behind Children, Loving Mother, Civilized Tourism in Qijiang - Comfortable for Living All Year Round, and Safety Babysitters. These important

volunteering service project characteristics make a Collection of Special Volunteering Service Projects in Qijiang in 2016 (綦江区 2016 年志愿服务特色项目汇编), which provides sound guidance for later volunteering work.

The work planning system is actually a cloud system applied to the whole area. This system has three levels, district, street and town (department or system), and village community. With online real-name registration, the volunteering cloud system is used to release projects, recruit and select volunteers, record their working time and evaluate their performance. By the end of December, 2016, there were 102,810 volunteers registered, serving 593 organizations, working on 321 projects for over 80,000 hours. Meanwhile, the official WeChat, Civilized Qijiang, Qijiang Online, and Qijiang Daily all help issue volunteering projects. Various volunteering service organizations, such as Love Online, Youth Volunteers Association, and Love Alliance actively took part in the propagation by opening the official WeChat and Weibo channels.

Picure 12.   Outdoor advertisement on a sidewalk in Qijiang. The left side is a community volunteer service board saying "the true wealth is the spirit, the true

noble is the civilization, the true happiness is the dedication, the true honour belongs to the volunteers, and praises you (the volunteers), the true elite of humanity". The right side is public propaganda about avoiding pornography, including AIDS publicity, illegal abortions, and pornography sites that damage youth.

Through these three measures, urban volunteering projects in Qijiang have become normal branding[35] (I14). The last is the construction of rural spiritual civilization, which is a unique phenomenon. As a matter of fact, Qijiang Spiritual Civilization Office is only an executive office, while the district committee and government are responsible for the design. The reason for this division of work is that rural work is usually complicated.

First, a scheme called Reconstructing Beautiful Villages was issued jointly by the district committee and government, in which rural civilization was included. The general goals of the scheme are to live comfortably, produce effectively, live beautifully and get together harmoniously. There are also standards with five reforms, six processes and three goods. The five reforms are reforming dangerous houses, improving drinking water, and rebuilding kitchens, restrooms and colony houses. The six processes are the possession of courtyards, joint roads, rubbish collection facilities, sewage treatment facilities, Internet and close-circuit television. The three goods are good appearance, good environment and good life. Meanwhile, a Notice on Enhancing Construction of Rural Civilization During Building Beautiful Villages was issued jointly by the propaganda department of the district committee and District Civilization Office to vigorously promote traditional culture, folk culture and farming culture with a civilized environment, civilized customs and civilized service. In this way, Harmony Qijiang was built. District meetings are held to assign rural civilization work in 23 demonstrative villages with guidance and instruction. During the process, the demonstrative villages

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[35]品牌化 in Chinese, branding here refers to some volunteer service projects becoming famous brands.

can join a general scheme with their local characteristics and five-harmony measures so that rural civilization construction can be better integrated with rural development.

The second reason concerns linking the government at all levels. The district government organizes a special meeting every month about the progress of construction in various towns and demonstrative villages, and finds solutions to problems by establishing a regular special meeting system. A district leadership contact system has been established so that related leaders can solve difficulties and troubles in work. Each village is allocated one town leader and cadre to arrange the concrete daily work of building beautiful villages. A departmental assistance system has been established to assist village projects. One village is assisted by one district department and coordinated by two or three departments to solve problems of capital and technology in the process. In addition, a responsibility implementation system should be established with clear functions and responsibilities for the 23 units so that they can deepen their work in each demonstrative village. Meanwhile, an urban-rural co-building system should be established for civilized units so that they can better cooperate with each other and offer labour, materials and capital according to a unified arrangement. The co-construction should be included in the inspection and acceptance. Through this linear leadership management at all levels, organizational leadership is enhanced with effective linkages.

The district committee and government are also responsible for the overall planning, coordination and establishment of guarantee systems. Specifically, the rural civilization construction should be regarded as a project with a proper government budget. The collection of funds should adhere to the principles of financial input, striving for more town facilities, external assistance, and farmers' self-collection. Special subsidy funds for the construction of a rural rubbish collection system, new rural demonstrative points, dangerous buildings, drinking water projects, rural restrooms, overall environment treatment, the construction of highways, service road, land reclamation and methane

tanks should be all invested in demonstrative villages collectively. Eight municipal demonstrative villages should be supplied with 100 million yuan per year for three consecutive years. A district supervision department has been established to inspect the construction situation monthly. Promotion of the construction of beautiful villages is included in a yearly assessment. Those who complete work on time are encouraged with awards, while those who conduct themselves badly are investigated and punished.

The main job of the Spiritual Civilization Office in rural spiritual civilization construction is to strengthen the concept of Harmony Qijiang by organizing activities. Model families are selected to carry out activities like Homes Affected by Rural Civilization. Village rules and regulations are amended and perfected to guide people to abandon backward customs, particularly rural burial customs. Villagers are encouraged to rebuild their living environments with improved roadsides, personal courtyards, fronts and backs of houses, empty fields, public trash and grass. Villagers are encouraged to plant flowers and trees to make beautiful and harmonious villages. Good people, civilized families and demonstrative party families are selected for their social morality, vocational morality, family virtue and personal morality. Through these acts, villagers are encouraged to help others, protect public facilities and the environment, do business honestly and build a pure and fair atmosphere. Rural areas also have their own volunteer teams to organize, the three-cares volunteering service[36]. By establishing village studies, village activity rooms and field training rooms, villages can enjoy convenient cultural service. An artistic propagation team, theme activities and traditional festivals, such as Our Festival, can enrich people's cultural lives.

In terms of the work content, the construction of Harmony Qijiang is complicated and

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[36] The three cares refers to care for others, care for society and care for nature. Specifically, care for others means care for lonely elders, left-behind children, peasant workers and the disabled so that they can feel social warmth and have a happy life. Care for society means the popularization of civilized etiquette and knowledge, the maintenance of social order, guidance of civilized transportation, and construction of primary-level culture so as to form civilized social customs. Care for nature means protection of ecology and the environment, construction of ecological civilization, and the cultivation of nature so as to create a comfortable natural environment.

plural, based on municipal propagation demand (I14). The propagation in Chongqing is determined by the propaganda department of the CPC Central Committee. No matter how complicated it is, it is essentially propagation work, ideologically linear management. Although the concept that Harmony Qijiang is a place brand hasn't been detected in any existing literature, it is defined as a brand for Qijiang spiritual civilization construction in many official documents, and this is even confirmed by the Chongqing government. That is to say, Harmony Qijiang is now part of Qijiang from the perspective of the government, and it mainly belongs to citizens' ideology.

We should be clear about the role of the government in Harmony Qijiang. The government is the main subject of construction in both the Wulong tourism brand (covered in Section 5.1) and the Natural Yunyang brand (covered in Section 5.2). However, Harmony Qijiang is in the charge of the Party committee department. The different subjects lead to different natures. Harmony Qijiang has less economic development orientation than Heritage of Nature, Wulong for the World or Natural Yunyang.

4.3.3. *Role of the Spiritual Civilization Office in Harmony Qijiang construction*

In Harmony Qijiang, there is no market subject, and the Spiritual Civilization Office, affiliated to the Propaganda Department is the subject. Since there is no economic effect, spiritual civilization construction is totally funded by the government. Besides organizing all the activities, the Spiritual Civilization Office also serves as the coordinator of the government departments. We can see the coordinating role of the government in Sections 5.1 and 5.2, but obviously the Spiritual Civilization Office enjoys a higher command. Of all the government departments, the Propaganda Department, as a Party committee department, is at the highest level (I14, I20). Therefore, the coordination of the Wulong Tourism Department or Commercial

Department with other government departments is usually done by the district committee or district government. Meanwhile, the Spiritual Civilization Office in Qijiang district has the right to ask for cooperation from various government departments at the same level. The case of reforming public institutions offered by the Propaganda Department of Qijiang District Committee is a good example., The Qijiang Sichuan Opera Troupe was once faced with bankruptcy for improper operation. But with the help of the Propaganda Department of Qijiang District Committee, it was transformed into a local cultural centre, and then into the Yunan Culture Development Company. It was successfully transformed into a company from a government public institution[37]. First, from the Sichuan Opera Troupe, Qijiang Local Culture Centre was established. The status of the original staff did not change, but they had to compete for posts. Then it was transformed into the Yunan Culture Development Company with basic management by the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), oriented management by the Culture Committee, and self-operation of the company itself. Activities of public welfare and commerce are now conducted separately. Thus, the original Sichuan Opera Troupe could survive. In this case, the Spiritual Civilization Office in Qijiang District coordinated the SASAC, the Culture Committee, the Industrial and Commercial Bureau, Qijiang Organization Commission Office and so on. After the reformation, its public activities mainly serve spiritual civilization construction, creating special performances themed around tourism, safety and clean governance. During the interview, the interviewee mentioned that market reconstruction of the Sichuan Opera Troupe, affiliated to the Culture Commission, should not be in the charge of the Spiritual Civilization Office. However, since the Culture Commission, Industrial and Commercial Bureau and Qijiang Organization Commission Office are all at the same level, they have no right to ask for cooperation from other departments. This is why the coordinated role of the Spiritual

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[37] Sichuan Opera Troupe is a public institution with balance allocation, which means it has a certain stable and recurring income, but the income can't make up for recurrent expenditure, so the balance needs to be complemented by the national budget.

Civilization Office is greater than the other government departments at the same level.

The Spiritual Civilization Office plays an important role in the construction of Harmony Qijiang. Unlike other tourism and commerce brands where the market plays a core role, the government undertakes the expenditure, activity organization and propaganda during spiritual civilization construction. However, residents play the largest role in Qijiang's spiritual civilization construction, with autonomous participation. To some extent, the government's function is to offer capital support and guidance for many activities, for example, improving the living environment and sanitation in rural areas. The Spiritual Civilization Office once held competitions among villages, calling upon villagers to protect the surrounding environment. Some villages and families were even rewarded spiritually. As Qijiang Civilization Office said, although the effect was slight in the beginning, the environment in many villages improved gradually with little rubbish around. Even volunteering activities came to be organized by the residents themselves, autonomously, with guidance and support from the Spiritual Civilization Office. Many awards events are totally completed by the residents, while the Spiritual Civilization Office only offers prizes and capital support.

As a kind of spiritual public brand, Harmony Qijiang aims to promote local residents' sense of identity and belonging (I14). The subject of productivity involves government departments, the Spiritual Civilization Office and residents themselves. The work of the Spiritual Civilization Office in all districts and counties in Chongqing, and across the whole country, is prescribed by the CPC Central Committee Spiritual Civilization Construction Commission at the beginning of each year. However, only the important directions are set, without concrete content. Therefore, Qijiang district has the right to decide its own way of working. Of the 38 districts and counties in Chongqing, Harmony Qijiang is the only successful case of a brand. This contributes to the co-construction between government and residents coordinated by the Spiritual

Civilization Office, as residents can become direct stakeholders in the process with autonomous participation. Successful cases in Nanan District and Nanhu community in Chongqing are similar in operation. Nanhu community is located in the centre of Nanping District with an area of one square kilometre, 81 buildings and 6,424 households. There are 24,460 permanent residents, of whom most are immigrant workers or elders. The Community Commission put forward the idea of benefiting the self, benefiting others and benefiting the homeland with the development of volunteering services. The working idea is similar to that of Qijiang District, establishing volunteering stations and selecting moral models. But the creation lies in the building of the volunteering service system. The recruitment and registration of community volunteering services, as well as a management system using integral cards, have been perfected. Meanwhile, five social units in the community have been organized to establish a volunteering alliance. Volunteers who participate in the volunteering service get one point (called an integral) per hour, and they can exchange services with others. For instance, with two integrals, you can have your blood glucose monitored for free, and one integral is equal to three yuan for a haircut. With four integrals, you can have a lunch in community canteen for free and so on. In this way, residents' activeness in volunteering can be stimulated. Meanwhile, the Micro-benefit Centre in the community serves as the base of social organization, activities and exhibitions. It covers an area of 400 square meters, and has many functional rooms, such as a meeting room, training room, activity room, exhibition room and so on. For social organizations the community offers space and office equipment for free. Experts are invited to organize training with specific development planning for social associations. Thus, the Micro-benefit Centre has become a real home for social organizations, serving 43 organizations with a certain influence, with over 6,000 members. Its services cover public welfare, charity, housekeeping, education, etc. For residents of Nanhu community, all their recreational needs can be satisfied by the social organizations at the Micro-benefit Centre.

Picure 13.　A singing interest group practicing in the Micro-benefit Centre, Nanhu (微益坊) (the author)

Nanhu community was named the National Advanced Star Home for the Aged, National Advanced Party Organization at Primary Level, and National Demonstrative Community for Harmony Community Construction. It was awarded the Most Beautiful Volunteering Service Community during the Four 100 Learning-from-Lei Feng National Promotion Activity. However, during the field research, the residents could seldom name these titles. Instead, they were familiar with the function of the Micro-benefit Centre and the concept of benefit of the self, benefit of others and benefit of the homeland. From the Micro-benefit Centre, we can see the donation and sharing spirit of community residents, institutes and grassroots governments. The concept of sharing can vigorously stimulate the enthusiasm of people of all ages. Guided by the government, residents can maintain social morality and public order spontaneously, building a sound community atmosphere, and this is what the government documents demand. As a result, residents in Nanhu community have a comfortable leisure life, as

Picture 14 shows.

Picure 14.   Residents enjoying afternoon tea in Nanhu community tea house (the author)

4.3.4. *Socialism spiritual civilization: what has been selling?*

Since the official document release in 1986, the sermon of socialism spiritual civilization has been delivered nation-wide in China for many years. Under pressure from China's rapid marketization process and tremendous material civilization development, the construction of spiritual civilization by the Communist Party of China survived, and the reasons behind it are worth covering. The reason for the success of Harmony Qijiang and Nanhu community is, as Lewisl (2002) argues, that the economic liberalization and reaction to political decentralization forced the propaganda department to change its working ideas and adopt innovative and adaptive ways to carry

out propaganda work. Propaganda work in China is no longer entirely top-down, but integrated with the spontaneity of residents. However, when spiritual civilization is constructed in a branding way, we must wonder if socialism spiritual civilization construction is so important that not only do the government value it but residents are willing to participate in it, then what has been selling the process? According to the cases and materials collected during the field research, there are three elements of socialism spiritual civilization construction, ideology propaganda and education, civic morality, and civic science quality.

The cores of socialist spiritual civilization construction are the propagation of political concepts and education in ideology, in three parts. Firstly, the promotion of socialist core values aims to integrate these values into economic and social development practice as well as people's daily lives and production. With educational guidance, public promotion, cultural edification, practice, systematic guarantees and so on, socialist core values can be turned into people's firm beliefs and change people's behaviours (P29). Secondly, education in ideals and beliefs aims to make the masses believe in socialism with Chinese characteristics, theories, systems and culture, so that they can consciously become firm believers and loyal practitioners of the lofty ideals of communism and the common ideal of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Meanwhile, they should keep up with CPC Central Committee ideologically and practically (P29). In practice, the public should be led to read original works, learn about original texts and understand the original truth so as to better master leaders' speeches or government documents. With a good knowledge of these governing ideas and new ideological strategies, their ideas can be united. Thirdly, education in patriotism, which is officially at the core of Chinese national spirit and its spiritual gene, aims to realize the dream of Chinese rejuvenation. The main purpose is to enhance residents' patriotic feelings and national awareness with great sense of identity and belonging. Thus, patriotism becomes a firm belief and the spiritual reliance of each Chinese person (P29). Picture 11 in Section 4.4.4 (outdoor advertisements in core

business circles) shows all the factors above. In fact, outdoor advertisements with similar contents are commonly seen in the streets of Chongqing.

Civic morality includes citizens' morals and social culture construction. Citizens' morals include social morality, vocational morality, family virtues and personal morality. Social morality refers to good manners, helping others, protection of public facilities and the environment as well as the observation of rules and laws. Vocational morality refers to dedication to work, honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, service to the public and donation to society. Family virtues refer to respect for old people and love for children, harmonious conjugal relationships, frugality in household management and neighbourhood unity. Personal morality refers to patriotism, donation, observation of laws, great virtue, mercy, uprightness, kindness, industriousness and bravery. To sum up, people are encouraged to be good citizens, good employees and good family members.

Picure 15.   Outdoor propaganda on a sidewalk in Qijiang saying "practicing

etiquette and cultivating morality starts from childhood"

Social culture means the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture, in particular, traditional Chinese festivals. Meanwhile, the revolutionary spirit formed by CPC leaders during revolution and construction should be added to traditional Chinese culture and inheritance. For example, many festivals are held by Qijiang Spirit Civilization Office (Figure 21).

Festival	Activities and contents
Spring Festival and Lantern Festival	Highlighting the themes of happiness, peace, and the prosperity of the country. Carrying out activities such as warming up and offering love, welcoming condolences, sending Spring Festival couplets (to the old and poor), visiting gardens, and community neighbourhood festivals.
Ching Ming Festival	Relying on red resources such as the Lijiang Martyrs Cemetery, the Shijie Red Army Martyrs' Tomb, and the Shijie Red Army Monument, activities such as commemorating the ancestors, remembering the martyrs, and sweeping the graves.
Dragon Boat Festival	Highlighting the themes of loving the motherland, seeking innovation, and harmonious coexistence between man and nature. Carrying out resident festival activities, cultural entertainment, physical fitness, patriotic health and popular science propaganda activities.
Qixi Festival	Highlighting the themes of loyalty to love, and family harmony. Carrying out activities such as the friendship/dating meetings and traditional wedding culture.
Mid-Autumn Festival	Highlighting the themes of solidarity and reunion, and

	celebrating the harvest. Carrying out activities such as the Mid-Autumn Festival, the party, poetry and so on.
Double Ninth Festival	Highlighting the themes of respecting the elderly, cherishing youth, and carrying out activities such as filial piety, respect for the elderly, helping the disabled, and hiking.

Figure 21.   Activities for carrying forward Chinese traditional culture, modified from the document *Notice on the Serious Implementation of the Our Festival Series of Theme Activities*, Chongqing Qianjiang District Spiritual Civilization Construction Committee Office (重庆市綦江区精神文明建设委员会办公室关于认真开展 “我们的节日”系列主题活动的通知)

Civic science quality means acquainting the public with scientific knowledge, spirit, thought, and methods. Specifically, young people's interest in science, innovation awareness and practical ability should be improved. Leading cadres and public officials' science awareness and decision-making ability should be elevated. Labourers and farmers' abilities in scientific production should be promoted along with the scientific value of world and atheism education. At the same time, it objects to feudalistic superstition and heresy as well as ignorant and backward ideas. In Qijiang District, we find only the case of objection to rural federal custom, and only leading cadres are organized to study the party's theories without any cultivation of scientific quality for the youth.

In fact, socialist spiritual civilization construction is a hodgepodge. According to *Instructive Guidance on Deepening the Construction of Massive Spiritual Civilization* issued in 2017, spiritual civilization construction includes massive spiritual civilization construction of party theories and socialist core values, practical construction of massive spiritual civilization, promotion of people's quality in scientific culture and

education as well as reformation of the social environment and leadership of the construction by CPC, which adds up to five projects and 23 items. Although not all 23 items are covered, Harmony Qijiang is still a complicated work. Its complexity lies in work contents from all spiritual civilization construction constantly being added to this project. Much content has been added to Harmony Qijiang since its first emergence in 2003, which leads to cumbersome work. From the latest work report in 2018, we find that Harmony Qijiang covers agriculture (Beautiful Village - Harmony Qijiang). For the complete complicated work contents, Harmony Qijiang is defined as a local spiritual civilization brand by the Propaganda Department in Qijiang District. That is to say, all these achievements aim to build a harmonious society for residents.

4.3.5. *Linking spiritual civilization to place branding*

There is no doubt that Harmony Qijiang is an ideology transmission project delivered by the CCP Propaganda Department, and public service projects delivered by departmental cooperation. Is it, however, reasonable to consider it as a place branding attempt despite the claims of government officials.

As mentioned in the literature review, residents have always been an important stakeholder in place branding, and researchers put great efforts into investigating how residents participate in place branding. According to Braun et al. (2012), residents are one component of place brand, ambassadors who convey the place branding information and implement their rights thorough the political legitimization of place branding. In the case of Harmony Qijiang, residents are an integral part, creating place identity through their behaviour, thought and characteristics, and ultimately creating the image of Harmony Qijiang. They are also the authority information carriers for outside audiences, since whether Qijiang is a comfortable and harmonious place to live is

determined by the residents rather than the propaganda. The residents are the voters who elect local leaders and government officials. Therefore, Harmony Qijiang, as an official local policy approved by the district government, has, at least nominally, a valid legitimization process. As this is an inter-place process, the brand of Harmony Qijiang is a inside-to-outside identity construction, which avoids the pitfall, pointed out by Braun et al. (2012), of developing artificial brands imposed from outside. However, there is no mutual communication or consultation between residents and the government as this is a top-down process. Even though Merrilees et al. (2009) says that residents' expectations for a place brand are very different from those of local officials, no evidence from the local residents of Qijiang verifies this point. Public meetings, as instruments for deciding an appropriate brand identity for the locality (Bennett and Savani, 2003), or any similar coordination mechanism, have not been witnessed in the case.

The Harmony Qijiang project does fulfil, or at least aims to fulfil, the needs of local residents and increases their satisfaction, which is one fundamental function of place branding (Dinnie, 2011). Harmony Qijiang, as an integral part of socialism spiritual civilization, is not only interpreted as a spiritual product but also as public service satisfying resident's needs. Spiritual products are officially interpreted as products of people's spiritual labour and cultural creations that meet the needs of spiritual and cultural life. Many activities related to Harmony Qijiang ,such as the selection of moral models, cultural evenings, etc. are spiritual products. In addition to entertainment, the other roles of spiritual products are education and inspiration, improving the ideological, cultural and moral level of society, cultivating and establishing a correct outlook on life, world outlook and social values, and patriotism education. Through the supply of spiritual products, the identity of the resident can be reshaped. There is no doubt that the pursuit of spiritual products is one of the basic physiological desires of human beings, but the government determining the content of spiritual products leads to the inability of residents to choose. Of course, this is not the full case, for example, the

arrangement of the reunion of left-behind children and their parents is intended to meet the emotional needs of residents, as is material care, such as condolences for the elderly or the relief of veterans. In China and western countries, government works are inclined towards social welfare. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the spiritual and material concerns of the residents greatly improve their satisfaction. Therefore, transferring this element of government work to place branding is effective.

Place branding is, as Kavaratzis (2012) points out, public and political. Place branding in the case of Qijiang is, at least partially, a public management process. The spiritual cultivation and ideological education functions of Harmony Qijiang show that place branding is a political representation in both a visible and invisible way (Vanolo, 2017).

CHAPTER 5. THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

The party is leading everything in the seven aspects of industry,

agriculture, business, education, military affairs, politics, and the

party.

------Mao Zedong

Speech on the enlarged central party conference

1962

Chapter 4 provides a detailed description of the three major aspects of place branding, tourism, commerce and resident identity building. This chapter provides an overall discussion of the case study, summarizing the role of government in Chinese place branding, manifested in three aspects, funding support, place brand management and coordination between stakeholders. It expounds the role of place branding, how the place branding process is understood by government departments and the characteristics of place branding. Conclusions are reached on the basis of the interviews and governmental documents from Chongqing, to give readers a comprehensive understanding of the Chongqing branding process.

Although many scholars do not think that China's present economic system is a socialist market economic system (Bremmer, 2009), the foundation of its market-oriented economic operation has been established. It is an economic system under gradual transition, in which open competition is carried out in some areas while other areas are monopoly-limited. The thinking and management methods of the planned economy still exist in China. To be clear, the modern market economic system does not exclude government intervention. In Chapter 5, the author explains the

government's contribution to place brand construction in the case of Chongqing's districts and counties. While the Chinese market economy is gradually improving, government management is important for establishing a stable economic and social order, which objectively requires the government to scientifically position its role. The government, in essence, serves the market, enterprises and people. The government is required to regulate behaviour, make scientific and rational strategies for regional economic and social development, guide the behaviour of economic entities in an orderly manner, and create a good external environment (Chen, 2017). Similarly, the government plays an important role in the construction of place brands.

5.1 Funding sponsor and investor

As a main funding sponsor and investor in place branding, the government's support for branding is both direct and indirect capital.

Direct capital investment includes most of the brand promotion expenses and a portion of infrastructure investment. Indirect capital support includes the construction of financing platforms and financial support for related industries and enterprises. These two forms of financial support are not antagonistic but complement each other to jointly ensure the smooth operation of branding activities.

Due to the hysteresis effect of brand, it is difficult to gain income in the early stages of place branding. Therefore, the stakeholders in the region have no motivation for initial brand investment and the marketing funds during early periods all come from the government. In the middle and late stages, with the brand effect obtained, some stakeholders are willing to bear part of the cost of brand building, but due to the public nature of place branding, stakeholders are more willing to contribute to the parts that fulfil their own interests. This mostly applies to local enterprises. Other stakeholders believe that the construction cost of a place brand should be borne by the government. Therefore, brand activities based on government funds do not change in essence

through the stages of brand building. The government bears almost all the branding cost, which, however, is insignificant compared to investments in infrastructure construction. In practice or theory, it is difficult to define whether infrastructure investments are part of the costs of place branding. The interviewees from Chongqing government clearly state that infrastructure investment should (at least partially) be counted into the cost of place branding. They believe that perfect infrastructure is the foundation of any good place brand. The three most important stakeholders in the case of Chongqing - the government, enterprises and residents - all think that infrastructure construction is essential. Compared to the developed regions on the southeast coast of China, Chongqing still resembles the underdeveloped provinces in the west, where the infrastructure is different from areas with mature place brands such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou or Hong Kong. Some interviewees from the government think that the infrastructure of a region involves all aspects of the region, and the place brand is no exception, so the investment in infrastructure is an investment in place brand.

A government financing station, also called a local financing platform is a company established by a local government via allocated land, equities, fees, treasury bonds and other assets, whose assets and cash flow reach financing standards. The company is supplemented with financial subsidies if necessary as repayment commitment, for the purpose of undertaking various funds, and applying the funds to local public utilities. This practice is common in tourism brand building and commercial brand building. The financing station is funded by the market, but guaranteed by the local government. It is very effective for the government in the early stages of brand building, but the problem is that market capital dominates brand building, making the government lose control. This is why the Wulong Karst Group has undergone three restructurings as described in the previous chapter. From the initial market investment to the government holding 51% at the end, Wulong District used market capital to develop local tourism, build the Wulong tourism brand, make the local economy grow, and finally achieve nationalization through share repurchase. The financial support from related industries

and enterprises included tax reductions and financial subsidies, to promote and support the development of local enterprises. For example, Wulong District Government gave tax-free subsidies for rural tourism projects such as agritainment. Yunyang County government not only reduced taxes but also gave direct subsidies for specific agricultural products. This is common practice in other districts and counties.

It can be seen that the government's funds and resources are mainly used in areas where funds are insufficient and attracting market capital is difficult during place brand construction. Infrastructure investment is the basis of regional development, and accounts for the largest proportion, while the brand promotion expenses are fully funded by the government. At the same time, the financing station and subsidies are used as government resources to fill the gaps of direct government funding. It is worth noting that the construction of spiritual civilization cannot generate economic benefits because of its ideological education and publicity for residents. Therefore, all sources of funds are government grants.

5.2 Place brand manager and marketing activity initiator and organizer

Another important role of the government is place brand management. This is reflected in the absolute control of brand positioning, branding elements and infrastructure, as well as the licensing of the brand (see the case of Yunyang). In Chongqing, the district and country where building a place brand is explicitly proposed government agencies manage the place brand. Generally speaking, there are two kinds. The first is managed by a specific department. For example, Chongqing's tourism brand construction is in the charge of the Chongqing Tourism Bureau, which is also the place brand management department. The second is a specially set up brand management office, such as the Natural Yunyang Brand Management Office. Another special management method is where the highest level government department in the region is responsible for brand building, such as the example of Wulong tourism branding in Section 5.1.

In all cases in Chongqing, the positioning and slogan of the place brand are finalized by the relevant government department. But this does not mean that the government carries out professional brand positioning. Usually, the government employs professional practice and academic teams to position and plan the place brand. Brand elements including the slogan and VI system design are outsourced to professional branding or advertising companies. The government believes that infrastructure is the most important part of brand construction. But infrastructure is neither clearly defined as part of a place brand nor completely independent of place brand. It is the foundation of a successful place brand. As described in Section 4.1, government departments take infrastructure to be part of public service (see Section 4.3.2), either as a brand communication element or directly as part of the place brand. Academically, there is controversy about the role of infrastructure in place branding. From the cases in Chongqing, no clear solution can be seen.

Government departments at all levels and public institutions are the main marketers, promotion activity initiators and organizers of place branding. As a marketer of place brand, the government adopts a multi-level communication method, the most important of which are city image propaganda videos. City image propaganda videos are mainly broadcast by traditional TV media, including CCTV, provincial and municipal TV stations, the BBC, ABC and NBC. They include pictures of cultural life in documentaries such as *A French Girl in Chongqing*. At the same time, as an initiator and organizer of promotion activity, the government also uses official media to promote branding activities.

The most rich and commonly used marketing method is organizing events, including promotion meetings, festivals, trade fair exhibitions and performance galas. Taking the Chongqing New Year cultural tourism activity of 2019 as an example, the tourism departments of all districts and counties organized a total of 276 activities during the

Spring Festival (see Attachment 2). Chongqing Tourism Bureau organized 36 municipal art activities (see Attachment 3), 37 exhibitions of cultural relics and museums (see Attachment 4), 70 intangible cultural heritage activities (see Attachment 5) and 11 mass culture activities (see Attachment 6). The commercial department and propaganda department organized similar events.

The promotion conference is a promotion or introduction event designed to help the government promote its own characteristics, products and policies to enterprises, social organizations and groups, thus promoting exchange and bringing benefits for both parties. It includes the transmission of information, such as cultural values and human resources policies. Promotion conferences are usually held in the city's convention centres, star hotels, auditoriums, stadiums and other places. The face-to-face communication between the company and the promotion targets is helpful for introducing products, services, ideas, etc., and increasing mutual understanding through answering questions on the spot. They create an atmosphere the promotes the ideal bilateral inspection effect. They can also be used in conjunction with festivals, anniversaries, and other events with special meaning to deepen the promotion effect. However, in view of the high cost of propaganda, travel, etc., the cost of publicizing in such a form is relatively high.

There are two types of exhibition, traditional fairs and modern expositions. Fairs are divided into market fairs and temple fairs in China. They are extensive, with merchants and consumers, agricultural products and industrial products on show. Large-scale, complex, comprehensive exhibitions are still called fairs today, while a professional exhibition with a trading focus is called an exposition. An exhibition is not for trading, but mainly for publicity.

There is also a large-scale conference that combines the promotion conference and the exhibition. This form of activity is generally organized by the Chongqing Municipal

Government. An example is the Western China International Fair for Investment of Inland Opening-Up (WCIFIT), which has been held for 21 consecutive years. Although it is called a fair officially, its nature is far greater than this. Taking the 21st WCIFIT held in 2018 as an example, the activities included: the exhibition with promotion (New Era China Economic Exhibition, Western Cooperation Exhibition, and Chongqing Exhibition); the signing ceremony of major economic and trading projects; a theme forum for pure meeting purposes with famous economists and Chongqing politicians invited to give speeches; the Tour of Central Enterprises to Chongqing with activities (including symposiums, dinners for participating guests and field research) to enhance exchange between business and the locals; high-level meetings (main leaders of the Chongqing Municipal Government conducting in-depth negotiations with business leaders, foreign company guests, leaders of national ministries, commissions and other provinces and cities).

Festivals refer to events organized by the government to increase influence, drive economic development or promote culture. They can be divided into natural, social, political, historical, national, international, leisure, cultural and economic festivals based on the resources. Since local resources are not only natural or historical, They can also be innovative (for cultural and economic festivals) or new festival resources can be discovered. The human factor is important in cultural and economic festivals, which have obvious commercial features and regional economic characteristics. The outward appearance of the festival is based on culture, while its essence is economic benefit. The economic effects of the festival implicitly exist within its cultural atmosphere. Festivals often promote locally advantaged resources. The theme of festivals is always cultural, such as the tourism festival, ski festival, kite festival, fashion festival, music festival, beer festival, watermelon festival, lychee festival, camellia festival (the camellia is the city flower of Chongqing), mountaineering festival or hotpot festival held in Chongqing.

The last common form is the performance gala, a form of activity with Chinese characteristics. There are time-based events, such as New Year's Day Art Gala, March 8th Art Gala, May 4th Art Gala, June 1st Art Gala, Mid-Autumn Art Gala, National Day Art Gala, and Spring Festival Art Gala. There are events based around themes, including the Integrity Art Gala, Nurses Day Art Gala, Jianjun Festival Art Gala, etc., or industry, including the Industrial and Commercial Art Gala, Homeland Art Gala, Community Art Gala, Campus Art Gala, Military Camps Art Gala, etc. This type of gala is characterized by entertainment and socializing. The initiators are all government agencies, but the residents and social groups participate spontaneously. At the same time, because the government is the main initiator, such activities have a political propaganda purposes (Picture 16).

Picure 16.   Double Ninth Festival Gala of Huilongwan community, Qijiang District, Chongqing. The top line on the stage banner says "bathing the wind of the 19th People's Congress Meeting, conveying Chinese virtue" (the author)

In addition to the large-scale events held at the municipal level, districts and counties

also hold complex events such as the Real Estate Exhibition & City Shopping Tour Festival (Picture 17) organized by Jiulongpo District Government. This event is not only an exhibition, but also a fair and a tourism festival. There is a performance show The event is organized by as many as six government departments (Urban and Rural Construction Committee, Commercial Bureau, Tourism Bureau, Yangjiaping Business Area Committee, High-tech Zone Management Committee Economic Development Bureau, and High-tech Zone Management Committee Construction Bureau). There are also 21 coordinating government departments, including industry and commerce, quality inspection, fire protection, health, finance, publicity, and gardening. The sheer number of organizers and co-organizers shows the complexity of this event.

Picure 17.　Jiulongpo district, the slogan at the top of the stage is "high-tech Jiulongpo, beautiful scenic city"

5.3 Internal and external coordination

A coordinator, to accommodate the conflicting needs, priorities and expectations of all stakeholders, is required for effective place brand management (Hankinson, 2010). Hankinson, however, does not clarify who that coordinator should be. In the case of Chongqing, we find the government acting as coordinator of place branding, and there is internal and external government coordination.

Internal government coordination refers to the coordination of the vertical and horizontal relationship within the government that enhances collaboration and integration in the administrative system. In order to adapt to changes in the external environment, the government's administrative departments must handle relationships well. The vertical and horizontal relationship refers to the coordination between the horizontal departments and the hierarchical departments of the government. The main method is establishing a horizontal coordination organization, and clearly defining the division of power and authority, which includes balancing conflicts of interest between government departments at all levels. Coordination between the hierarchical departments is mainly achieved through authorization, power appointment, and administrative supervision.

The scope of external government coordination is extensive. Broadly speaking, external coordination can be seen as a reflection of the relationship between the government's administrative department and society. In China, government departments are directly and widely involved in social life and undertake the task of managing society. There is an interactive relationship between government departments and society. In a narrow sense, external coordination refers to the coordination by government departments of the relationships among non-government sector stakeholders in place branding.

5.3.1. *Leading group as internal coordinator*

The government agency responsible for coordination is generally referred to as the leading group. In the case of Chongqing, the municipal, district and county governments, and even some township governments have established a leading group. This is a special organizational model existing in China's political organization system, and is a working mechanism unique to China. China's government departments have copied the small-sector system of the Soviet Union. Once they encounter a slightly broader task, they seek the support and assistance of other departments at the same level. Therefore, it is a natural choice to set up a deliberative coordination mechanism across all departments. According to the central government, the coordinating body (namely the leading group) is a phased working mechanism which does not belong to the newly established government agency, and which is called off once its task is finished[38].

Taking the Municipal Tourism Economic & Development Leading Group as an example, the structure and mode of operation are shown in Figure 22.
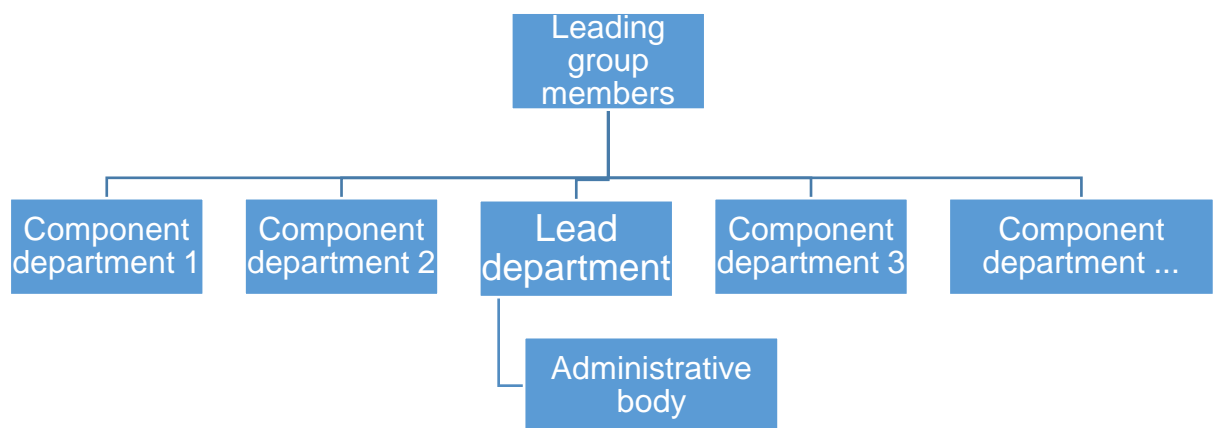
Figure 22.   Example structure of a leading group

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[38] Notice of the General Office of the State Council on Establishing the Second National Economic Census Leading Group （国务院办公厅关于成立第二次全国经济普查领导小组的通知）, available at: http://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2008/content_987922.htm. Notice of the General Office of the State Council on Establishing the Second National Economic Census Leading Group, available at: http://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2008/content_987922.htm.

The leader of this leading group is Wang Hongju, Deputy Secretary of the Municipal Party Committee, and Mayor of Chongqing Municipal Government. The Deputy Group Leaders are Yu Muyuan, Deputy Mayor of Chongqing Municipal Government and Tong Xiaoping Deputy Mayor of Chongqing Municipal Government. The leading group members total 40, and are all leaders of city government departments. The lead department is the Municipal Tourism Department. The Municipal Tourism Economic & Development Leading Group has an office set up in the Municipal Tourism Department, and Wang Aizu, the Director, is also the Office Director. Therefore, the administrative body is the leading group office and another 33 government departments and 6 institutions are the component departments.

By nature, the leading group neither has a fixed office space, nor determines its staffing separately. It is not included in the government's full allocation plan or agency list, and the institutional scale is uncertain. The leading group works by holding seminars, releasing reports, and checking the work at a specific time of the year. On the one hand, the leading group itself does not assume administrative legal responsibility, and cannot be a defendant or applicant for administrative litigation or reconsideration. On the other, the administrative body of a leading group has a fixed office space (or is co-located with a department), a defined function, and government establishment. The rights of the leading group are mainly derived from internal government decisions and orders issued in the form of meeting notices and minutes, which have de facto administrative effectiveness and binding force both inside and outside the government. Administrative decisions are ensured to be carried out through regular work guidance and unexpected work inspections.

It can be seen that the overall coordination function of the leading group is achieved by the administrative power of the group members. The municipal leading group not only coordinates the various government departments at the municipal level, but also provides guidance and supervision to the relevant departments of the district and county

governments (including autonomous counties). The leading group is a multi-integrated and multi-level working mechanism. Such working modes can quickly call on departmental resources and integrate tourism, development, reform, finance, transportation, agriculture, urban and rural construction, forestry, the land office, planning, and culture to boost tourism development. The Municipal Tourism Economic & Development Leading Group is a four-level government agency linking mechanism, in which the municipal governments coordinate, district and county governments promote, township governments act, and villages and communities participate. This kind of coordination includes a balance of interests and work distribution among horizontal government departments, and the vertical docking of cities, districts and counties (including autonomous counties), as well as cooperation between districts and counties (including autonomous counties). The relationships among the external stakeholders and between the stakeholders and the government are connected by an assigned department. One of the most important tasks of the leading group is promoting the creation and assessment of tourism brands. Under the overall coordination of the leading group, Municipal Tourism Industry Development, the governments of all districts and counties (including autonomous counties) are responsible for the creation of tourism brands in Chongqing. The leading group is responsible for formulating work plans, and clarifying the responsibilities and job requirements of the government at all levels. At the same time, the target responsibility assessment system is formulated. The tourism development goals are included in the comprehensive assessment and evaluation system and economic evaluation system of the districts and counties (including autonomous counties). The leading group involved in the brand building of Five Chongqing, includes the Five Function Areas of Chongqing, and the tourism, commercial and propaganda departments, as well as the district and county government. Its working mode and the work content are basically the same as the tourism leading group. Therefore, the coordination role the government plays in place branding is mainly achieved by the leading groups at all levels of government.

5.3.2. *Public service and industry management as external coordination*

The internal coordination of the government is explained in the section above. The coordination between the stakeholders outside the government, and between the stakeholders and the government, are mainly achieved through the government's public service and industry management. Such external coordination mainly occurs in the tourism and commerce fields. The administrative institutions and some government administrative departments are responsible for delivering public services, while the government administrative department is fully responsible for industrial management.

The public services involved in place branding are those, in a narrow sense, that meet the needs of enterprises and residents or balance conflicts between stakeholders. The coordination role of public service is the objective requirement of all stakeholders in place branding, and is the basis for building place brand, instead of being regarded as a public service itself. Under the context of the transition from a managing government to a service-oriented government in today's China, public service instead of public management is regarded as the government management model, and as such, adapts to the development of the market economy.

The public service involved in tourism branding includes the establishment of a smart tourism system, the toilet revolution project, the consulting service system and the improvement of the tourism identification system. The specific content is shown in Table 7.

Public Service	Content
Building a smart tourism system.	The government should strengthen the construction of Internet infrastructure for tourism, accelerate the coverage of wireless networks and 3G/4G infrastructure in airports, stations, terminals, hotels, scenic spots, rural tourist spots and key tourist routes, and the construction of the Internet of Things for

	high-risk tourism projects with a tourist focus and environmental sensitivity. It should implement wireless network coverage and a smart database, barrier-free travel credit cards, and a QR code recognition popularization project. The government should accelerate the construction of the tourism information big data centre and tourism emergency command platform, monitor the operation of the tourism industry, and establish a multi-sector data sharing mechanism for tourism and business, transportation, public security, aviation, statistics, agriculture, industry and commerce, forming a big data platform for the tourism industry. During the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan period, the city should build a two-level tourism data centre for cities, districts and counties (including autonomous counties). An e-government system should be constructed. The government should focus on building a tourist flow monitoring system, travel team management service system, tourism safety supervision command system and tour guide service management system for high-grade scenic spots. The procurement of cloud computing services is encouraged to improve the e-government office system, and raise the level of government decision-making and tourism information. The government should promote pilot demonstrations of smart tourism and the construction of smart tourism cities, scenic spots, enterprises and villages.
Vigorously promoting the toilet revolution.	The government should seriously implement the National Tourism Administration's deployment of the tourism toilet revolution, and comprehensively strengthen the construction and management of tourist toilets in accordance with the requirements "to be sufficient in quantity, clean and tasteless, and effective in management, thus making tourists satisfactory". Therefore, the government should make sure that there are standard tourist toilets in public places like scenic spots, traffic distribution points, tourist blocks, rural tourist spots, tourist dining spots, tourist entertainment spots, tourist shopping spots, and along tourist routes, the number of which is compatible with the number of tourists. On the basis of adhering to the

	practical functions of tourism toilets, the cultural and landscape construction of the tourism toilets should be strengthened, making them a window through which to display civilized tourism.
Improving the consulting service system.	Relying on the tourism traffic distribution centre, urban commercial centre, community and large-scale scenic spots, a four-level networked tourist service system should be established, city-district (including autonomous county), township (street), and village (scenic area), supported by tourist service centres and stations. In principle, the tourist service centres coordinate with the same-level tourism distribution centres for the functions of tourism consultation, tourism organization, tourism management, publicity and promotion, and tourism supervision. The tourist service station relies on the construction of commercial centres (streets), bus hubs, large communities, scenic spots, etc., and focuses on tourism consulting, tourism product ordering, and complaint acceptance. The city's tourist consultation service centre (station) should be regulated in accordance with the "five unifications", unified identification, unified decoration standards and equipment configuration, unified distribution of publicity materials, unified staff clothing, and unified post business knowledge training.
Improving the travel identification system.	The traffic guidance system is standardized to form a multi-directional guidance system with the road system and the map system coordinated. On the main roads leading to tourist distribution centres, tourist destinations, tourist clusters, and tourist attractions above national 3A-level, standard and clear traffic signs in both Chinese and English should be set up. On the highways, high-grade highways, tourist feeder roads, public activities, station squares, main streets, etc., tourism traffic guidance signs and tourist image display signs should gradually be popularized. The government should improve the navigation logos for tourist attractions, and perfect the internal landmark identification system for scenic spots at all levels. Also, the government should establish a tourism commentary system, improve the tour

	guide service system, and gradually realize wireless tour guides and multi-language automatic tour guide services in major tourist attractions.

Table 7. Chongqing tourism public service system (重庆市旅游发展总体规划 (2016—2030 年) modified by the author)

The public service provided by the commercial department includes the promotion of commercial culture, the construction of commercial brands, and the establishment of a business talent system. The promotion of commercial culture aims to create a culture of Chongqing businessmen and boost the development of cultural businesses. The department advocate respect for customers, demand-driven business logic, respect for rules, innovative business culture, civilized management, and a business philosophy of integrity. The government obliges commercial enterprises to enhance their sense of social responsibility, in order to improve the sustainable development capability of Chongqing's commercial enterprises. It creates a fair competitive market environment and enhances the healthy development of Chongqing's business. The government also aims to enhance the cultural elements of business districts, commercial specialty streets, and urban complexes, through store decoration, merchandising display, advertising promotion, and image packaging, by supporting the development of cultural and creative businesses, realizing the deep integration of culture and business, and further enhancing business quality, paying attention to promoting commercial culture to residents, advocating healthy and civilized lifestyles and consumption patterns, creating a good consumption atmosphere, and cultivating green consumer culture. The construction of commercial brands includes the brands of commercial enterprises, business districts and characteristic commercial streets. Increasing the use and promotion of commercial image logos, fosters and develops GI products and trademarks, and builds well-known brands. The government encourages the development of brands and professional service organizations to guide enterprises to improve the trademark management system.

The commercial department supports Chongqing commercial brands' participation in important exhibitions at home and abroad, enhancing the support for China's well-known trademarks. The construction of the commercial talent system includes: encouraging government departments and enterprises to fully cooperate with universities and vocational colleges; cultivating talents that meet the needs of industrial transformation and upgrading, and the development of emerging industries; and expanding the number of professional talents in life services such as household management, and healthcare for the aged. The government strengthens the cultivation of high-skilled talent and professional technical personnel in the fields of technology, modern logistics, e-commerce, financial leasing, commercial factoring, and cultural tourism. The higher education institutions are supported to offer professional master's degrees in business fields. The education institutions should innovate using the cooperation model of industry, university and research, and strengthen the construction of research centres, research institutes and key laboratories. Meanwhile, the government supports the construction of Chongqing Business Logistics Collaborative Innovation Centre, and the implementation of information technology, key technology research and development and the application of demonstration projects in the trade field. The government improves the mechanism of the Expert Committee on Commerce and Trade Circulation, and builds a new type of think tank for the business service industry. At the same time, the government creates a talent incentive and guarantee mechanism, supports activities such as industry skill and service innovation competitions and other activities, and helps the cultivation of business service industry masters. The government should increase the introduction of international and domestic talents by means of relaxing nationality management and creating loose and convenient conditions.

The government's industry management: 1) formulates development plans for industry according to national guidelines, policies, and long-term development plans for the national economy; 2) coordinates activities among enterprises within the industry, promotes and organizes link and cooperation between enterprises; 3) formulates product specifications

and technical standards for the industry, and organizes technical exchange among enterprises within the industry; 4) investigates the development trend of the industry, collects and sorts technical information, and conducts technical consulting services; and 5) helps train managers and technicians to improve their skills and management. It can be seen that public service regulates the micro-level public demand, and industry management is a kind of meso-management between macroeconomic management and microenterprise management. Both tasks have their own focus and overlap (such as professional training), but the essence is to meet and balance the interests of external government stakeholders.

The author failed to obtain relevant municipal data from the Propaganda Department because of the confidentiality of its work, but from the case of Harmony Qijiang (Qijiang District), it can be seen that the department's work includes public service and industry management. While public service includes the construction of infrastructure, the specific work is the launch of the Cultural Centre, fixed film screening locations, and construction of the Library and Cultural Centre Branch, the Public Cultural Internet of Things, and the Grassroots Comprehensive Cultural Service Centre, so as to realize full coverage of the 308 administrative villages by cultural centres in the district, with 42 fixed movie screening locations, 7 library and cultural centre branches, and 5 comprehensive cultural service centres. Also, 100% coverage of the public cultural Internet of Things in the town cultural station (centre) is achieved and 250 mobile culture services are carried out. Industry management is one of Harmony Qijiang's jobs. In addition to the transfer of the Sichuan Opera Troupe mentioned in Section 4.3.3, it also includes the development of characteristic cultural tourism, the marketization of Qijiang farmers' prints, the preservation of cultural relics and the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

The three departments involved are more inclined to pure public service and industry management, rather than place branding. The work content is essentially a part of place governance, but is shown clearly in the governments' place brand construction.

Therefore, it is clear that place branding is regarded as a place management tool by the government, and place branding is about expressing the development vision and governance goals of the local government for the region.

5.4 Government administration and party administration in Chinese place branding

In China, since the subject of place branding is the government, the process of place branding is inevitably affected by the political system. As a substantial one-party dictatorship, party administration affects government administration. This section focuses on exploring how the political power of these two aspects affects Chinese place branding. To give readers a clear understanding, this article briefly outlines the concepts of party administration and government administration, then explains the current party and state agency reform.

5.4.1. *The Party leads everything*[39]

Since the reform and opening-up policy began, and with the continuous deepening of reform in the economic field, China's reform in the field of administrative management has also gradually advanced. The administrative management system is not only an integral part of the political system, but also closely related to the economic system and various social undertakings. The government's administrative management system reform plays a very important role in economic and social development as well as the implementation of reform and opening-up policy. In 1987, the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China comprehensively defined the principles and measures

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[39] On January 30, 1962, Mao Zedong pointed out at the Enlarged Central Work Conference that the Party is leading everything in the seven aspects of industry, agriculture, business, education, military affairs, politics, and the Party. In December 1973, Mao Zedong said at the Politburo meeting hosted by the Politburo that the Politburo is in charge of the whole, the Party and government, the military and the people, and the east, the west, the south and the north. On January 7, 2016, the Central Political Bureau Standing Committee meeting chaired by Xi Jinping, the General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, re-established this as a political principle. On October 24, 2017, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China passed a resolution on the Constitution of the Communist Party of China (Amendment), which was written into the Party Constitution.

for separating the Party and the government. Such reform essentially solves the problem of the Party's substitution for government. The separation of party and government functions is based on different leadership systems, organizational forms and working methods of party organizations and administrative organizations. The separation of the Party and the government is a major reform of the party and state leadership system, intended to resolve the relationship between the Party and the government, and the issue of the Party's substitution for government. The report[43] of the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, clearly defines the Party as a political organization, while the organ of state power is the state power organization, which is an important part of the state machine. The relationship between the Party and the political power is one of leading and being led, but it is not an obedience relationship between a superior and subordinate power. The two are different in nature and cannot be replaced by each other.

In terms of its functions, the CCP has changed from conducting all administrative work in the past to focusing on managing political principles, political direction, policy, and strengthening the Party's own construction. As for its tasks, the unified leadership in which the Party directly led and managed economic activities in the past, has turned to making decisions on overall, hierarchical and principled issues. The work object, including the people, finances, and other things were all taken and managed by the CCP, and now management, ideological and political work against people is the key. From the perspective of leadership, an indirect and exemplary guiding leadership style has replaced the direct and specific command methods of the past. Over the 30 years of reform of the administrative system, the Chinese Communist Party has made many attempts to deepen the reform. In the 2018 issue of the Decision of Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Deepening the Reform of the Party and State Institutions[40], the reasons, mission objectives, methods and guiding principles of

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[40] http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2018-03/04/content_5270704.htm

management system reform are clarified.

Deepening the reform of the institutional and administrative systems is an important part of comprehensively deepening reforms and of improving and developing the socialist system with Chinese characteristics. The fundamental purpose is to improve the national governance system and governance capacity, so that the institutional setup and functional allocation can adapt to the major contradictions in society and the problem of insufficient and unbalanced development can be solved. At the same time, the implementation of reform and opening-up policy highlights the role of the market in resource allocation, which has forced the government to change its management style and adapt to market changes. The key tasks for deepening the reform of the institutional and administrative systems include: optimizing the establishment of government agencies and the allocation of functions; coordinating the reform of the Party, government and military organizations; rationally setting up local institutions; and promoting statutory institutionalization. The party administration reform, which is very clear, is to improve the system of adhering to the CCP's overall leadership. The report clearly states that "the Party exercises overall leadership over all areas of endeavour in every part of the country". The most fundamental problem solved by such a decision is actually the clarity of the relationship between the Party and the government. The connotations of the Party's leadership are broader than ruling. The leadership of the Party is first and foremost the leadership of the state power, but it also includes leadership over all matters of state and society. It involves the Party members, the Party's class and a mass foundation. Governing is the Party's adoption of the organs of state power, in the name of the state, using the form of the law to implement the Party's programmes, lines, principles and policies. The most important CCP leadership style is its way of governing. Therefore, this reform plan is not intended to implement the separation of the Party and the government, but divide the work of the Party and government, that is, to reform and improve the Party's leadership and governance style. In place branding, the mutual influence between the Party and the government

administration is mainly reflected in the policy making and planning in government administration, party leadership, and political ideology in party administration.

5.4.2. *Government administration: policy making*

The purpose of this section is not to clarify the general policy and planning making process in government as this is not the purpose of this study. Instead, this section focuses on exploring the specific process of making place branding policy, and why the government makes place brand construction a stand-alone policy or mixes it with other policies.

a) Why make place branding a policy?

The first thing to be clear about is that, according to the *Regulations on the Work of Official Documents of the Party and Government Organs*[41], there are only 15 types of official government documents (see Table 8).

Name of official document	Scope of application
Resolution	This is applicable to major decision-making matters.
Decision	This is applicable to decision-making and deployment of important matters, rewarding and punishing relevant units and personnel, and changing or revoking inappropriate decisions of lower-level organs.
Order	This is applicable to the publication of administrative regulations and rules, the proclamation of major mandatory measures, the

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[41] http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2013-02/22/content_2337704.htm

	approval of awards and promotion ranks, and the award of relevant units and personnel.
Bulletin	This is applicable to the publication of important decisions or major issues.
Announcement	This is applicable to announcing important matters or statutory matters at home and abroad.
Notice	This is applicable to publishing matters that should be observed or known within a certain scope.
Advice	This is applicable to presenting ideas and solutions to important issues.
Inform	This is applicable to issuing official documents requiring lower-level organs to execute and relevant units to know about or implement.
Brief	This is applicable to commending advanced work, criticizing mistakes, conveying important spirits and informing about important situations.
Report	This is applicable to reporting to higher authorities, and responding to inquiries from higher authorities.
Instruction	This is applicable to asking higher authorities for instructions and approval.
Reply	This is applicable to answering requests of lower authorities.
Proposal	This is applicable to the governments at all levels to submit matters for deliberation to the People's Congress at the same level or the

	Standing Committee of the People's Congress in accordance with legal procedures.
Letter	This is applicable for non-affiliated agencies to negotiate work, make inquiries, answer questions, request approval and reply.
Minutes	This is applicable to recording the contents of meetings and agreed items.

Table 8. Types of official government document

There are two types of official government documents involving place branding, those that directly clarify documents regarding place brand construction (mainly resolutions, advice and notices), and those about government planning of brand building. The place brand construction plan is not any of the above official government documents, but was finally officially released by government agencies in the form of resolutions, advice and notices. For example, Five Chongqing construction was released as resolution, Five Function Areas of Chongqing was released as advice. Tourism brand and commerce brand construction plans are normally released as notices. The work of the Municipal Propaganda Department is disseminated to the lower-level departments (districts and counties) in the form of notices, and the district propaganda departments reissue the notices in the form of notices and reports. In addition to the official government documents about brand building, the place branding plan completes its legalization process by transforming into an official government document. The interviewees made it clear that these resolutions, advice and notices are strict policy documents, that is, place brand construction is identified as part of a public policy. There are two main reasons for doing so. Firstly, policy acts as a guarantee of government execution and implementation, and secondly it acts as an official confirmation for non-government stakeholders.

Policies issued in official government documents are guaranteed to be carried out. This is because of the concept of government executive and implementation ability, which is

a typically Chinese concept. On March 5, 2006, Premier Wen Jiabao of the State Council presented a government work report at the Fourth Session of the Tenth National People's Congress, which put forward "building a sound administrative accountability system and improving government execution and credibility". This shows that the concept of government execution power advocated by local governments is recognized by the central government. Due to China's central decision-making and local execution (or higher-level government decision-making, and lower-level government implementation), government executive power is often relevant to policy implementation. Therefore, in the face of the ineffective implementation of public policies and in order to solve the problem of poor implementation, the concept of government execution derived from the execution power of enterprises is combined with the model of central decision-making and local government implementation, generating the concept of public policy enforcement. Obviously, the concept of public policy enforcement has a special context in China. It is precisely because of this special context that the implementation of public policies is not effective, often equated with weak government implementation. Specifically, the implementation of administration-level government is not effective, which implies that the central or higher-level governmental policies are always correct, and improving the implementation of public policies is equivalent to improving the execution of local or subordinate governments.

As a one-party ruled, executive-led, unitary state, China's public policy enforcement is stronger than other multi-party countries. A policy-oriented place branding plan can be transformed from government planning to policy implementation, with an assurance that the implementation is beneficial to the higher level government department. Policy-oriented place banding plan has a process of legalization by the approval of government authorities, ensuring government execution and giving it social authority.

For non-government stakeholders, there is an official guarantee that the government's

planning document is socially authoritative. In the interviews with non-government stakeholders, the interviewees emphasized the importance of policy. Firstly, there is the concept that "things unbound by the law can be done legally"[42], for non-government stakeholders, but there is a belief that only when they are explicitly allowable in notices officially issued by the government can things be done. Secondly, through the transfer of benefits, the policy induces non-government action. For example, the company contributes to place branding, and can get compensation such as rent reduction or tax discount. Thirdly, the government guides the behaviour of non-government stakeholders by building a vision for the future. By showing them this vision of the regional brand, along with its plans and goals, the local government can shift the stakeholders' attention from current interests to long-term interests, and attract them to participate in the construction of regional brands. Fourthly, the behaviour of stakeholders is guided by the government's administrative coercive force.

b) Making place branding plans

The government's place branding plan or project (规划) process is as follows:

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[42]At the second Work Conference on Clean Government held by the State Council on February 11, 2014, Premier Li Keqiang pointed out, for market participants, that "things unbound by the law can be done legally", and for the government, "things without permission by law cannot be done".
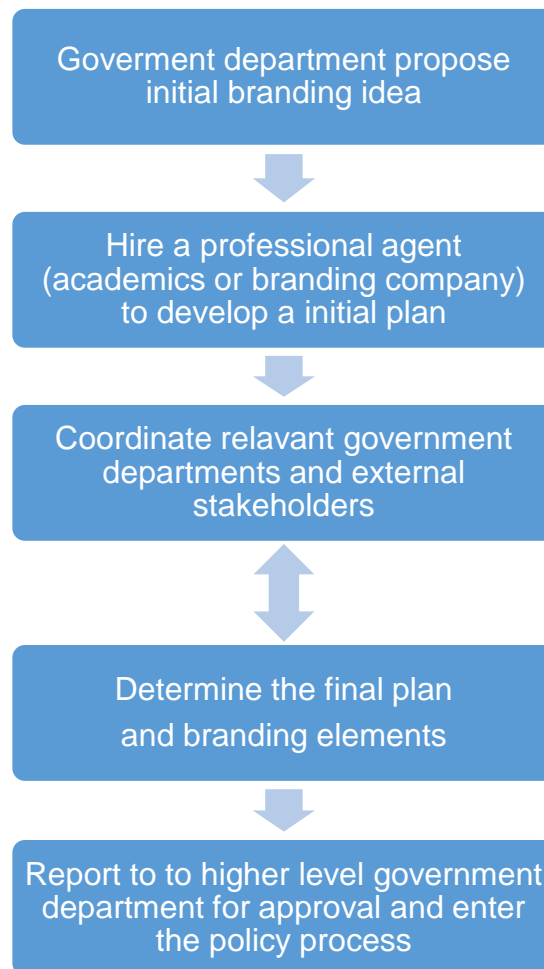
Figure 23.   Government place branding plan project process

The process is linear. First, the relevant government departments put forward preliminary branding ideas, which may include clear brand positioning and branding goals, or just a vision for branding. Then, the government asks academic research teams, or professional branding or planning companies to design the plan. After the initial plan is complete, the initiating department coordinates the other government agencies, balances the needs and interests of the non-government stakeholders and revises the plan. This process may be repeated several times. Usually, a professional agent meets with or reports to the government agencies or relevant government departments to discuss modifications. After deciding the final plan, the government identifies branding elements such as slogans, VI systems, infrastructure, etc. On obtaining the complete

plan, the initiating department reports to the municipal government (or higher-level government department) for approval, entering the policy-making process.

c) The final and official release

Through an executive meeting, the municipal government makes a series of generally binding decisions such as guidelines, policies and regulations, as well as specific arrangements on some issues. In all government documents involving place branding, the main issuer of the Five Function Areas and Five Chongqing is the Chongqing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China, and the other issuers are Chongqing government offices (or district/county government offices).

What needs to be distinguished here is that the document issued by Chongqing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China is the general policy. The general policy is the principle guiding the overall situation of public policy to achieve some goal or accomplish a certain tasks. The general policy is the highest level public policy. In the public policy system, there is only one general policy. It is the basis for the formulation and operation of basic and specific policies, is in the guiding position and determines overall leadership. General policies can be expressed in the following forms: the Constitution; the programme of the Party; a policy agenda or report of the leaders of the Party, the head of state, or head of government; and important documents of the Party and government. The Five Functional Areas and Five Chongqing are important documents of the ruling party and therefore are general policies.

The basic policy, issued by the municipal government, is the guiding principle for the policy body to guide the work, and is the specificization of the general policy. The difference between the basic policy and the general policy is that the general policy is cross-sectional and comprehensive, guiding the overall situation, and is stable across a certain historical stage. The basic policy is a guiding principle in a certain field or in some aspect of a field, with different content in different periods. The specific policies

issued by the district or county government are specific measures, guidelines, and boundary regulations formulated by the public policy bodies at different levels to address a particular problem. The specific policy operates at the lowest level of the public policy system, and is the specificization of the basic policy. The achievement of the goals of the general policy, and basic policy, ultimately depend on the implementation of specific policies.

Therefore, the decision-making power of the CCP is reflected in the general policy, but this is not the whole story. The influence of the Party is actually spread throughout the place branding decision-making process, and these effects are mainly reflected in the CCP's leadership of the government and control of political ideology.

5.4.3. *The party leadership, political ideology, and leaders personal influence*

In China, the CCP is the ruling party and the people must adhere to its leadership. However, the ruling party and the persistence of the Party's leadership do not mean that the Party has everything in hand or that everything must be done. Through long-term exploration and practice, the CCP proposes that the Party's leadership is mainly political leadership, ideological leadership, and organizational leadership. The main role played by the CCP is to "capture the overall situation and coordinate all parties" (Research Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the CPC Central Committee, 2013). Political leadership formulates major policies, proposes legislative proposals, and raises the Party's claims to the national will through the people's congresses at all levels. Organizational leadership establishes party organizations at all levels including institutions, enterprises, and social organizations, plays the core leadership and coordination role, and ensures the implementation of the Party's propositions as well as national policies and laws. The ideological leadership mobilizes the people of all ethnic groups and the whole nation, through publicity and education, in order to actively and consciously realize the Party's ideas and national policies and laws.

The report of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China emphasizes that "it is necessary to make the Party's claims become the will of the state through legal procedures". At present, the central, provincial, municipal, and county levels have people's congresses, which are held every year. Through the people's congresses at all levels, in accordance with the statutory procedures, the CCP has raised its will to the law, and national policy to be carried out by the government. The annual government work report and the government's governing programme are discussed and approved by the Party in advance. Taking China's five-year plan as an example, firstly, the CCP Central Committee proposes a five-year plan; secondly, the State Council prepares a plan outline based on the recommendations of the CCP Central Committee; thirdly, the plan outline is discussed at the National Political Consultative Conference with revisions proposed; and finally, at the National People's Congress, it is considered and voted on by secret ballot to become the national development programme. The various decisions in the regions, including place branding, also follow this process.

The Party's organizations at all levels, commonly known as the Party Group, is responsible for implementing the Party's policies. The Party Group refers to organizations established by the Party within the leading organs of the central and local state governments, people's organizations, economic organizations, cultural organizations and other non-party organizations. The Party Group is responsible for realizing the Party's line, principles, and policies, researching and formulating measures for central committee and approving the Party's committee resolutions and decisions. They make decisions on major issues in the sector, and, in accordance with the cadre management authority and prescribed procedures, make recommendations and nominations for the appointment, removal and management of cadres. They also guide the work of organs and the Party organizations, and take the lead on ideological and political work as well as spiritual civilization construction. Finally they are responsible for uniting non-party cadres and the masses, and completing the tasks assigned by the

Party and the state (Research Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the CPC Central Committee, 2013).

Therefore, the Party's leadership is not only reflected in the decision-making process of all place branding projects and plans, but also in their implementation, including the final confirmation and censorship. This brings up a problem in the actual place branding operation: the understanding of the place brand by the Party secretary and other Party committee leaders determines the importance and status of place branding in government work. For example, among the three successful cases mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the biggest commonalities is the attention paid by local Party leader(s) to branding. Wulong is led by its Party secretary (the first leader at the district-level of the CCP) and he is responsible for the tourism marketing of 23 government departments. The Natural Yunyang brand is nominally headed by the Yunyang County Agricultural Committee. The real leader is the sub-prefect of Yunyang County People's Government (a member of the Party Group of the Yunyang County People's Government of Chongqing). Harmony Qijiang was originally proposed by the Qijiang District's Office of Spiritual Civilization, but has now become the core work of the Party Committee Propaganda Department (in practice, the administrative level of the Party Committee Propaganda Department is higher than that of government departments at the same level). The head of the Spiritual Civilization Office at that time (also a member of the Party Committee Propaganda Department) is responsible for this work. In Nan'an District of Chongqing, the head of the Tourism Bureau clearly told the author that the Nan'an district had no other brand building other than the urban tourist area that the city government had determined. The main reason is that the leaders (referring to the Party committee leaders) did not pay attention to other places (I2). Another reason mentioned was that although the leadership attached importance to it, it did not have professional place branding knowledge, which leads to little effect on place branding (I5, I10).

Place branding involves many departments, and no single department can complete the

work, which is why each place brand requires the intervention and leadership of local leaders (I1, I5, and I6). Since, under the Chinese political system, only the leaders of the Party committee can mobilize all government departments, and promote plans into the policy-making process, and the final decision-making power lies in the Party committee, many branding projects and plans have been strongly influenced by the leaders' opinions. For example, in the branding design of Anju ancient town, upon the transfer of the leader, the subsequent leader responsible for brand management did not recognize the brand VI system or branding slogan decided by the former leader, so the relevant department was obliged to design a new brand VI system and branding slogan. Regarding district and county government planning, interviewees mentioned the personal preferences of leaders, such as leaders liking high-level comprehensive planning (I12), and that the disseminating of content needs to meet leadership expectations (I8, I19). Sometimes, the brand means nothing to the leaders. Some investors are friends of the leadership, so the leader attracts investment via private relationships. Examples of this were provided by interviewees in the field research. Many interviewees said that the leader (referring to the Party committee leader) could decide everything (I1, I4, I5, I6, I10, I14, I18, I19 and I20), and this situation is the same or similar in both the municipal and district governments.

Therefore, the decision of the Party's leadership in place branding is achieved by giving the Party committee the power to decide on government matters. This is also the origin of the personal influence of local leaders (especially Party committee leaders). The place branding plan involves government regional management, but the decision-making power is transferred to Party committee leaders eventually.

Another influence worth discussing is political ideology of the ruling party. Political ideology affects all aspects of Chinese life, and for place branding its role is mainly reflected in the policy, planning and project making. The influence can be divided into political ideology and the local leader's ideology (in the case of Chonqing, the local

leader refers to the Chairman of Chongqing Municipal Party Committee).

According to president Xi Jinping's report on the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, current socialist ideology and basic strategy with Chinese characteristics, as the inheritance and development of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong thought, Deng Xiaoping theory, the three representative important ideas, and the scientific development concept, includes 14 points: upholding the party's leadership over all work, adhering to the people as the centre, persisting with comprehensive deepening reform, upholding the new development concept, upholding the people's mastery of the country, adhering to the rule of law, adhering to the socialist core value system, adhering to safeguarding and improving people's livelihood in development, adhering to the harmonious coexistence of man and nature, upholding the overall national security concept, upholding the Party's absolute leadership over the People's Army, adhering to "one country, two systems", promoting the reunification of the motherland, persistence in promoting the building of a community of human destiny, and governing the Party in an all-round way.

Of these 14 points, Xi Jinping's most important political ideology can be summarized as the China Dream and "four comprehensives". The Chinese Dream is "to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, which is the greatest dream of the Chinese nation since modern times"[43]. The four comprehensives are building a well-off society in an all-round way, comprehensively deepening reforms, comprehensively administering the country according to the law, and strictly administering the Party. The China Dream is the goal, and the four comprehensives is the realization path. The essence of the four comprehensives is strategic layout. The specific content of this strategic layout is to position well-off society as "a key step to realizing the Chinese nation's great rejuvenation of the China Dream". The overall goal of comprehensively deepening reforms is "to improve and develop the socialist system with Chinese

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[43] Xi Jinping: The Governance of China I

characteristics and promote the national governance system", and the modernization of governance capacity. The comprehensive management of the country, according to law, is the starting and the booster point for comprehensively deepening reform. The path to comprehensively and strictly ruling the Party, is to enhance the systemic, creative, effective and predictive nature of the Party's rule.

The beginning of this section explores the influence of comprehensive deepening reform thought. Section 4.1.1 and Section 5.3 identify the role of the China Dream in Chongqing's place branding. These are the results of the influence of political ideology, and the source of these effects is political ideology acting as the guiding thought in various policies. The guiding thought of Five Chongqing is the scientific development concept, and General Secretary Hu Jintao's "314 overall deployment"[44] to Chongqing. In the *Proposals on Scientifically Dividing and Accelerating the Establishment of Five Functional Areas* by CPC Chongqing City Committee, Chongqing Municipal People's Government, the guiding thought is Deng Xiaoping theory, the important thinking of the three represents, scientific outlook on development, and thoroughly implementing the spirit of the important speeches of the Party's 18th National Congress and General Secretary Xi Jinping. In the *Chongqing Overall Tourism Development Plan* and *The 13th Five-Year Plan for the Development of Modern Business Service Industry in Chongqing*, which both contain place branding projects, guiding thoughts are The spirit of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the four comprehensive strategic layouts, and the spirit of the important speech of General Secretary Xi Jinping. In addition to the municipal documents, the documents of the district and county governments involved in the place branding project have similar expressions. Political ideology from the municipal level also affects the formulation of

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[44] The 314 deployment is summarized as three major positionings: 1) efforts have been made to accelerate the construction of Chongqing into an important growth pole in the western region, an economic centre in the upper reaches of the Yangtze river, and a municipality directly under the central government; 2) a goal to take the lead in building a well-off society in an all-round way in the western region; 3) the major tasks of stepping up work to promote agriculture, taking the town to the countryside, and solidly promoting the construction of a new socialist countryside; earnestly transforming the mode of economic growth, and speeding up the pace of reforming the old industrial base; focusing on solving the problem of people's livelihood and actively building a socialist harmonious society; and comprehensively strengthening urban construction and improving urban management.

the above policies.

Because of the age of Five Chongqing and the imprisonment of Bo Xilai in 2013, its impact on Chongqing has been exhausted, but according to one interviewee, Bo Xilai has a clear left-wing ideology. Such ideology is clearly reflected in his philosophical concepts and policies, including "three-enter" and "three-together" (three-enter refers to government officials entering the grassroots, entering the village, entering the farmers' households, going deep into rural areas and reaching out to the farmers; "three together" means government officials eating, living and working with local farmers), his fight against corruption, promotion of the Chinese Communist Party's traditional revolutionary ideas (Mao Zedong thought), public rental housing system and Five Chongqing. In the later period of Bo's administration, many local policies in Chongqing were directly related to Five Chongqing. Academically, it is generally considered a clear city brand building plan. The Five Functional Areas does not have as much ideological content, and is more of a regional development strategy. It is mainly used to "scientifically divide functional areas, clarify the functional orientation of districts and counties, and coordinate regional urban and rural coordinated development at a higher level. It can promote the comparative advantage of each region, and can achieve a game in the whole city, realize the integration of the city, regional development differentiation, resource utilization optimization and overall function maximization; help to further enhance Chongqing's core competitiveness and accelerate the construction of national central cities. It is conducive to strengthening coordination and cooperation between Chongqing and neighbouring provinces and cities, accelerating the construction of the Cicang urban agglomeration and the Sichuan-Yunnan economic zone; it is conducive to enhancing the scientific, pertinent and effective guidance of regional development classification."[45]. But no matter how the official defines Five Chongqing or the Five Functional Areas of Chongqing, the interviewees in Chongqing believe that these

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[45] Proposals on Scientifically Dividing and Accelerating the Establishment of Five Functional Zones by CPC Chongqing City Committee, Chongqing Municipal People's Government

thoughts are the ruling thoughts of the leaders of Chongqing, that is, the manifestation of their political ideology. Among the various documents issued by Chongqing, the ideas closely follow Deng Xiaoping theory, the three represents important thought, the scientific outlook on development and the spirit of Xi's speech.

Therefore, whether it is from the Party Central Committee or from local leaders, the political ideology directly affects various decisions of Chongqing government. The impact and balance between these involves power separation of central and local governments in government management, which is not the direction of this study. But, at least in nominal terms, Five Chongqing and the Five Functional Areas are based on the Party Central Committee's thinking, as the former party leader of Chongqing, Bo Xilai said: "We have never proposed any model, The policy in recent years is to implement the three representative ideas".[46]

The political ideology and ideas of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China emerge as the guiding ideology and working principles of government work. The content of the China Dream, a purely political ideology, is not explicitly used as a guiding ideology. On the contrary, the China Dream is most often seen in the various types of propaganda facing the public, while the four comprehensives are not common. The local ruling philosophy runs through all local policies and propaganda.

The influence of political ideology shows a linear structure in China's place branding management (see Figure 24). The political ideology from the Party Central Committee firstly affects the political ideology of the leaders of Chongqing city; the local leader's governance thought must follow (at least nominally) the thought from the Party Central Committee, but the local leader has the right to modify the thought from the Party Central Committee to the local situation; plans or policies involving place branding are made under the guidance of the thought from both the Party Central Committee and

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[46] http://fj.sina.com.cn/news/z/2012-03-15/1046126507.html

local leaders.
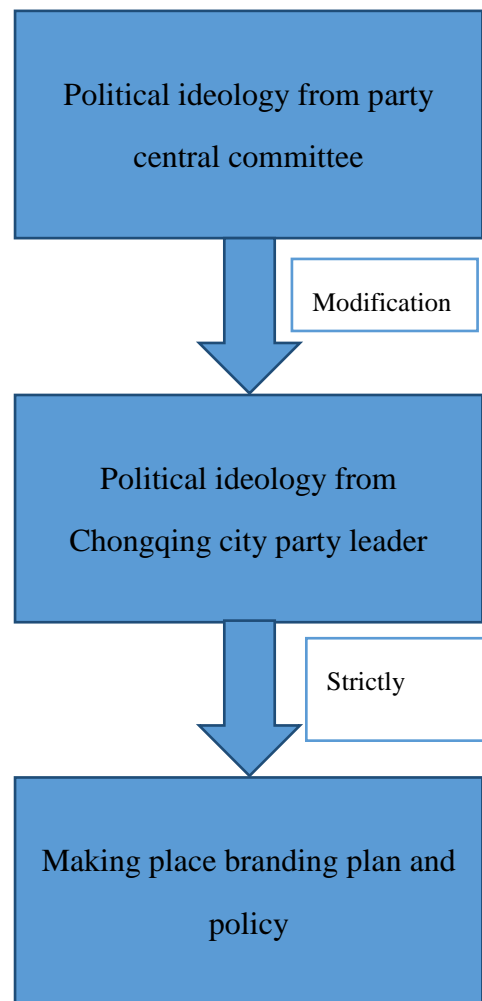
Figure 24.   Political ideology as a guiding thought in place branding

5.5 Summary

On March 22, 2018, in the *Birth of the Party and State Institutional Depening Reform Plan* (深化党和国家机构改革方案诞生记)[47] published by the Xinhua News Agency, the opening sentence: "A red line (of institutional reform) runs through - insisting on and strengthening the party's overall leadership, is to deepen the party and the

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[47] Available at: http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-03/22/c_1122577702.htm

fundamental guarantee and primary task of the reform of state institutions". General Secretary Xi Jinping personally served as the team leader of the document drafting group, points to the essence of this plan. The Party Leadership of the Chinese Communist Party was to become the main axis of China's political operation in the future.

Although the field research for this study was carried out from the summer of 2017 to the beginning of 2018, the Party's influence on the administration had been far-reaching and extensive even before the proposal that "the party leads everything". As one interviewee said, "the Chinese Communist Party's control over government administration is deeper and stricter, especially in the field of ideology". Party administration and government administration in place branding overlap each other and it is hard to clearly distinguish the influence of each part. To clarify this issue requires a more in-depth analysis of the Chinese government's management model, which is beyond the researcher's ability and the scope of this research.

Government dominance is the strongest characteristic of Chinese place branding. This conclusion is consistent with the government-led place branding advocated by many Chinese scholars. The leading role of the government is mainly reflected in the three most important aspects of place branding, brand management, brand subject (the place itself) development, and branding legalization. Government brand management includes brand positioning, branding element confirmation, brand marketing and promotion, branding events, and coordinating the government's internal and external stakeholders. Brand subject development is the construction of the place or region, especially the infrastructure. The foundation of good place or regional development is the basis for building a place brand. Due to the public nature of place brand use, the funds involved in place branding are provided by the government or through a government-established financing platform. Finally, by developing a place branding plan or policy (or a plan or policy that includes place brand construction), the

government not only completes the legalization of place branding, but also ensures the continuous transfer of political ideology from central to local execution.

CHAPTER 6.   TOWARDS A POLITICAL PLACE BRANDING

The terrible part of power is that it is silent

In the quiet, it has surrounded and clamped you

From film and television to books and news

Precise feeding and castration of ideology infiltrate in to life

Which makes people think that this is a reasonable normal

Thus losing the pursuit of freedom and the understanding of truth

The self-sufficient wisdom of survival is in exchange for the

behemoth to take what he wants.

Maybe one day I will wake up from the hustle and bustle

But at a loss

I found that the sky above is only as big as the wellhead

But how can I jump out?

Those who are eager to break free can only glimpse the world from

the sneaky gap

So please always be suspicious and alert to unlimited power

Because it never only targets one person

What you think is unrelated to you is always inseparable from you

------ 北国佳人李春姬

2ᵉᵈ March, 2019 posted on Weibo, authorized use

In the previous chapter, the author clarifies the roles of the government in Chinese place branding. As the main subject, the government is not only the funding sponsor for place branding but the place brand manager, as it controls the brand elements including infrastructure, brand positioning, brand VI system, and brand slogans, as well as being the branding activity organizer. The government also acts as a coordinator, balancing the conflicts of interest between government departments, between government departments and non-government stakeholders, and between non-government stakeholders. The party's leadership has enormous political influence, because in the process of incorporating place branding plans and projects into public policy, the Party influences place branding at its root, by exercising decision-making power and transmitting political ideology.

In this chapter, based on the above observations, the author critically answers the research questions. Specifically, this chapter focuses on the underlying nature of place branding in China. Section 6.1 summarizes the overall process of a place branding project, while Section 6.2 discusses why place branding is important. Finally, based on the literature and case study findings, Section 6.3 critically discusses the nature of Chinese place branding. The political influence reveals a strong characteristics of place governance and public policy of Chinese place branding.

6.1 Branding the city: "positioning starts everything"

This section explores how government departments conduct branding campaigns to realize the functions of the place brand. Even though there are arguments and controversies in understanding place brand management (Kavaratzis et al., 2014), and no clear responses from the interviewees particularly clarify what place brand management is, the author summarizes the process of place branding in general. Normally, a certain department gives a positioning on a place or region. This often comes with a readable and catchy Chinese slogan. Branding activities are organized according to their aims with clearly distinguished communication channels.

6.1.1. *Positioning*

The fundamental aim of positioning is to create a unique image in the consumer's mind and differentiate a place or product from its competitors (Ries and Trout, 2001). In 1991, positioning theory was introduced into China. After 20 years of theoretical transplantation and practice, there have been classic cases of practical positioning, such as Great Wall Motor (a motorbike company), Kung Fu (catering company), and Wang Laoji (a Chinese herbal tea company). Although most successful cases focus on companies or products, the role of positioning in city brand building is not essentially different from that proposed by Ries and Trout. This idea was elaborated on and encompassed by many interviewees.

For government departments, the main purpose of positioning is distinguishing the region from other regions and avoiding homogeneous competition (I16, I2). Therefore, it is the first job to be done. Positioning leads to differentiation, and the "market can only be created by differentiation" (I16). The starting point for positioning lies in in-depth digging into a certain place (I15, I10), and this is the same for a tourism department or a commercial department. Positioning is mainly based on regional resources, including visible infrastructure and natural resources, as well as the invisible culture and history. Infrastructure-based positioning is rather common in the commercial department while natural resource-based positioning is common in the tourism department. However, positioning based on the invisible culture and history is often spread across the two departments.

The positioning of the entire city of Chongqing and the specific requirements for each district raised by the Municipal Committee of Commerce of Chongqing are mainly based on the economic conditions and infrastructure. For instance, the existing branding of the commercial districts and streets are all based on their characteristics. The commercial enterprises, commercial districts, featured commercial streets, and markets

are all encouraged to strengthen their quality control and branding, promote the use and spreading of commercial logos, cultivate and develop products and trademarks relating to geographical indications, and create famous brands, so that the commercial brand value of the entire city can be improved by a market approach (I16). The branding of agricultural e-commerce is mainly focused on sampling counties located in the ecological protection development districts in the southeast of Chongqing and the ecological conservation development districts in the northeast of Chongqing.

When Interviewee I2 mentioned the positioning of Nanping Commercial District, he believed that, in comparison with other commercial districts, its positioning as the Capital of Conventions originated from the "Nanping International Convention Centre, which is exclusive to Nanping Commercial District. Nanping Commercial District is also positioned as the Capital of HQs, because of the office buildings in the district (I2). Even though Interviewee I2 mentioned that the positioning of Nanping Commercial District had to be separated from the others, the positioning as the Capital of Conventions is exactly the same of the positioning of Guanying Bridge Commercial District and Jiefangbei. The main reason is that the Capital of Conventions is derived from the positioning of the entire city of Chongqing by the Committee of Commerce. All commercial districts positionings are unified in this respect. Urban Tourism Zone is another positioning that is the same for all commercial districts, which originates from Chongqing Tourism Bureau (P21, I11). According to positioning logic, that aims to avoid homogeneous competition, the positionings of commercial districts should be significantly differentiated. One typical example is the positioning of Jiefangbei CBD. In addition to the tourism branding and being the Capital of Conventions, as requested by higher authorities, Jiefangbei also features a cultural brand based on its unique history and culture, including its political significance, the Grand Theatre that represents modern civilization and the Yangtze River Cableway that represents the port culture of Chongqing. Guanyin Bridge Commercial District, is positioned as a Modern Commercial Capital, because it is more developed than others in terms of business and

commerce (I16). The unique positioning of Nanping Commercial District is the Chinese Medicine Health District (I2).

The tourism department is inclined to position on the basis of natural resources. Municipal tourism authorities tend to position each district according to their actual situations, because the city is simply immense. For example, the Tourism Bureau is building the urban function core district and urban function extended district, which are included in the main urban area, into an Urban Tourism Zone (I8, P24). The other two regional positionings of Chongqing are focused on natural resources, the Three Gorges International Gold Tourism Destination and Ecological Folk Custom Travel Destination of Wuling Areas, the former covers the ecological conservation development districts in the northeast of Chongqing, while the latter covers the ecological protection development districts in the southeast of Chongqing. Both positionings are based on the natural resources in the regions. There are certain cultural and historical contents, such as the remains of the Three Gorges in Wuling, and the customs of Wujiang River Basin. Especially relevant to Ecological Folk Custom Travel Destination of Wuling Areas, the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Construction of Chongqing as International Famous Destinations clearly identifies building the "ecological protection development districts in southeast of Chongqing" into an "eco-folk tourism destination that integrates natural ecology and ethnic customs" (P24). In addition, the tourism department proposed seven tourism brands to be constructed in Chongqing: Yangtze River Three Gorges International Gold Tourism Belt; the World's Most Beautiful City of Landscapes; a Historical and Cultural City in China; the Capital of The World's Hot Springs; the Capital of International Business Convention, Exhibition and Shopping; the Capital of International Leisure Resorts; and the International Rural Tourism Demonstration Area (P24). These seven brands are mainly based on infrastructure and natural resources, partly combined with their cultural and historical positioning.

This logic of positioning offered by the municipal tourism agency is recognized by the

subordinate departments. When speaking of the positioning of Wulong, Interviewee I10 said that it is mainly based on natural landscape and culture. These two aspects may not be severed, since the former serves only sightseeing, and a unique brand can only be formed when this is combined with culture. Natural landscapes are mostly on the same level and can be easily replaced, while culture is at the core of competitiveness for a brand and forms an irreplaceable brand value (I10). The branding the Three Cares of Qijiang for Qijiang District is based in this way of thinking, referring to the natural attractions of Qijiang District, Qijiang National Geological Park, Gujian Mountain National 4-A Park, Dongxi Ancient Town, Huaba and Hengshan. The printmaking of Qijiang District is a unique art, which supplements it culturally (P14, P5).

Whether it is the positioning of the commercial department or tourism department, all are highly unified but with room left for differentiation. Such differentiation is reflected in the positionings made in accordance with the characteristics of each district by the municipal authorities, but also in the fact that each district positions itself differently according to their circumstances. As mentioned in Section 4.1.3, place branding can guide place development, because positioning provides goals and visions for districts and is therefore the top-level design of district development (I15). Even though positioning is based on the basic conditions of a district, it contains the development direction for the future, and exerts pressure on decisions made by the government. The seven brandings of Chongqing tourism mentioned above, the specific projects and the industrial development directions of each brand are all included. For instance, there are specific port constructions and places to be renovated, reservoir bank greening in certain regions, construction of given attractions on the Three Gorges, as well as the construction of parks, cultural parks and cultural industry bases for the Yangtze River Three Gorges International Gold Tourism Belt (P24). Interviewee I10 offers an example from the practice of district government to explain the situation. For the traffic department, the basic principles of road construction are making sure that they are unobstructed and of short distance. If a road is positioned as a tourist road, the

construction principles are more than that because local tourist attractions must be considered. It is not just a road built for traffic purposes, but also an important bridge that connects the attractions. The road design principles of the traffic department do not matter here.

It is worth noting that combining culture with tourism, and commerce with tourism is required by the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Construction of Chongqing as International Famous Destinations, and this is reflected in the development plans of the cultural authority and commercial department working plan (P24, P25, P26). Taking Yuzhong District, the Origin of Chongqing City, as an example, it precipitates the culture and heritages of Chongqing, the Anti-Japanese War culture, and Hongyan (Anti-Japanese War) spirit; it also has a series of urban name cards or landmarks such as Hongyadong (see Section 3.2.2), Jiefangbei (People's Liberation, WWII Monument), and Chaotianmen (famous Yangtze river harbour).

The concept of all-for-one tourism (全域旅游) became the new working philosophy for economic development in each province and region after it was proposed by the central government (I8). For Yuzhong District, the idea of all-for-one tourism is about facilitating regional development through a combination of culture, commerce, and tourism. The combination of culture and tourism is at the core of competitiveness, while tourist facilities and services are the foundation, and the combination of tourism and commerce is the support for commercial tourism (I8). They have their own directions of development yet they affect each other. For example, the Cultural Committee has to provide support for the cultural and innovative industries in addition to protecting the existing historical and cultural heritage, including the development of Zhongshan Cultural Industrial Park, Houjie Film and Television Industrial Park, Chongqing International IP Industrial Park etc., creating a suitable vibe for cultural and innovative businesses, so that industry can develop in a cluster. Meanwhile, for Zhongshanhui Cultural Industrial Park, Shangqing Temple Global Internet Industrial Park, Hongyan

Connection Cultural Industrial Park and many other industrial clusters in Yuzhong District, their industrial chain has to be further perfected, improving the integration between culture and tourism. Culture serves to support the combination of commerce and tourism. The integration of these three elements is extremely obvious in the 18-step ladder project. Shibati has been transformed into a commercial street, and the architectural styles of the 18-step ladder of Ming and Qing, the Republic of China era and the period after Chongqing was opened as a port, were preserved during the renovation, the ladders and houses have all been authentically restored. The cultural connotations of these historical buildings is exploited in order to create the 18 attractions, including 171 residential dwellings, the prefect's yamen, and the Consulate General of France, each of which has their own historical story. Various industries are to be introduced, forming a themed zone where the customs of Sichuan and Chongqing, commerce, tourism and culture are integrated, for the development of featured business, tourism and recreational industries (W15). Even though there is an exact concept of the 18-step ladder, it has always been representative of old Chongqing, and a name tag for the city (I15). There are many normal residents living around Shibati and it is a neighbourhood that shows the typical life of ordinary people, a true reflection of those who have been living in this city for a long time. The renovation project of the 18-step ladder shows that even though it is no longer a neighbourhood of ordinary life after it turned into a commercial street, its cultural positioning remains noticeable.

Taken together, government departments position the place and region based on the specific local conditions and resources. Such positioning is not a simple top-down or bottom-up process, but both. Taking the positioning of Five Chongqing and Five Functional Areas as example, the municipal level government only offers macro direction to the city. The main reason for proposing these two concepts as public policies is that they offer a basic discipline to guide government work. Government departments at district and county level build their own working plans based on the

municipal level government document. Government departments at district and county level offer detailed working plans including specific aims and goals, methods to achieve those aims and goals, feedback and revisions of former work. Government departments at town, sub-district, and township level also offer working plan but mainly at the lowest level of execution unit rather than with specific aims, goals, and methods. Therefore, the guiding function of Five Chongqing and Five Functional Areas is top-down discipline that lower government departments at each level must obey. Lower level government departments, on the other hand, enrich the content of such concepts and add detail. Even though the working plans of lower government departments must be reviewed and approved by higher government, "it is impossible for municipal level government to provide detailed positions for lower government departments. Because, on one hand, it would cost too much effort, and on the other hand, it is the duty of lower government department to provide such things, as we (referring to districts and county level government departments) know the place better" (I14). Other interviewees from tourism departments, commercial departments and propaganda departments support this idea. Therefore, the forming of detailed positions and working contents is a bottom-up process.

6.1.2. *Make a slogan, engage in propaganda, and conduct activities: a coherent process*

After the completion of positioning, branding can be summarized as a coherent process, which includes making a slogan, engaging in propaganda and conducting activities. The three steps seem to be independent of each other yet are actually closely related and interwoven. After the slogan is decided upon, corresponding advertising is arranged. Although advertising is usually for activities, the implementation of the activities is often considered a part of advertising. Before clarifying the process in detail, two issues need to be explained. Firstly, the actual meanings of slogans and propaganda in China are not the same as their typical understandings in the west. The slogan, as mentioned by (Cole, 1998), is a tool for propaganda, and what the slogan contains is much more

than simple indoctrination or brainwashing it is the partial Chinese culture.

In product and corporate branding, the meaning of a slogan helps consumers grasp the meaning of the brand as well as create brand awareness (Keller, 2003). Slogans are normally and widely applied in advertising campaigns (Keller, 2003), and are equally common practice in place branding campaigns, such as I Amsterdam for Amsterdam, Everyone Stays Longer than Planned for Budapest, or Surprise Yourself in Athens Attica for Athens, where their function is similar to product and corporate branding (Kavaratzis, 2008). In China, slogans are seen as a summary of the spirit of the age, ideals, beliefs, and codes of conduct (W13). They are not a product of modern times but serve as phenomenal national symbols, which either have some deep or shallow relationship with Chinese culture, political tradition, or historical background (Lu, 1999). Slogans play a special role in national governance in certain political times (such as the Great Leap Forward or the Great Cultural Revolution). As shown in Picture 18, the operation of state apparatus during the Great Leap Forward depended on supreme directives, leaders' instructions and internal policy provisions, and there was a responsibility to disseminate ideologies (Lu, 1999). The essence of these directives, instructions, and policy provisions was popularized and simplified into slogans. These slogans were posted in urban and rural areas, factories, communes, army, schools, and streets and alleys to warn people to obey them. Such refined language showed tremendous strength in putting across policies and mobilizing the masses, especially in the vast rural areas where most people were illiterate or semi-literate (W12). After the Great Cultural Revolution, this slogan culture gradually evolved into the banners and slogans seen everywhere in the city today.

Picure 18.　　A picture taken during the Great Leap Forward; the slogan on the wall says "eating at no cost, trying hard to produce" (吃饭不花钱，努力搞生产) (China.com (W14))

Although the most common genre is political slogans, which simplify the Party's administrative programme and major conference decisions into straightforward ideas that inform the public, other organizations employ slogans such as schools, enterprises, and factories. Various slogans prevail in every aspect of life (Picture 19).

Picure 19.   A slogan in a high school saying "raise one point (in the college entrance exam) and get rid of thousands of competitors" (VisionChina)

In addition to the plain, crude banner slogans, the most common type seen in daily life are ornamented slogans, like that shown in Picture 20.

Picure 20.　　A slogan at the centre of Three Gorges Square business area. The left board presents the eight concepts of socialist core values and the right board has two elements. The first four lines promote the Civilized City concept, speak civilized language, do civilized things, be civilized residents, and create a civilized city, while the picture below has one connotation (respect for the elderly and love of the youth) of the China Dream. The last lines of both boards are the propaganda party, Three Gorges Square Commercial Circle Management Committee.

The subject presenting the advertising shown in Picture 20 is the Three Gorges Square Commercial Circle Management Committee. The content of the slogans is quite diverse, ranging from socialist core values, to the building of a civilized city, to the China Dream. The slogans are clear and simple, and, except for the artistic representation, the way they are presented is essentially no different from the way the slogans in Picture 19 are displayed. Slogans are the most important and common publicity tool and have the following Chinese characteristics. Firstly, they are a communication and management

method. The government, schools, and other organizations convey organizational objectives and operative norms to their members for the purpose of seeking unity in thought and work. Secondly, slogans are a symbol of official rights, which are not solely limited to government departments. Organizations send strong signals to their members by a range of means. Official slogans are often representative of political correctness, which is close to truth, and undisputed. With repeated slogans full of connotation, organizations inform their members of their presence and realize unity in values. Thirdly, slogans are ceremonial ornaments. Many times, they function as decorations that create a sense of atmosphere and ritual. It is a unique cultural phenomenon that modern people hang banners on big occasions of opening, welcoming, celebrating and the like. Fourthly, slogans, especially government slogans, take a formalist approach in their effect. Formally, slogans are used to hand down information to the inferior from the superior. But they are also a method by which the inferior express they have "understood the core of a certain government document and finished relevant advertising activities... thus having completed their tasks" (I20). Consequently, from where the government stands, the slogan is anything but a simple propaganda technique, it symbolizes its official rights and denotes that the lower government departments have undertaken the tasks assigned by the upper departments, at least to some extent.

Propaganda in China carries distinct meanings. It implies an information expression approach to a specific topic or agenda (Cole, 1998). While it is often endowed with negative connotations in the context of the modern west (Beder, 1997), mainly as a result of its excessive use during wartime, including the French Revolution, the American War of Independence, and World War II (by the Nazi government and the Soviet Union), propaganda is considered a positive term in China (Björner, 2017). Lasswell (1927) calls it "the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols". Propaganda in the Chinese language has three connotations: 1) to announce and convey; 2) to explain and educate; and 3) to communicate and publicize

(Li, 2008). Specifically, propaganda is the announcement and conveying of information to a target audience, and its functions of interpretation and education are demonstrated mainly in the political field (see Mao Zedong's *Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work*). Its third connotation is prominently reflected in the field of communication, as a social behaviour which adopts all kinds of meaningful symbols to affect how people think and guide how people act via the dissemination of certain ideas. Its basic function is to spread an idea, theory, policy, ethic, or attitude (Li, 2008). Taking these three aspects into account, propaganda is a neutral word in the Chinese context and does not involve the strongly negative meaning it has in the English context, such as that proposed by Martin and Bernays (1929): "Propaganda is making puppets of us. We are moved by hidden strings which the propagandist manipulates". Only by clarifying the differences in the meaning of slogans and propaganda in the Chinese and English contexts can we clearly understand the content of the government's place branding process. This study adopts the Chinese context connotations of slogans and propaganda.

In the case of Chongqing, the brand slogan is made simultaneously with the positioning in the government department. Generally speaking, the slogan is the core of the positioning of the brand. But other explanatory and elaborative positioning is included. Take the Five Chongqing concept as an example. In practice, the concept itself is a slogan of propaganda (as shown in Picture 12), yet in Chongqing's urban brand building it is turning Chongqing into a liveable, convenient, safe, and healthy city with forests. Related, concise explanations are offered in the official documents. For specific municipal departments, slogans in publicity work equal the spreading of positioning (I8). For example, City of Water and Mountain, Beautiful Chongqing is used by the Chongqing Tourism Ministry in its official document the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Construction of Chongqing as International Famous Destinations, where it serves as a slogan instead of the actual brand positioning. The positioning of Chongqing tourism

brand is specifically divided into seven: the Yangtze River Three Gorges International Gold Tourism Belt, City of World Beautiful Scenery, National Historical and Cultural City, City of World Hot Spring, City of International Business Exhibition and Shopping, City of International Leisure and Holiday-making, and the International Rural Tourism Demonstration Zone. However, the seven brand positionings are rarely seen in the actual dissemination. It is the shorter slogan that is employed in official publicity activities in place of the seven. The simpler slogan improves the spreading efficiency and helps the audience memorize it. City of Water and Mountain, Beautiful Chongqing can be understood as a major positioning of Chongqing's tourism, while the other seven are the concrete contents and the sub genres of positioning (I8).

Picure 21.   The slogan Safe Chongqing on a wall (the author)

In government departments below the municipal level, the making, modification, and use of slogans are much more complicated, without any established rules. The changing of slogans in some divisions is quite frequent, for example the tourism slogan in Wulong District. However, the slogan Three Cares of Qijiang has been used for many

years in Qijiang District, and the slogans for spiritual civilization building in the two districts have not been altered for a long time. In Wulong District, the Office of Spiritual Civilization has not adopted its own slogan but employed the one used throughout China, Create a National Civilized City. And Qijiang District proposed the slogan Harmony Qijiang which it extended to all aspects of the construction of spiritual civilization. As a lower-level government department, the Guanyinqiao business district keeps changing its slogan, while the Jiefangbei business district has gradually downplayed the significance of slogans, which mainly spread the information about certain activities, and "rejects vague slogans" (I15). Although they sometimes differ from the slogans put forward by the government, what can be concluded is that the leaders of the government departments at this level can directly influence the slogan used. Of course, the impact of leaders' power on place branding goes beyond making slogans, as elaborated on later in this chapter.

In the government's view, brand communication relies on propaganda (I5, I8), which is generally seen in the dissemination of brand positioning and slogans. Another essential role of propaganda is summarizing and affirming events or promotional activities to be held. Government departments have two publicity approaches, the traditional media and the new media, the definitions of which are not in line with the strict concepts of communication science, just classifications made in government work. On that basis, the traditional media refers to government owned media such as TV, newspapers, outdoor advertisements, official websites, and radio, while new media refers to WeChat and Weibo (the Chinese version of Twitter). No matter what media the government adopts, it only employs official channels, that is the media owned or controlled by the government.

Traditional media coverage is fixed. That is to say, however little content may seem to be promoted this year, the dissemination though the traditional media remains unchanged. For instance, the Tourism Ministry of Chongqing, in addition to publicizing

itself on traditional domestic media, launched its tourism trailer on ABC in the United States in 2015 to tap into the American market[48]. The American trailer release has become an traditional annual media routine for Chongqing's tourism department.

There has been a remarkable trend of traditional media transforming into and integrating with contemporary mass media (Liu et al., 2017). The official media is making adjustments. One prominent feature is that the advertising on traditional media focuses on official and formal content such as the release of government information, the holding of official events, and promotional videos or advertisements for cities, while new media deals generally with soft marketing (I5). For example, the Wulong District in Chongqing, in order to promote its prestigious summer resort Fairy Maiden Mountain, launched an event called Battle of Watermelons, which was publicized differently in the new and traditional media. In the new media of Weibo, it was reported with the title *College Students Participate in the Battle of Watermelons for Stress Relief in the Fairy Mountain*. The content concentrated on how interesting it was, and the attached pictures were all pretty entertaining. But on the official traditional media of the website of the Wulong Tourism Bureau, the title of the event was *2000 College Students 'Threw 1 Ton of Watermelons' for Stress Relief? No. They Were Actually Helping the Farmers in Sales Promotion*. The content described the purpose of the event and even how the garbage was disposed of. In brief, the new media discussed the topic in a humorous, funny, teasing manner while the traditional media adopted a more accurate, serious, formal approach. The content released in the new media owned by the government is never as casual as that in the private new media. The official new media is characterized by two obvious features. Firstly, it is official, which constrains the basic principle of its advertising. Any methods that attract public attention by exaggerated or inappropriate speech are not employed. Secondly, what it releases is authoritative. Meaning that all its published contents are formal and accurate. It also assumes the burden of refuting rumours. For instance, the report on the Battle of Watermelons on the

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[48] https://abc7ny.com/travel/chongqing-chinas-city-for-international-travel-part-1/1486463/

Wulong Tourism Bureau website was an official response to the criticism on the Internet that the event was a waste of resources. It was clarified by the government that the organizers bought unsalable watermelons from the farms to help promote the sale of local melons and to boost tourism. Whether it is in the traditional media or the new media, the government always holds the belief about propaganda that, "the content is fundamental, new media is just packaging the way of communication" (I8).

No matter how sound the brand slogans may seem, it can only carry limited content, which is abstract most of the time. The case of Five Chongqing is an example. Detailed information is given in official government documents and the speech of Chongqing's former leader Bo Xilai, yet in its practical spreading, only the short and simple slogan is used, as shown in Figure 12. The positioning of Chongqing's tourism brand City of Water and Mountain, Beautiful Chongqing, is specifically divided into seven sub positionings. The same is true of Qijing government's Harmony Qijiang at a lower level. Government workers see it as an abstract concept and slogan, the meaning of which requires them to make adjustments to their work reality (I4). Therefore, the propaganda slogan of the government does not carry much practical significance. It is the brand activities that are concrete and perceivable.

The activities organized by the government are considered the actual steps of brand building. They can be classified into two genres. The first and most paramount is promoting meetings, conferences and events which advocate local characteristics, products and policies and facilitate communication, ultimately benefiting both parties. In effect, promoting meetings is a means of marketing conveying concrete and specific information to a target audience. They are usually held in the exhibition centres, star hotels, auditoriums, gymnasiums or other places in large or medium-sized cities to allow face-to-face communication between the government and the target audience whose products, services, and ideas are introduced there. Through on-site question-and-answer sessions, the two parties are able to enhance their understanding of

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each other and an atmosphere of bilateral inspection is likely to be created. In some cases, the organizers may select places with unique creativity and individuation like clubs or scenic spots for distinct promotion effects. Also, the specific timing of festivals and anniversaries can be taken into consideration to highlight the results of promotion.

This approach is the main means of promoting the brand in the commercial and tourism sphere. Taking the case of The 21st Western China International Fair for Investment and Trade as an example to explain the specific process of government branding activities; the fair was hosted by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China, the Ministry of Water Resources of the People's Republic of China, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, and the Chongqing Municipal Government, and undertaken by the Chongqing Municipal Commerce Commission. In essence, it was a conference for investment attraction rather than a branding activity, but officials from the Chongqing Municipal Commerce Commission say that the event had been held for twenty-one years and become a significantly influential activity. So it is acceptable that the fair be regarded as part of the brand of Chongqing, attracting investment. In the past, the fair was called China (Chongqing) International Investment and Global Sourcing Fair. In 2018, it was renamed Western China International Fair for Investment and Trade under the approval of the State Council. This renaming in itself demonstrates the expansion of the event's impact. Meanwhile, it reflects the ability of Chongqing to hold large-scale international exhibitions, which supports its positioning as a city of business exhibitions. The event, after twenty consecutive years of hosting, has a long-term, far-reaching impact and brought Chongqing a brand effect, even though it was not a brand activity initially.

The slogan of the fair was "new era of interconnectivity, new pattern of inland opening-up". It was promoted by the official media, and the traditional media including 21 newspapers (Xinhua News Agency, Economic Daily, China News Service, China Daily, Science and Technology Daily, China Business Times, International Business

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Daily, 21st Century Business Herald, Daily Economic News, China Trade News, Workers Daily, Modern Logistics News, China Economic Weekly, China Report, Chongqing Daily, Chongqing Evening News, Chongqing Morning News, Chongqing Business Daily, Chongqing Times, Chongqing Youth Daily, Urban Hot News), 7 websites (Xinhuanet, People.com, Cqnews.net, Cqrb.cn, Cqliving.com, Cqtimes.cn, and Jrcq.cn), 1 TV station (Chongqing Broadcasting Group), 6 radio stations/columns (the Central People's Broadcasting Station, China National Radio, the Voice of Chongqing, Chongqing Traffic Radio Station, Chongqing Economic Radio Station, Chongqing Literature and Art Radio Station), and a magazine (The World and Chongqing, a monthly hosted by the Foreign Affairs Office of Chongqing Municipal People's Government and the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of Chongqing Municipal People's Government, and guided by the Information Office of Chongqing Municipal People's Government). However, in the new media only the Chongqing Release (the official Weibo of the Information Office of Chongqing Municipal People's Government) promoted the event.

Another seven media outlets in addition to those listed above promoted the event. They are named separately here as it is hard to distinguish whether they are private or official: Phoenix nets (Chongqing), Singapore Lianhe Zaobao, Nikkei Net, Hong Kong Satellite TV, Hong Kong Ta Kung Wen Wei Media Group, Hong Kong Commercial Daily, and Hong Kong Bauhinia Magazine.

The propaganda of this event has three characteristics: firstly, it requires full coverage; secondly, traditional media is not as "traditional" as the government expected; and thirdly, new media is neglected.

The media generally have two methods of propaganda. The first is the official manuscript. This is a uniform draft written by a certain news agency, an official media or the Party (propaganda office), distributed to all media. The other is the media

themselves deciding the content and method of reporting, but the organizers may make adjustments to the content. These two methods are employed by all the media mentioned above, and the government has never forced the media to choose the official manuscript. When selecting media, the government generally regards covering the public as its main criterion. Chongqing municipal government aims to cover the entire of Chongqing rather than the whole nation. All the official media of Chongqing participate in the coverage of the event, but the focus of propaganda is not on the accuracy or preciseness of their reports but making it known to the public as much as possible (I16).

Some media adopt traditional reporting methods. For example, the Xinhue News Agency selects the official manuscript approach. That is, the agency writes a report and sends it uniformly to the relevant media. China Report releases a series of reports and the topics are various aspects of the fair. Chongqing Report creates its content directly without any modification, while Xinhuanet separately launches a column of live video with pictures and text on its website, the content of which is updated manually and instantly by reporters on the scene. Interviews with the Chongqing Municipal Commerce Commission indicate that the government chooses only the Chongqing Release as its new media partner. From the field research, we find that most traditional media also employs the new media in its reporting. To name just a few, the Chongqing Evening News, Chongqing Times, Chongqing Daily, and Chongqing Broadcasting Group all released the contents of the fair on their official Weibo and WeChat platforms. Although new media is applied to reporting, the government, as the event organizer, relies mainly on traditional media. The marketing director of Cqnews.net states that, the government seldom adopts the new online media for interviews. Such neglect of the new media is demonstrated by its inadequate funding (I19). The current writer finds, by examining Weibo and WeChat, that plenty of nonofficial media release relevant news; among them, Sina Finance and Everyone Loves Chongqing have great influence.

Apart from large-scale city-level events like The 21st Western China International Fair for Investment and Trade, there are similar activities carried out by other district and county government departments. For example, the Chongqing Tourism Bureau held a promotional meeting for City of Water and Mountain, Beautiful Chongqing in October 2017 in Hangzhou, a city in southeastern China. The meeting directly employed the major brand slogan of Chongqing's tourism as its name and applied traditional media like the Chongqing Daily for publicity. At the same time, Cqnews.net adopted the official manuscript of Chongqing Daily as usual, and on December 30, 2017, a tourism promotion meeting with the same title, City of Water and Mountain, Beautiful Chongqing was hosted in New York. From the government's point of view, these events are actually brand building activities (I5, I8 and I10). That is, more people learn about Chongqing's tourism via these activities than the publicity of the media, and the brand of Chongqing's tourism is therefore disseminated. But why is the government so persistent and sparing no effort to adopt the traditional media as a propaganda tool for broader coverage? A reasonable explanation might be that they are showing their work both to the public and government departments at higher levels. This is a "must-do" political task much like the ubiquitous use of slogans. Another case is the promotional videos for cities that are broadcast on major TV stations. These videos are advocated and appreciated by people of power as they are of high quality even though they have no practical effect on the actual place branding practitioners (I5). Wen (2013) comes to a similar conclusion when studying the promotional films on China Central Television (CCTV). Another reason lies in the authority of the official media. Although most of the official media in China are public institutions by nature, their coverage and information about events related to the government comes from the government, which means that the official media have the right to speak on behalf of the government. This guarantees the authority of the content disseminated and completely eradicates the possibility of distorted propaganda in society. The third reason comes from the unique nature and identity of the Chinese media. The official media are public institutions, and from a legal perspective, public institutions are state-owned organizations and institutions with

legal personality. They are under the leadership of specific government departments, and as a result the official media are easier to control by the government in terms of the content of the propaganda.

6.1.3. *Place management co-mix with place branding*

Interaction and overlap between place management and place branding is seen both in practice and theory, which becomes profound in the case of Chongqing. Considering Five Chongqing and the Five Function Areas of Chongqing as place branding concepts, their influence in place management is significant. This section elaborates on the impact of Five Chongqing on district governance concentrating on the instance of Yubei District of Chongqing, as there are many affairs involved in the management of the areas administered by Chongqing. Changes in environmental protection policies are used to elaborate on the impact of the Five Function Areas of Chongqing on Chongqing as a whole.

Based on the concept of Five Chongqing, Yubei District Government put forward a campaign for the construction of a green, healthy, pleasant, safe, traffic-convenient and civilized Yubei, according to its actual situation. The campaign is led by the main leaders of the District CPC Committee and District Government, the HQ of Five Functions (which is in charge of the specific works of the five aspects), and District leaders act as the directors. Meanwhile, specific construction plans are made, construction goals analyzed, and the construction of Five Chongqing is now being carried out with a focus on specific projects.

The construction of Forest Chongqing for Yubei is positioned as an eco-friendly, green city district. Work is carried out in both the rural and urban areas of the district. A two-year campaign of rural greening, taking place in the autumn and spring of each year is about mobilizing 500,000 military and civilian volunteers to plant trees and

build seedling bases. Investors and private companies are invited to take part in the Green City project, such as Red Maple Wood Base in Yubei. There are projects designed to increase income for farmers, too. The Yubei government has already planted more than 30,000 mu of tangerine trees to lift local farmers out of poverty. There is rural eco-system construction, including a National Eco-Friendly Village and municipal-level Green Village. In urban areas, there is the construction of a national landscape district, which is part of Chongqing building itself into a national landscape city. There are three main aspects of infrastructure construction: 6 parks at an investment of 4 billion Yuan; 10 eco-friendly main lines (roads); and urban forest construction or urban greening. For instance, a 500 mu forest is planned for National Rd 210, making it the largest forest-covered road in downtown Chongqing.

The goal of Healthy Chongqing is to make sure that "minor illnesses are treated on the village-level, severe illnesses are treated on the district-level and bodybuilding can be accessible everywhere" (小病不出村、大病不出区、健身零距离). Yubei combines social aid, charity and financial aid to create a mixed public service mode including health and sports aspects, for the Healthy Yubei campaign,. There are two sub-aspects of the health campaign: 1) building a district-level healthcare system, including the modification of district-level healthcare institutes and TCM hospitals in the district, and building village-level health centres for 195 villages, covering the entire district; and 2) building the emergency system for grassroots healthcare institutes, making sure that emergency aid is accessible for residents at all times. Furthermore, free-of-charge health examinations are offered to households enjoying the minimum living guarantee and migrant workers. There are three sub-aspects of the sports campaign: 1) infrastructure construction including district-level stadiums, and more community fitness equipment and sports parks; 2) building the Home of Martial Arts in China, with the district sports bureau developing a set of martial arts with Chongqing characteristics, and teaching local residents; and 3) building a health centre for nationals, incorporating all towns and sub-districts.

The targets of Liveable Chongqing are making the sky blue, the water clear, and the city green, and creating lakeshore houses. There are five sub-projects: 1) urban renewal, removing old houses and replacing them with green land; 2) the face lift project, upgrading urban landscapes to improve the urban environment; 3) the Blue Sky, Clear Water, Green Land and Tranquillity movement, which aims to improve air quality; 4) accelerating rural building and offering new Chongqing buildings (housing for rural residents who have to relocate due to demolition), replacing 735 households; and 5) improving infrastructure, including squares, green land parks, community-based business centres, etc.

Safe Chongqing involves reinforcing the police department by having them equipped with advanced electronics, the modification of dilapidated bridges, and a crackdown on organized crime. There are 15 specific tasks, including the solving of cases that have been piling up at the police station. The Safe Chongqing project in Yubei includes plans to build the first National Safe District and Western Safety Demonstration District in Chongqing by 2012, with more than 1 billion Yuan investment.

Being the traffic hub of the west, Yubei is where the airport, railways and high-speed railways meet. The objective of Smooth Yubei is building a traffic hub and international trade gateway. The traffic construction in Yubei includes the expansion of Chongqing Airport, Chongqing-Lichuan Railway and Chongqing-Huaihua Railway.

The construction of Civilized Yubei has ten objectives, such as improving citizen quality, and urban greening, which set out to consolidate Yubei's title as the National Civilized District.

The Five Function Areas of Chongqing, raised by Sun Zhengcai, the former leader of the city, is interpreted as the strategic plan of government leaders in terms of economic, social, cultural and environmental construction. We can see the impact of the Five

Function Areas of Chongqing on the city's environmental policies in an official document known as the *Opinions Concerning the Promotion of the Five Function Areas by Implementing Differentiated Environmental Protection Policies*, issued in August 2014. The document was issued by Chongqing Municipal People's Government, and provides details of the differentiated environmental policies of the five districts, in six aspects including control of the environmental bottom line, environmental standards for new projects, control of main pollutants, environmental standards and technological policies, environmental regulation and environmental economic policies.

The document requires that all industrial projects within the urban functional core areas of Chongqing become emission-free, in order to solve the prominent issues such as air, water and noise pollution, creating the Two-River & Four-Bank target, and demonstrating the beautiful urban landscape of the city. The document demands enhanced control of the air and water environments in urban functional expansion areas, and the building of a high-quality eco-friendly city. In addition to the projects being separately located, all new industrial projects in the district must be settled in industrial parks or areas where industries gather. In the newly planned areas, the document requires strict implementation of the environmental negative list mechanism, acceleration of environmentally friendly ecosystems, strengthening of pollution control, protection of important wetland ecosystems such as Changshou Lake and Yutan Lake, improvement of the ecosystem capacity of regional development, and building an industrial cluster and city with a modern landscape where humans and nature live in harmony. Industrial projects that consume coal or heavy oil for construction or expansion are prohibited in the district, and enterprises are encouraged to purchase the right to emit waste from other districts.

In the ecological conservation development zone of northeastern and the ecological protection development zone of southeastern Chongqing, the *Opinions on Implementing Differentiated Environmental Protection Policies to Promote the Construction of Five Function Districts* requires them to strengthen the ecological conservation, restoration

and biodiversity, creating an ecological corridor along the Yangtze river, and an important ecological barrier in its upper reaches, with a national water resources strategic reserve and a national ecological functional area. Projects that undermine ecological conservation or protection are prohibited.

In addition, government departments at various levels should take regional objective factors such as climate, geographical conditions, resources, population and even how residents think into consideration when they brand. The interview respondents did not always believe that these factors were elements of a place brand, but acknowledged that they did affect it. The impact mainly manifests itself in regional management. Even the same conditions can generate the opposite effect in certain areas of Chongqing. Taking the tourism of Wulong District as an example; the extraordinary geographical conditions of the mountainous areas are why Xiannv Mountain of Wulong is warm in the winter and cool in the summer. So the local tourism authority labelled Xiannv Mountain a summer and winter resort. In other areas of Chongqing the winter is so cold that all travel services are suspended. In another example, place brand practitioners at different levels may have different opinions about the unique landforms of Chongqing. The interviewees from Chongqing Tourism Administration believe that Chongqing is mainly famous for its natural landscapes, since the entire region is divided into three major areas by the Yangtze and Jialing rivers, while Wuling Mountains cross Chongqing cutting the land into two parts north and south, creating natural landscapes exclusive to Chongqing. The interviewees from Wulong District, however, believed that the district had no natural resources but mountains and hills since it is located south of the Wuling Mountains, and there is no scenery surrounded by waters and mountains as mentioned in the general marketing of Chongqing. The interviewees from the commercial departments of Chongqing believed that downtown Chongqing was special as it is divided into several areas by rivers and mountains. These natural barriers led to the unique layout of Chongqing with multiple business districts and centres each with its own characteristics, which is an advantage for Chongqing as a whole. Managers from Nanping Business District believe that such natural barriers impede each district

from expanding outwards, so their development and expansion is limited. Meanwhile, the positioning and branding of each business district leaves people with no option but to live within their own spectrums.

Defining Five Chongqing and Five Function Areas of Chongqing as place branding concepts, means they exert an impact on every aspect of regional governance whether of the entire city, a county or a business district. The responses of the interviewees can be divided into rules, the first of which is exactly as the old saying goes "old wine in a new bottle, or a change in form but not in content", which means that even though the brand slogan and positioning of Chongqing have changed, what the government actually does remains only slightly changed. In fact, what the government has scheduled must be done, regardless of concepts like environmental protection, spiritual civilization construction, tourism, etc. (I10). Former leaders like Xi, who proposed Five Chongqing, and Sun who proposed Five Function Areas of Chongqing, were incarcerated due to suspected corruption, and that's why these concepts vanished from government documents, slogans on the streets and reports in government media. The successor, Chen, didn't bring out any new concepts. The interviewees from various government departments believed that the disappearance of these concepts had little impact on what they do when they deal with their work. These two particular concepts are no longer mentioned even inside government. When planning actual work or during meetings of inter-district governments, they are still arranged in accordance with the FiveFunction Areas of Chongqing, but Five Chongqing is hardly noticeable since it was replaced by Five Function Areas of Chongqing. The fact that regional development concepts are replaced along with the change of government leaders is deemed to be a kind of political influence, which is elaborated on in Chapter 5.

The second rule is that branding is never a part of the government's schedule. Regional management and marketing are what branding is. When city branding or place branding were mentioned in the interviews, the majority of interviewees didn't think that they

should be at the core of a government's job. There is no branding department or anyone taking care of it across all government offices, only marketing departments, offices or centres in certain government departments. In commercial departments, the interviewees believed that place brand construction was mainly about regional management. Good commercial brand of place is generated naturally if all commercial aspects of a region are neatly done. Nevertheless, the tourism authority considers that branding is carried out through marketing. Essentially speaking, events organized by the tourism department, such as promotion shows, are a kind of promotion instead of a complete branding process (I5), and attention and consumers should be obtained first through marketing before even thinking about how to build a brand. Branding makes no sense at all if there are no consumers in the first place. The bad result of such logic is obvious, as attention is obtained through marketing, but the audience's understanding cannot be unified, and hence there is no unified brand.

6.2 Place branding in China: why is it important?

This section focuses on the function of place branding. According to the interviewees' responses, there are four major functions of place branding, attracting investment, competing with similar places, guiding place development, and creating resident attachments with ideological education. The functions of attracting investment and creating resident attachments are the same as in the existing literature, however, the branding concepts of Chongqing (such as Five Chongqing and Five Functional Areas of Chongqing) mentioned in many pieces of literature, do not exactly work as branding concepts but policy and the guiding principle of the place. In addition, even though building resident attachments is a common use of place branding, it shows a unique character of China that it is combined with ideological education. The following sections illustrate these functions in detail.

6.2.1. *Attract investment*

One of the most important justifications of place branding activities and investment, which was dominant in the interviews, was supporting the attraction of investment. According to the interviewees, the fundamental appeal that attracts private businesses is the existing business infrastructure. Business buildings, industry parks and zoning systems are the key elements that attract the business sector[49]. For the business area specifically, the main attraction for companies is the commercial complex, which is a variety of commercial and office buildings (I15). The real estate companies' brands are the most important component of business area branding as their business projects can attract many companies (I16). Taking Chongqing Longfor Real Estate Company[50] as an example; the average rental rate is more than 95% with an average opening rate of 96% in their commercial streets. The rental rate of certain commercial streets (Chongqing College Town Project) can reach 99% with a 100% opening rate (I16). As a result, the Longfor Real Estate Company brand sometimes replaces a place brand or becomes a major part of it. For example, Guanyinqiao business area (观音桥) is frequently replaced by Northern Downtown Paradise Walk (北城天街) (see Picture 22) which is already a landmark and symbol of Guanyinqiao business area (观音桥) (I15). This is similar for Dashihua Business Area (大石化商圈) located in Yuzhong District, known as Longfor Times Paradise Walk (龙湖时代天街).

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[49] Normally, the "business sector" or "corporate sector", sometimes simply called "business" is the part of the economy made up of companies. The interviewees used this term at the beginning of the interviews but it is reasonable to interpret this term as just companies since, during the interviews, the interviewees directly used "private companies" rather than "business sector". Therefore, the "business sector" here is used as a summative term.

[50] Longfor Real Estate Company is a listed company based in Chongqing, one of the earliest shopping mall developers in China. Its most famous project is Longfor Paradise Walk in Chongqing, which is a complex of commercial streets, shopping centres and recreation facilities.

Picure 22.   Paradise walk in Guanyinqiao business area (观音桥)

Such behaviour by government departments constructing business area brands is partly "free rider" behaviour as the government departments do not pay for branding directly but benefit from it. The advantage is that the government saves branding costs and effort. Nevertheless, the disadvantage is obvious, the government cannot decide the positioning of branding since the private company controls the process. Company branding is a common act of building unified brands to ensure a unified understanding by the audience. If the same real estate company constructs in two areas, it is hard to distinguish them, and this is the reality for two business areas of Chongqing, Guanyinqiao and Sashihua, which are constructed and managed by Longfor Real Estate Company. This advantage was pointed by a government officer from Jiefangbei central business district talking about the difference between the two business areas, as Longfor Real Estate Company does not have any property in Jiefangbei central business district.

Besides attracting investment for business areas, local districts of Chongqing also tend to use industry parks and zoning systems to attract investment. Both methods involve certain national and government titles that be used to attract business settlement and

industry investment (I1, I2, and I4). The difference is that an industry park focuses on a particular field such as e-commerce, software outsourcing, creative industries etc.; while a zoning system focuses on free trade. These central or local government authorized titles are the main branding element that attracts investment, since it shows commitment to investors that a park or zone for free international trade is guaranteed by the government. However, behind these authorized titles are various investment promotion preferential policies, which are the key to attracting investors (I2, I13).   For example, the whole area of Jiefangbei CBD is included in China (Chongqing) Free Trade Zone （中国重庆自由贸易试验区）, therefore, pre-establishment national treatment[51] and negative list management models are applied in this area, which is consistent with the international investment management concept (P1) (China Daily, 2015). There are also another ten investment incentive policies including service industry, listed companies, SMEs, innovative industry, tourism marketing, hotel industry, and e-commerce (P3). Viewed separately, these investment policies can hardly be considered branding attempts or brand elements. However, together, it create a favourable policy environment (I2), which does become a key element for attracting investors.

6.2.2. *Facing internal competition*

Places use place branding as a tool to compete with other places for limited resources (Kavaratzis et al., 2014). However, in the case of Chongqing, there is no strong evidence to support this argument as the responses focused on internal place competition. The establishment of business area brands is intended to compete with other business areas and distinguish them, or enhance the core competitiveness and internal development driving forces in the area (I2, I15). Officers from three major business areas (Nan'ping, Jiefangbei and Guanyinqiao) all mentioned that they were facing increasing pressure from other business areas or emerging business areas. This does not means business areas do not face competition from other business areas out of Chongqing but,

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[51] "The essence of pre-establishment national treatment is providing national treatment for foreign capital during the entry stage, which means the capital importing country should provide foreign capital treatment that is no less than domestic capital in the pre-establishment stage" (China Daily, 2015) (W5).

for the majority of business areas, their radiation range does not exceed the city range (I16). When Guanyinqiao business area was established in the early 2000s, Jiefangbei and Nan'ping business areas, as traditional business areas, faced huge pressure (I2, I15). The new emerging business area of Jiazhou (located north of Guanyinqiao) diverted consumers away from Guanyinqiao business area.

A government officer from Jiefangbei CBD management committee said "we dig ourselves (referring to Jiefangbei CBD) deeply and consider culture brand as the unique brand symbol, which other business areas do not have. That is why Jiefangbei attracts the majority of local consumers and tourists. With this in mind, Jiefangbei is developing towards a world class CBD" (I15). At certain development stages, due to the limitations of radiation range, business areas only focus on competing with other nearby business areas within the city. Well-developed business areas like Jiefangbei, however, compete with outside business areas such as Chunxilu business area in Chengdu (also located in southwest China), since "Jiefangbei may act as a core for Chongqing even for southwest China in the future" (I15).

6.2.3. *Guiding place development*

Guiding the place development function of a place brand can be divided into macro (the overall Chongqing city level) and micro (certain departments, local districts or county level). From a macro perspective, Five Chongqing and Five Functional Areas are two recent branding concepts mentioned in much literature (Berg and Bjrner, 2014, Björner, 2017b, Björner, 2018, Hong, 2004, Fan, 2014). It needs to be clarified that Five Chongqing and Five Functional Areas of Chongqing, in reality and practice, are hardly to be considered merely branding concepts. Chongqing Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party officially proposed the Five Chongqing and Five Functional Areas of Chongqing concepts at committee conference. Even though the official government announcement of five Chongqing no longer exists and cannot be found anywhere, the official government document that proposes Five Functional Areas of

Chongqing reveals the nature of such concepts, which is public policy. The Five Functional Areas concept was officially proposed and approved at the third plenum of the 4th Committee, CPC Chongqing City on 14th September, 2013, and is an official government document (*Proposals on Scientifically Dividing and Accelerating the Establishment of Five Functional Areas* by CPC Chongqing City Committee, Chongqing Municipal People's Government (中共重庆市委重庆市人民政府关于科学划分功能区域、加快建设五大功能区的意见)) presented to all levels of Chongqing city government as a major Municipal government decision. The format of this document is a government document, which naturally makes it a public policy (Keane, 2013); and according to *Party and Government Organs Official Document Handling Work Regulations* (党政机关公文处理工作条例)[52], this "proposal" (意见) (sometimes interpreted as "opinion") is one of the fifteen government document types. The proposal or opinion (意见) is applicable to proposing solutions to important issues. This document includes the government purpose, plan and discipline of city development, which is fully in accordance with the definition and characteristics of public policy (see Chapter 2, Section 2.7).

The question raised here is: if Five Chongqing and Five Functional Areas of Chongqing are public policies, why are they related to the city branding of Chongqing? One reasonable answer is that the influential range of public policy covers the whole of society and all stakeholders including, but not limited to, legislature, political parties, administrative agencies, mass media and citizens (Chen, 2005). Even though there are some arguments identifying the stakeholders in place branding, it is a consensus that residents, governmental organizations, infrastructure and transportation providers, businesses, as well as academic organisations are all involved in place branding (Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015). The other answer is that this public policy affects the image formation of Chongqing. The Five Chongqing policy tries to create a favourable image of Chongqing as a liveable, (transportation) smooth, forest, safe and (citizen) healthy

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[52] Central government website of China: http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2013-02/22/content_2337704.htm

city. It includes a large amount of government investment in infrastructure construction, public space, art, and landscape design, all of which are city brand elements (Kavaratzis, 2008b). This is a similar case to the Five functional districts. Lastly, such concepts are used as branding slogans in official government expression, media releases and academic research, since these concepts are "in plain Chinese and easy to remember"[53] by the public. The use of slogans is an important element in Chinese place branding as it is a strong propaganda element.

The Five Chongqing and Five Functional Areas of Chongqing, as public policies, influence every aspects of Chongqing's city branding. Such concepts indicate the vision of the city's development and position the city clearly. Therefore, it is reasonable to consider them, at least partly, as branding concepts. With this in mind, the function of these concepts guiding place development becomes clear.

Five Chongqing constitutes the overall framework and goals for Chongqing's future development (W8). According to *The Twelfth Five-Year Plan for Chongqing's National Economic and Social Development* (P22), the construction of Liveable Chongqing focuses on improving residential quality, optimizing public space, improving service facilities, providing comfortable accommodation for people, and enhancing the attractiveness of the city to various types of talent. This is an important goal for the realization of scientific development in Chongqing; Smooth Chongqing focuses on improving traffic conditions, resolving the unfavourable factors of Chongqing being located in the southwest inland, reducing urban development costs, increasing urban operating efficiency, and enhancing urban radiation-driven capabilities. This is an important foundation for realizing the scientific development of Chongqing. The construction of Forest Chongqing aims to promote greening in urban and rural areas and optimize the ecological environment, which is an important condition for the realization

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[53] According to former Chongqing city mayor, Huang Qifang, from Chinanews, available at: http://www.chinanews.com/gn/2011/09-17/3334733.shtml

of scientific development in Chongqing. The construction of Safe Chongqing focuses on satisfying the safety needs of the residents and enhancing the sense of security of the people. It is an important guarantee for the scientific development of Chongqing. Healthy Chongqing focuses on improving people's quality of life and making them healthier, happier, and more fulfilled. It is an important part of realizing Chongqing's scientific development.

Compared to Five Chongqing, Five Functional Areas of Chongqing provides more detailed guidance on city development, and offers clearer methods to achieve these goals.

These two overall branding attempts contain a future vision of the city. Five Chongqing is a more straightforward expression of the vision and a goal for the development of Chongqing, improving the environment, improving traffic conditions, enhancing resident's sense of security, creating a healthier lifestyle, and improving people's living conditions and environment. Five Functional Areas is more specific, since it not only offers plans for urban development, but also shows how to achieve such goals and what methods should be taken. An officer called Five Chongqing a "cliché concept" and "empty talk", since besides Forest Chongqing the other four concepts are all general government work without innovation (I20). Even though the Five Functional Areas contains much general government work content, the concept is more pragmatic as various departments can find their work direction (I20).

From a micro perspective, the tourism and commerce departments value place brand as a strategic tool, which is also true for local districts and counties. For tourism, the place brand is the soul of a place that contains its characteristics and connotations (I10). It is also a complex combination of tourism resources, social economies and humanities (I10, P21); therefore, for tourism, a place brand is not a single brand but a brand system, which includes an accommodation brand, catering brand, entertainment brand, shopping brand, culture brand, etc. These separate brands combine with agriculture, rural tourism,

animal husbandry, forestry, product processing, traditional handicrafts, and creative culture to create a complete brand system (P21). Hence, a place brand determines, or at least offers, a direction for local industry development. Examples and details of how commercial departments, tourism departments and local districts or county governments build such brand systems and how they make a 'system' of them is discussed in Chapter 4.

For commerce departments, especially the business area management committee, place branding provides a future vision and branding principal. For example, a culture brand was originally designed for Jiefangbei business area, and they still stick to this concept (I15). The culture brand is a design for Jiefangbei that comes from district government, therefore, in daily management, Jiefangbei management committee apply it to their daily work, finding cultural aspects of the whole area such as the Liberation Monument (解放碑), Hongyadong (southwest China traditional architecture), the Yangtze River Cableway, Chongqing Grand Theatre etc. (I15). All these elements are in Jiefangbei central business district of Chongqing as shown in Picture 23.

Picure 23.   Cucoloirs of Jiefangbei (Jiefangbei CBD Investment Guide)

In marketing and communication, these elements are mostly used for showing that the cultural aspects of Chongqing have become a key working focus. For example,

Chongqing Grand Theatre is the one of the ten largest social and cultural infrastructure undertakings confirmed by Chongqing Municipality, which aims to "create urban image, enhance urban cultural taste and urban function, strengthen urban attraction and radiation and enrich the cultural life of people" (W7). It shows the modern culture of Chongqing. Yangtze River Cableway, on the other hand, shows the wharf culture of Chongqing and the character of three-dimensional transportation. It was originally supposed to be removed for a bridge construction, but the government decided to retain the unique transportation method and promote it as a tourist site.

However, one thing which should be mentioned is that using culture brand as a key guiding principal in place management is rare in Chongqing. The reason Jiefangbei business area is aware of the unique culture brand is that the business area is the most developed in Chongqing, and in the top ten business areas in China (I15), therefore it has less thirst for economic development than other business areas. Another reason is that Jiefangbei business area is quite small, only 1.03 square kilometres, and as a result the cultural heritage and modern cultural sites are located more densely than in other business areas. Taking another business area, Shapingba business area, as an example; the closest cultural heritage site, the Mausoleum of the Martyr (烈士墓), is located three kilometres away and Ciqikou ancient town (the Porcelain Mouth (瓷器口)) is five kilometres away, both beyond the physical range of Shapingba business area. Therefore, they are normally considered the cultural heritages of Shapingba district rather than of the business area.

6.2.4. *Creating resident attachments and identity, and ideology education*

The final important reason why place branding is pursued in Chongqing according to the interviewees, is to create an emotional connection for the residents. One example given by a government officer is that they organized a series of activities in 2015 during the national Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Victory of the Chinese People's

War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and The World Anti-Fascist War. Chongqing has a unique advantage in branding Anti-Japanese War culture, since it was the wartime capital of China. There are many historical heritage sites such as Chongqing bombing site, Stilwell Museum, the former residence of General Stilwell, KMT Government Office, the South Bureau of the CPC Central Committee etc. They invited former soldiers of the Anti-Japanese War and their offspring to visit Chongqing as well as businesspeople and residents of Taiwan. The aim was very clear, to create new attachments and a good expression of Chongqing (I11). Culture branding has a patriotic education function. Hongyan Alliance Culture Developing Management Centre (also known as Chongqing Hongyan Revolution History Museum) organized various activities targeting students to spread Anti-Japanese War culture and it is still a patriotic education base and Party spirit education base for Party cadres.

Good place image, as a part of place brand, also helps to build resident identity (I4). Building resident identity through branding activities is the work of the propaganda department. Spiritual civilization construction and the volunteer service are two main methods. Spiritual civilization construction contains various activities including but not limit to moral model selection, selection of other exemplary figures, organization and guidance of daily cultural activities for residents, ideological and moral construction of citizens (P18). Volunteer service work mainly focuses on the construction of volunteer centres and volunteer programmes. The aims of such activities are promoting residents' participation in social life and improving regional and community governance, thereby improving the cohesion of residents and building resident identity (14).

An interesting example, given by an non-propaganda department interviewee (I4), is that before Wulong's tourism development, local girls were reluctant to marry local men, as they wanted to leave their poor hometown. Along with the tourism and economic development, local marriageable age men become more competitive in the eyes of Chongqing residents. Nowadays, local residents of Wulong are proud of being

Wulong people and accept the identity willingly (I10).

The last major function of place brand lies in ideology. Ideological education and Party theory propaganda intertwine. In real activities, these two functions overlap since they are the major part of the Party's work. The recent China Dream proposed by president Xijinping, is not only a national branding concept but also considered important Party guidelines and an important governing concept. Liu Yunshan, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and secretary of the Central Secretariat said:

> "Deepening the propaganda and education of the China Dream must be combined with Chinese characteristics socialism propaganda and education, must be combined with the building of a socialist core value system, must be combined with current tasks, and guiding people to strengthen their ideals and beliefs, to build spiritual support, and to actively participate in realizing the China Dream. (We) must integrate the publicity and education of the China Dream into the education and teaching of schools at all levels and integrate it into the ideological and moral education of minors and ideological and political education among college students, and integrate it into the construction of campus culture so that it can enter teaching materials, enter classrooms, and enter students' minds" (W11).

It is the cultural walls of the executive branch (shown in Picture 24), state-owned enterprises and schools that realize these functions. Outdoor advertising (Picture 26) and propaganda walls (Picture 25) serve similar functions.

Picure 24.   A slogan on the wall of a government department saying "comprehensively implement the party's basic theory and basic strategy" (the author)

Picure 25.　A huge wall in the centre of Shapingba business area saying "highly holding the great banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics and not forgetting to move forward" (the author)

Picure 26.   The China Dream (left) and socialist core values (right) on a street in Yunzhong district (the author)

It is worth mentioning that China Dream as a national branding concept "is not a single region or a concept or phenomenon peculiar to Chongqing city. It is more likely to be a phenomenon under the national system and a phenomenon with Chinese characteristics", and as a result, applications of the China Dream are quite similar in every city in China (I6).

6.2.5. *Economic development-oriented place branding*

This chapter, based on the case of Chongqing, illustrates the characteristics of Chongqing brand building by going through the two most important aspects of place branding, the role of place branding and the process of place branding. From the government's perspective, place brand is capable of attracting investment, improving competitiveness, guiding regional development, and creating resident attachments while offering ideological education. The branding process carried out by the government is not as complicated as illustrated in existing literature. What the government does

merely involves confirming positioning and slogans, and organizing promotional and advertising events. Moreover, the last three aspects appear sequentially. The entire process exerts a great impact on all aspects of regional management. The main reason such conclusions are drawn is because Five Chongqing and the Five Function Areas of Chongqing were seen as place branding concepts by researchers by default. Many studies on the city brand image of Chongqing adopt a similar approach. However, the feedback from interviewees suggests that such opinions remain questionable. As mentioned in the previous chapter, these two concepts were proposed in official government documents issued by the Chongqing Municipal People's Government. But the concept of the city brand image of Chongqing is mentioned in none of these government documents. Instead, the Five Function Areas of Chongqing concept is clearly pointed to as a "fundamental principle"[54] that guides government work in the process of Chongqing's development. If we look at the way these concepts were brought up and their essence, they are, by strict standards, public policies. However, there is no detailed brand concept but a concept with a broad range, whether in government-funded propaganda events or the answers from the interviewees. Therefore, it can be understood that these concepts, as public policies, serve as the concepts of a city brand. The way the government expresses the Five Function Areas of Chongqing is as an indicator of Chongqing's development, and one of the roles of its city brand.

The following features of Chongqing city brand building are concluded based on the understanding above, the responses of the interviewees and the collected materials.

First, whether it is the brand of the entirety of Chongqing or place brands of districts or counties, the ultimate goal is to promote regional development and economic improvement, which is clear in the commercial and tourism departments. The ultimate

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[54] *Proposals on Scientifically Dividing and Accelerating the Establishment of Five Functional Areas* by CPC Chongqing City Committee, Chongqing Municipal People's Government (approved by the third plenum of the 4th Committee, CPC Chongqing City on 14th September, 2013)

goal of Five Function Areas of Chongqing is to build a moderately well-off society in an all-round way (including ten economic indicators such as per capita GDP, per capita disposable income of urban residents, per capita net income of rural households, Engel coefficient, etc.). The construction of Chongqing tourism brand has specific economic indicators, shown in Figure 24.

Index		Unit	2015	2020
Total volume of tourism	Total income	100 million yuan	2251.31	4500
	Proportion of the city's GDP from tourism	%	5.71	8
	Number of visits received	100 million	3.92	5.26
	Those who spent the night	100 million	0.7	>1
	Number of inbound visits	10,000	282.53	500
	Jobs directly created	10,000	40.54	70
Tourist attraction	Number of national 4A and above attraction sites		75	120
	Number of municipal (and above) tourism sites		10	30
	Number of five-star cruise liners		25	30
	Number of hot spring scenic spots in operation		33	60
	Number of featured tourist routes		70	120
Tourist service capacity	Total number of star-rated restaurants		232	350
	Number of five-star restaurants		27	75
	Number of international flights		49	100
	Throughput of aviation passengers	10,000 person-times	3240	5000
	Rate of complete supporting facilities in national A-level tourist attractions	%	100	100
	Proportion of foreign-language-speaking tour guides	%	55	75
	Visa-free for transit tourists	Hours	72	144

Figure 25.   Main index of international tourism destination of Chongqing (*13th*

Five-Year Plan for the Construction of Chongqing as International Famous

Destinations)

Attracting consumers is the most important thing during the construction of a tourism brand (I5). This process is about the state using public investment to shape a tourism brand and attract consumers, while consumers purchase tourism-related products and services, and the government collects the investment back through taxation (I10). The process stimulates economic development. In spite of the absence of a specific plan for the entire brand building of Chongqing in commercial departments, the interviewees from commercial departments still mentioned how a good business street or block brand can cover a considerable number of neighbouring residents, creating a complete consumer structure, and promoting local consumption (I16). Ultimately, the branding is about "bringing in people, improving business, and improving your (local) values" (I15). How the brand facilitates regional development and economic progress is elaborated on in the specific cases in Chapter 5.

Secondly, place brand is defined confusedly by different government departments. One of the most obvious cases can be seen in the discussion about place brand and place image. An interviewee from Wulong argued that a good place brand can be applied in marketing, to create public topics and endorse local products (I17). However, using place brand in this way cannot generate word-of-mouth (I17). Place brand is used to market a place as it represents a place's image (I5). "With such a good brand image, we'd have values and credibility, which are helpful, in return, for product sales" (I10). Such discussion about place image and place brand is logically invalid. Based on such logic, the building of place image is the root while branding is nothing but a tool to use or approach to take after the image is formed. Another interviewee from the tourism department of Wulong called place brand the key that leads everything, while place image is merely a part of place brand.

Another aspect is that the positioning of a city brand remains unclear. The positioning should enable the target audience to understand what they are being offered, what demands the city has, and what would attract a person to settle down, travel, start a business or invest. From this perspective, Five Chongqing is more suitable than Five Functional Areas to serve as a city brand concept. However, the concept becomes blurred as it is passed down to district or county level as the positioning of International Business District, Liveable City, Eco-Friendly City, and Civilized City. Some business districts or urban areas are positioned as a Modern Industrial Cluster, Capital of Medicine, Urban Tourism Destination, City of Ironware and so on, which means that they mistook industrial positioning for the overall brand positioning of the city. As a result, the unique locations of the city or areas are downplayed, and the positionings become increasingly identical.

As a very distinctive city in China, Chongqing's overall city brand positioning is different from many other Chinese cities. However, the high-speed urbanization process makes the city lack differentiated features, so there is no eye-catching character or brand supporting point. The advantages, characters, highlights and strengths of the various districts of Chongqing are yet to be enhanced in terms of industrial characteristics, city appearance, history, culture, or citizen quality. Gathering various features for the brand positioning or choosing a strong position point cannot precisely reflect the characteristics. Therefore, it is extremely challenging work to position the brand of a city without an obvious character. Among the many business districts in Chongqing, only the Jiefangbei business area is differentiated based on its unique traditional and modern culture, while others struggle in the quagmire of competition where all players appear identical.

Thirdly, city brand planning is discontinuous. City brand building not only requires accurate positioning, but also strategic and continuous effort to spread, reflected in many previous successful cases. Chongqing's brand building actually had long-term

goals when it was first put in place, but changes in government leaders were important factors that exerted an impact on brand building across the country. As a result, some brand concepts either lived for a short time or kept being renewed, making the brand building disconnected. For example, Five Chongqing was proposed in July 2008, but it vanished only four years later when the former leader of Chongqing, Bo Xilai, was relieved of his office as the CPC Secretary in 2012 by the CPC Central Committee. Five Functional Areas, which was first proposed in 2013, vanished completely from Chongqing less than four years after implementation, as Sun Zhengcai was transferred from his office as the CPC Secretary of Chongqing by the CPC Central Committee. The practice of completely denying previous regional development plans just because the government leaders were replaced was criticized by the interviewees. "These concepts and policies are the result of collective brainstorming. They are not just something that some leaders came up with, so they shouldn't be completely denied because of previous leaders accused of misconduct" (I20). Many regional brands are forced to be interrupted, stopped or altered just because their leaders are replaced. For example, the positioning of Anju Ancient Town in Chongqing came to an abrupt stop because the former government leader retired, and the new leader asked for a redesign of the brand positioning, slogan and logo (I18). Even though the one in charge of brand building acknowledged that the previous positioning, slogan and logo were very suitable for Anju Ancient Town and the effects would be good, nothing could stop them from being replaced. An interesting comparison shows that even though the tourism brand building of Wulong has gone through multiple changes in the past two decades, the tourism logo remained the same as was decided by the former district CPC Secretary almost twenty years ago (see Picture 27).

Picure 27. 20 years anniversary of Wulong tourism, picture (http://www.wlkst.com/topic/25.jspx)

The interviewee from Wulong (I10) said that the reason the logo was kept is because Liu Qi, the former county CPC Secretary of Wulong, who was transferred to the office of the Director of Chongqing Municipal Tourism Administration, still had political influence in the tourism sector because of his experience in tourism development and building. So the logo, Liu's political legacy in Wulong, was not be altered by his successors. The influence of the political rights of leaders on brand building is self-evident.

Fourthly, integrated marketing communication is missing from the process of city brand building. As the systematic integration of various marketing tools and approaches, integrated marketing communication is no longer a stranger to studies of modern marketing, communication science and branding. The integrated marketing of a city brand emphasizes the integration of communication media, marketing channels and PR resources according to the purposes of propagation and the interests and demands of audiences, centring on the core values of city brand, and carrying out all-round marketing and communication activities for the goal of strengthening the awareness of

the city brand (Fan, 2014, McCartney et al., 2008). The concept of integration is incorporating all communication media into the core values of the city brand, including the logo and slogan, news planning, news releases, crisis PR, sports, festivals, forums, advertisements, celebrity endorsements, souvenirs, images of leaders, civil servants and civilians, the visual delivery of city space, etc.

However, the marketing communication of Chongqing's brand remains in the mainstream media and advertising. Almost all government departments attach great importance to national mainstream media like the People's Daily and CCTV, or regional official media like Chongqing TV and Chongqing Daily. Today, however, as we live in an age where new forms of media thrive, the influence of mainstream media is being seriously challenged by Internet-based media. Not only does Chongqing think highly of the power of traditional mainstream media, it also knows how to make use of internationally well-known media to boost its city image. In addition to popular formats such as promo videos, films, cartoons, and souvenirs, which are used to spread the city image, the city has its own English language website to promote its tourism industry (see Picture 28). There is Chongqing Release on Weibo and WeChat. It can be seen that the city's propaganda channels and media coverage are broad, but they are not fully utilized in government-organized events.
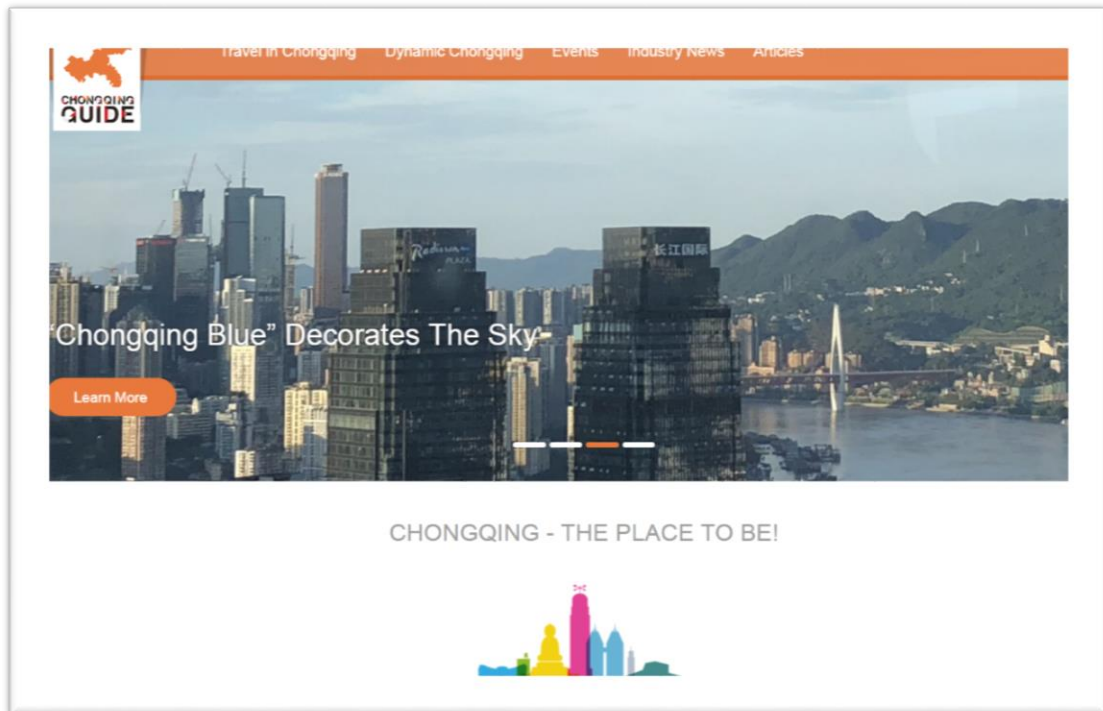
Picure 28.   Screenshot   of   Chongqing's   official   travel   website
(http://www.chongqing-guide.com/ accessed 19th August 2018)

6.3 Place branding as public policy

In Sections 6.1 and 6.2, the general process and practical functions of place branding are clarified. This section, in combination with the data analysis and case study in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, makes the argument that place branding can also be considered a public policy process. To support this argument, this section discusses the contents of place branding, the subjects of place branding and the characters of place branding as a government tool. Finally, based on the case studies, this section summarizes the policy process of Chinese place branding.

6.3.1. *Economic, cultural, social and political dimensions of place branding*

Even though the definition proposed by Kotler (2002), considering place as an market-orientated product, is no longer perfectly suitable for place branding today, marketing is still an integral part of every place branding case. In Kotler's view, the place is a combination of the actual behaviour of consumers, manufacturers, suppliers

and distributors. Therefore, place marketing should highlight the characteristics of a place and find its advantages to improve its competitiveness (Kotler, 2002). Place marketing seeks to treat a place as a business, selling the various resources of a city and the public industry or services to consumers in a modern marketing process. It includes a comprehensive marketing of products, companies, brands, cultural atmosphere, trade, environment, investment environment and even place image and living environment (Kotler, 2002). Its markets are local, domestic, overseas and virtual (on the Internet). Kotler's place marketing incorporates the earlier view of Gold and Ward (1994) to communicate or market selective images of a place to target audiences. It should be pointed out that Kotler's place marketing theory has an implicit internal logic that what places sell to the target audience are all aspects of the place which are stronger or more perfect than other places. In other words, only places with relative competitive advantage or capital can perform place marketing. This implicit logic can be seen in many successful place marketing cases, such as Amsterdam, Seoul, or Chengdu. These cities have enough connotations to create a certain image in the minds of the audience. Place marketing is enhancing the place image in these cases, rather than adding competitive advantage. Therefore, when Kotler's theory is applied to developing places, criticisms are incurred and its applicability is questioned (Fan, 2010).

As a development of and complement to Kotler's theory, Anholt (2007) argues that place branding should not merely be marketing, but a planned dissemination of place identity in order to build a favourable reputation. Nevertheless, it is still a kind of commodification considering place as product, service or organization (see Anholt, 2007). This practice of spreading a specific place image for a specific audience means neglecting or deliberately hiding the negative aspects of a place.

Zenker and Braun (2010) define a place brand as a "network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, and the general culture of

the place's stakeholders and the overall place design". This consumer oriented place brand concept circumvents the problems posed by commodification of place; the logical origin is that place brand is the perception of the consumer or audience. This definition reveals the complexity of place brand, which is that the concept is perceived by people (Kavaratzis, 2008), has multiple associations, and involves a variety of actions and objectives for multiple stakeholders (Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013; Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015). According to Zenker and Braun (2010), place branding is a process of propagating place information to consumers. The result of this process is the establishment of a network of associations in the consumer's mind. As Zenker and Braun (2010) recognize, "the branding process is not limited to communication". For example, the physical or tangible parts of a place (landscape, infrastructure, tourism sites etc.) strongly influence the perception of the place brand. Based on Zenker and Braun's definition, place branding means developing the place to fulfil the customers' demands. However, it is impossible for a place to develop according to consumer's preferences, and this definition neglects the conflicts between different consumers (for example, place visitors and local residents). Therefore, this definition is more suitable for evaluating or measuring a place brand rather than instructing how to build a place brand. It is also increasingly clear that the political nature of place branding, along with its economic, social and cultural dimensions complicate its conceptualization (Björner, 2017).

As a research domain developed with traditional marketing and branding theory, the economic dimension of place branding has always been important. Place brands are often considered essentially an "economic apparatus" (Lucarelli, 2015) to attract investors, tourists and talent (Kotler, 2002) along with the expansion of export markets and attracting external investment (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). The emphasis on increasing global economic competitiveness of place branding requires that the place must concern itself with its position in the region, country and global market (Kotler and Gertner, 2002). So that the audience can focus on the outside of the place, external economics has also become a focus of place branding. In the context of neoliberalism

and globalization, the global political and economic system has changed from urban managementalism to urban entrepreneurialism (Harvey, 1989). Harvey (1989) points out that the transformation of urban governance to entrepreneurialism is caused by inter-city competition mechanisms, which means that local governments have a considerable degree of autonomy. Since the main purpose of urban entrepreneurialism is to enhance the competitiveness of cities, place branding pays attention to attracting working capital through the reshaping of place image, thereby improving the business environment and promoting the transformation of traditional industries into a service economy. Urban entrepreneurialism development strategy, in its early stage, mainly focuses on urban design, that is, the overall transformation of the urban environment (Biddulph, 2011, Hubbard, 1995). Later in the process, it promotes urban development and enhances the image of the place through large-scale urban projects (landmark commercial real estate projects, residential community renovation, waterfront revitalization, large-scale event site planning, or transportation infrastructure planning). As a relatively new strategy, place branding is not only a kind of regional propaganda or reshaping of urban imagery, but a specific strategy combining various social and economic activities that reflect and support the city's external image (Paddison, 1993). Place brands are not simple market-oriented economic activities. Brand building is the process of ordering a chaotic reality. A place brand is not a purely differentiated expression but more of an identification, continuity and collective interpretation.

In place branding, culture has always been a branding element (Deffner and Metaxas, 2010) and a resource to form place image (Liu, 2011). Culture is applied to reinforce the narrative of place (Jensen, 2007, Kavaratzis et al., 2015). However, the complexity of definition of culture has led to the incomplete application of culture in place branding. From the perspective of sociology, culture refers to "the cultivation of individuals through the agency of external forms which have been objectified in the course of history" (Simmel, 2011), or "a social domain that emphasizes the practices, discourses and material expressions, which, over time, express the continuities and

discontinuities of social meaning of a life held in common" (James, 2014). The Cambridge English Dictionary shows a strong existential character by stating that culture is "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time". In sociology and cultural anthropology, culture can also be seen as a symbolic system. Geertz (2008) defines culture as "the inherited concept system that human beings use to convey knowledge and attitudes about life, and to use them for inheritance and development". From the perspective of cultural studies, culture is ideology, and it is not absolutely exclusive (Gramsci, 2000). The broadness and complexity of definitions of culture make branding authorities free to use culture (Lai and Ooi, 2015), but at the same time culture is often designed to suit contemporary needs in place branding (Ooi, 2008). Since place branding can change the perceptions of internal and external audiences, place branding itself can also be considered a cultural phenomenon. Therefore, culture is both the instrument and object of place branding, and also the result of place branding.

Cases of global place branding show that culture is widely applied in brand construction and management (Kavaratzis et al., 2014). Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2016) suggest place brand should be used as resource to construct place culture. This requires the role of brand management to be changed from the simple selection of cultural elements to building and strengthening the brand at a macro scale with the culture a place needs or should have.

The social dimension of place branding, as the emphasis of branding authorities shifts from external to internal marketing (Kavaratzis, 2004), focuses on the internal audience and resident satisfaction (Björner, 2017). Although culture should be counted as part of the social dimension of place branding, researchers concentrate on local populations. The research on internal place branding audiences is concerned with the construction of place identity, such as improving the living environment for residents (Braun et al., 2013), and the construction and renovation of regional transportation, education,

medical care, and leisure facilities (Insch, 2011, Kemp et al., 2012). The construction of civic consciousness is also an important part of place identity (Kavaratzis, 2004) because it leads to the creation of place commitment and loyalty. It is because of this shared consciousness of place that the social links of residents are established, therefore Kavaratzis et al. (2014) describe place branding as a "community building exercise".

From the perspective of local residents only, the social dimension of place branding comes above the aspects. The most obvious evidence from the case of Chongqing is the spiritual civilization construction. Whether in Harmony Qijiang or the case of Nanhu community, harmonious family and social relationships are emphasized. The selection of model families, model groups and social moral models is an official interpretation of ideal family and social relationships. There are also religious and minority relations that do not appear in the case study, but are clearly defined in various government documents and reports (such as the construction of Five Chongqing and Five Function Areas). Improving the allocation of social resources, poverty alleviation (even though this is not the case in most western cases), and social equality are also major aspects of place branding practice. Social issues such as equal rights for LGTBQ people are another common element of branding practice in western places, for example Only San Francisco and London, City for All.

From a macro perspective, the scope of place branding is broader. As well as attracting external talent in the case of Chongqing, the construction of local colleges and universities and the cultivation of professional talents are also part of the branding plan. Yunyang's branding is considered successful, reconciling conflicts between urban and rural structures in China. The use of communication technologies especially the Internet and digital media in place branding has changed place recognition for both the planned and unplanned audience, which is common in many cases (Avraham and Ketter, 2008, Garay Tamajón and Cànoves Valiente, 2017, Keane, 2013, Sevin and Bjorner, 2015).

Place branding has always had clearly politicized characteristics (Morgan et al., 2003, Ashworth and Voogd, 1994). Wide political influence is seen in place branding (at local government, local political leaders, ruling party, and policy levels) (Parkerson and Saunders, 2005, Lucarelli and Giovanardi, 2016, Lucarelli, 2015, Lucarelli and Olof Berg, 2011). One of many factors of successful place branding practice is managing the political interests (Hornskov, 2007, Lucarelli, 2015, Pedersen, 2004, Stigel and Frimann, 2006). Political stability is a necessary condition for a successful place branding campaign (Lucarelli, 2015), which is verified by various cases in Chongqing. Place branding has always been associated with policy making and is subject to political decisions (Braun, 2008). It is considered a "powerful broadband policy instrument" which is the result of local policy implementation (Lucarelli, 2015). Therefore, Ashworth et al. (2015) consider place branding a power exercise for political elites. Interestingly, this discussion is not based on a politically centralized Chinese case but European place branding practice (see Molotch, 1976, Van Ham, 2001, Van Ham, 2008). Place branding, at least partially, is a demonstration of the political elite's ruling philosophy, or a more concealed political struggle (Ashworth et al., 2015).

This is clearly the case in Chongqing. For example, most plans and policies involving the place branding campaign are finalized and approved by local leaders. Political ideology and governance in place branding is very obvious. With the resignation of the former Chongqing leaders, Bo Xilai and Sun Zhengcai, the Five Chongqing and Five Function Areas concepts were quickly deleted from Chongqing government media and the Internet. This was a clear move to remove their political influence.

With China's policy tightening in the ideological field in recent years, the phenomenon of convergence in political propaganda and spiritual civilization construction in various cities cannot be ignored. Since 2012, Xi Jinping has put forward the concept of the Chinese Dream in many public speeches. Subsequently, billboards and slogans have appeared throughout the country. Chinese cities have adopted the China Dream TV

series produced by Chinese Internet TV, on planes, mobile phones, building enclosures and electronic screens (see Picture 29). This series of advertisements is not only used in Chongqing, but widely in every Chinese city. This unified visual political propaganda, that is tied to brand building and communication, is in itself conflicting with differentiated brand building.

Picure 29.   Screen short of the China Civilization website (中国文明网)[55]

How to enrich cities visually while respecting the freedom of the city, and at the same time visually expressing the form of order, is an important aesthetic problem facing all cities (Fuller and Moore, 2017). In the face of ever-changing Chinese society and the expanding city, where is the way for political city brand propaganda? It is also worth

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[55] http://www.wenming.cn/jwmsxf_294/zggygg/pml/zgmxl/index.shtml

pondering how to obtain real audience recognition from aesthetics, content, and function thorough this kind of city propaganda. Pictures 30 and 31 show a comparison of city slogans exhibited at the same time in Chongqing Longhu business area. Picture 30 shows a slogan produced by Longhu Real Estate Company, saying "this is Foggy City" in Chinese, the smaller Chinese characters are all Chongqing dialect. The advertisement in Picture 31 is produced by Yuzhong District Spiritual Civilization Office, and says "I take the lead civilized etiquette and strive to be a good citizen of Chongqing" at the top, while the bottom gives socialist core values.

Picure 30.   "This is Foggy City" outdoor advertisement at Longhu Paradise Walk, Chongqing

Picure 31.　　Spiritual civilization construction advertisement at Longhu Paradise Walk, Chongqing

6.3.2. *The subjects of place branding*

Place governance has always been intertwined with public policy and place branding (Anholt, 2008). City strategies and urban plans are closely connected with place branding (Björner, 2017) which is conceptualized as place development (Allen, 2007). The ultimate aims of place strategies and plans are similar to those of place branding, that is setting the development direction for the future (Vanolo, 2014). Although there are quite a few parts to place branding design, planning and implementation are in the place of development planning and local policy, and there is a lack of clarification of the branding body. This leads to another question: who gives places the rights to branding, and how is the scope of these rights defined? (Vanolo, 2017). In the case of Chongqing, the government answers this question well through the ligitimization of the policy involving place branding. The policies are instructive or major national or regional decisions, or policy-oriented government work reports. Section 5.4.2 elaborates on the generation of these decisions, while this section discusses the subjects of development and implementation.

The proposed policy is not immediately enforceable. It must be reviewed using a certain procedure to obtain legal status in order to be binding and authoritative in society. This process is legitimization. Due to the various legalization subjects, it is divided into legislature and government administrative organs. The procedure of the former is to propose a bill, review the bill, vote, pass the bill, and publish a policy; the procedure of the latter is a review of the legal work organization, a decision of the leadership decision-making meeting, and the signing and release of the executive head. According to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the decision-making power of major matters belongs to the People's Congresses at all levels, which can be seen as the legitimization body of place branding plans (or plans involving place branding). However, from the perspective of the government, the decision-making process on these major issues is quite complicated. The final review of the highest authority (the People's Congress) is only the last link in this complex decision-making and a legal procedure that must be fulfilled to complete the process. Before the People's Congress exercises the right to decide, Party committees at all levels, governments at all levels, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), and relevant departments need to coordinate preliminary decision-making. After the People's Congress has made a formal decision, the government organs, which are responsible for organizing these decisions, still have follow-up work, including a series of partial and specific decisions. In the decision-making process, there are three points that need to be clarified: 1) the whole process is led by the ruling party (CCP) to ensure that the decision is consistent with the Party's basic line and policy; 2) the formulation of decision-making is carried out by government organizations at all levels, but relevant experts and scholars are also involved, especially in early decision-making; and 3) the CPPCC and relevant social groups (such as chambers of commerce, etc.) cooperate with Party committees at all levels and governments at all levels in consultation and coordination. Therefore, from a general perspective, the ligitimization body of the policy making is inclusive.

However, under the current political model in China, there is a definition that is rather vague of what should be included in major national and local issues. Taking Chongqing as an example, the organs of the final review and decision-making for Five Chongqing and the Five Function Areas are Chongqing People's Congress, and the Five Function Areas have even received further approval from the State Council. However, the overall planning for tourism development in Chongqing, which includes the construction of Chongqing's tourism brands, was reviewed and approved by the Chongqing Municipal Government. Many place branding plans involve important projects and investments that affect the locality, but these decisions have not entered the People's Congress deliberation and decision-making process. Although these decisions have completed a legalization process, whether they are reviewed by the People's Congress or by local governments, there is no legal norm as there is no clear division of procedures. There is no clear answer to this question in the case of Chongqing, however, the author clarifies the final decision making body to some extent by classifying the decision-making plans involving place branding. This is explained in Section 6.3.4.

After the policy has been legalized, it enters the policy implementation stage. Policy implementation is the only way to translate policy into realities and goals into benefits (Zhu, 2002). The policy implementation process consists of three phases, the preparation phase, including policy propaganda, strengthening policy awareness, formulating implementation plans, preparing for material preparation, and preparing for organization; the implementation phase, including policy experiments, comprehensive promotion, command coordination, supervision and control; and the summary phase, including the impact assessment. Section 6.1 elaborates on the process of place branding. The implementation of the place branding campaign is similar to the policy implementation described above. This section focuses on the main body of the policy implementation process. Under China's current linear government administration, place branding as a government working plan or policy has two layers of process: city-district

government and district government street office (township).

The management of the district-level government by the municipal party committee and municipal government has three aspects: 1) the municipal party committee is the political leader of all districts' political and government work; 2) the municipal government's administrative leadership over the district governments; 3) the municipal party committee and the municipal government department guide the work of each district.

The municipal party committee has two main methods of political leadership in each district: 1) four major conferences, the municipal party committee standing committee, the municipal party committee secretary office meeting, the municipal party committee meeting and the meeting of party and government leading leaders (both district and county), are used to research and make decisions, or communicate decisions at the city level, for example, the resolutions on the Five Function Areas in Chongqing were conveyed to the districts and counties at the municipal level through these meetings; and 2) administrative approval and suggestions for revision of government documents (proposals, decisions, and plans) are proposed by the party committees and district governments of various districts, for example, Yunyang's branding plan and Wulong's tourism branding plan were submitted to the Chongqing Municipal Government for review and approval.

The municipal government's leadership for each district government has three aspects: 1) through the municipal government executive meeting, the municipal government plenary meeting, the mayor's office meeting, and the district and county leadership work conferences, the city government distribute work and receive working reports from all districts and counties, for example, the Chongqing Municipal Commission of Commerce arrange the construction of rural regional brands for all districts and counties under the Chongqing Municipality, and follow up the brand building work of

all districts and counties; 2) administrative orders and regulations are formulated and promulgated; and 3) work targets or detailed work indicators are assigned to the district governments and departments, for example, in the five-year commercial planning and tourism development planning in Chongqing, clear indicators were put forward for brand building (such as how much operating income was needed, how many scenic spots needed to be added or constructed, and how many employment indicators were to be solved) (see Sections 5.3.2 and 6.2.5). The departments of the municipal party committee and the municipal government have their subordinate departments in each district and county. For example, the propaganda department of the municipal party committee is responsible for the propaganda department of each district committee. The decision-making of the municipal party committee and municipal government of Chongqing municipality about the work of the city (Five Chongqing/Five functional districts) is carried out by the propaganda department of the municipal party committee. Sometimes this includes communication with the central government, such as in the case of the China Dream propaganda work.

The government process of the district government-street office (township) is summarized in the definition of the street office, which is the administrative body of the street in China's townships and districts. The people's government of a city or a city without a district may, with the approval of the people's government at the higher level, set up a number of sub-district offices as government agencies[56]. The street office is a basic urbanization administrative division with several community resident committees or a very small number of administrative villages. As the lowest level of the Chinese government, its basic functions can be summarized as[57]: 1) complete various matters assigned by the city or district government; 2) guide the work of the residents

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[56] Resolution of the Fifth Session of the Fifth National People's Congress on December 10, 1982, on Amending the Provisions of the Local People's Congress of the People's Republic of China and the Local People's Government Organization Law

[57] Organic Law of the People's Republic of China at the Local People's Congress and the Local People's Government at the Twelfth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Tenth National People's Congress on October 27, 2004

committee; and 3) report the residents' requirements to higher government. The street office is composed of the party and the administrative department. The street party committee has a secretary, a deputy secretary and committee members. The trade union, the youth group and the women's federation also belong to the party work. The administrative department establishes the director and deputy director, responsible for specific work.

In the case of Chongqing, there are also some special cases. For example, the Guanyinqiao Business Area Management Committee and the Jiefangbei Business Area Committee are supposed to be managed by the relevant street office, but these two departments involve major works that influence the local economy. Therefore, they are directly led by the district-level government (with higher decision making power). Another Chinese-specific organization is the residents' committee. The residents' committee, as a municipal resident autonomous organization, is not a government component but it is actually involved in the government process. Since the residents' committee is a resident autonomous organization, the street office and the residents' committee are not subordinate in administration, but the working relationship is between the grassroots government agencies and the grassroots mass autonomous organizations. The guidance from the street office to the residents' committee is: 1) the party branch or party group in the street party committee and the residents' committee is a leadership relationship in a strict sense. The principle and policy of the party committee at the higher level communicate to the residents through the channel of the party members, such as the construction of spiritual civilization of the propaganda department; 2) the street office convene the residents' committee to deploy and exchange government work; and 3) the street office, on behalf of the government, funds the work of the residents' committee, such as office locations and funding, as well as support for residents' activities. The Nanhu community mentioned in Section 4.3.3 is affiliated to the Garden Road Street Office in Nan'an District, Chongqing. Although most of the activities organized by Nanhu community were initiated by the residents'

committee, the Garden Road Street Office took up most of the funds and helped the residents' committees obtain financial support from the society.

The role and subject status of the ruling party (CCP) is clearly stated in Section 5.4, and additional explanation of the political relationship of the party system in government work is given here. In the current Chinese political management network, each administrative system directly accepts the political leadership of the party organizations at the same level, which is the most substantive political relationship. This explains why the party secretary or chair at all political levels is higher than the leaders of all levels of government, and why the party committee's propaganda department has higher actual authority than other level government departments. Although the other subordinate departments in the system are clearly in led relationships, their work mainly involves specific government work. This kind of government system in which all department accept the leadership of the party committee ensures political unity across the country, and guarantees the independence of each administrative system in practical work. Taking Five Chongqing as an example, the decision-making and spirit are communicated to various departments through the party committee, but the specific work of the various departments of the district and county is solely issued by the municipal government. From this perspective, the political dimension involved in place branding is strictly communicated by the party committee from top to bottom and guarantees political unity (such as the construction of the China Dream).

Non-government stakeholders in place branding (planning, strategy, and policy) decision-making and implementation are very common in Chongqing. They include the trade unions, the Women's Federation, the Communist Youth League, the Association for Science and Technology, the residents' committees and other social groups. These are the ways in which residents participate in the government process. These organizations have specific political relations with the Communist Party of China, and the Party has brought these groups and autonomous resident organizations into the

government process through political activities. The most basic units of activity, such as civilized cities and harmonious urban areas, are undertaken by these resident groups. Although this process has clear top-down characteristics, due to the large number of these organizations and the fact that the work is very specific, the resident organizations actually have higher autonomy without violating the party's principles. Public-owned enterprises and institutions that share certain government functions (such as China Railway Anju Group and Harmony Qijiang, mentioned in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5) as well as the media are involved. Although these organizations are non-governmental, they participate in the government process through political relations between the various party organizations and the ruling party. Another more important place branding stakeholder is the think tank. The impact of various non-governmental organizations is on the implementation, but the think tank mainly influences the formulation of decisions. For example, the overall planning for tourism development in Chongqing is undertaken by the Chongqing Tourism Bureau, and the experts from the Chongqing University of Tourism, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and other professional fields along with the special consultants invited to conduct research. Finally, a specific demonstration report is obtained to provide a decision-making basis for the government. In lower-level government decision-making, such as the brand building of Guanyinqiao business area or the branding of Anju ancient city, professional advertising companies are hired for the planning and design. Although these stakeholders do not have final decision-making power, they can participate in the government process through their bottom-up influence.

6.3.3. *Place branding as a government tool*

There is no uniform conclusion on the classification of government tools in the field of public administration. Common classifications include Mcdonell and Elmore's (1987) imperative tools, incentive tools, capacity building tools and system change tools(McDonnell and Elmore, 1987); Ingram (1984) motivation, capacity building,

symbols & persuasion, and learning; Howlett and Ramesh (1993) voluntary tools, mandatory tools and mixed tools; Hughes (1994) supply, subsidies, production, and regulation; and Osborne and Gaebler's (1993) 36 specific categories(Osborne and Gaebler, 1993). Since this study is focused on the source of policy, government tools are classified using Hughes' system.

From the existing literature, place branding is generally defined as a macro-government tool or instrument. Place brands are described as a series of government strategic initiatives aimed at integrating, guiding and centralizing place management (Kavaratzis, 2005). Place branding is a compass for local development, guiding local property enhancement and resource allocation optimization, promoting regional development, and thus increasing competitive advantage (Govers, 2013). Governments have been criticized for misusing place brands, such as using logos and slogans to whitewash local issues in an attempt to create a false positive image (Braun et al., 2014, Eshuis et al., 2014). Another problem is that place branding is used by many local and regional governments as a panacea to solve various regional problems, but there is no clear or valid evidence to prove its effectiveness (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2011). Furthermore, where place branding is considered a government tool, the related literature does not explicitly state which specific tool.

Cleave et al. (2016) believe that place branding can be seen as a government's conscious attempt to shape and promote local identity through policy development. Therefore, place branding can be considered a policy tool. However, Cleave's research is an effect study based on policy audiences more than on dissecting government tool types. Rehan (2014) believes that the government specifically controls the following six place branding contents: urban projects, local life branding, historical building, signature building, media generated image and city form. Similarly, Dril et al. (2016) summarize the three elements that are controlled (or influenced) by the government:

place image generation, place attraction (living standards and business development), and infrastructure.

The case of Chongqing gives a clearer answer. When the government implements the policy goal of place branding, its tools are: 1) supply. The government provides goods and services through the budget. A typical example is that Wulong's tourism brand and Natural Yunyang's brand are basically funded by the government; 2) Subsidies. It is a supplementary means of supply, the government provides specific goods or services through funding for specific private economic sectors. This is a common practice in the case of Chongqing, in the fields of tourism, business and spiritual civilization; 3) production. Goods and services are provided by the government directly or authorized by public organizations, of which public services are the more clearly defined (see Section 5.3.2). There are three types of public services that are most important: basic public services are those that provide citizens and organizations with the services they need to engage in production, life, development and entertainment through state power interventions or public resource input, such as water, electricity, gas, transportation, communication infrastructure and telecommunications services; economic public service refers to various services for citizens and organizations through state power intervention or public resource investment, such as technology promotion, consulting services and policy credit; and social public services, which refer to the services provided by state power intervention or public resource input to meet the direct needs of citizens' social development activities, including education, science popularization, healthcare, social security, and environmental protection.

Government tools also include: 1) privatization or marketization, such as the marketization and re-nationalization of Wulong Tourism Company, or the privatization of theatre in Harmony Qijiang; 2) government applications of business management technology, such as brand strategy management and performance evaluation in Wulong government work; and 3) social means, referring to the government's use of social

resources for social interaction to achieve policy objectives, including community governance, family and individual and volunteering organizations, most common in the construction of spiritual civilization.

6.3.4. *Policization: a new episode of place branding*

Combining the previous literature with the case of Chongqing, Section 6.3 discusses the nature of place branding as a public policy from three standpoints: the economic, cultural, social, and political dimensions of place branding; the main subjects of place branding; and the instrumentality of place branding. The complexity of place branding itself has always required researchers and practitioners to understand its essence from a pluralistic and interdisciplinary perspective (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008, Kavaratzis et al., 2014). Evidence from China shows that place branding has a clear trend towards policization, which is mainly reflected in two aspects: place branding design, strategy and planning have specific policy processes; and research and practice show that place branding is clearly and deeply associated with public policy.

The policy process of the place branding plan (or government planning involving the place branding plan), including the political process, the various stages, and the decision-making methods, are elaborated on in Section 5.4. Here, we focus on the macro-policization of place branding.

Horizontally, according to the social areas and problems involved in place branding, we see the combination with political policy, economic policy, social policy and cultural policy. The China Dream and the Belt and Road initiative are standard political policies. These policies contain a clear goal of establishing a specific national or regional image in the minds of internal and external audiences. Regionally, the Five Chongqing and Five Function Areas initiatives contain the dissemination of political ideas. Economic policies mainly regulate market economy relations, for example, various tax subsidies

and poverty alleviation projects in Chongqing's tourism and commercial sector brand building fall into this category. Promotional policies for the industrial, agricultural, and commercial sectors are also listed in economic policy. In the official government statement, these policies are the means by which the government promotes place brand building. Similarly, social policies such as population, social security and other related policies are the content of building a harmonious Chongqing, while cultural policies are more broad with science and technology, culture, education, sports and health all covered. After undergoing administrative reform by the central government, the cultural department merged with the tourism sector. In October 2018, Chongqing merged both departments into one, the Culture and Tourism Development Committee. It can be expected that, in the future, in Chongqing's brand building and development planning, culture and tourism, as the most important elements in place branding, will be more closely integrated.

Vertically, based on China's context, these policies can be divided into general policies, basic policies, and specific policies. General policy refers to the overall, fundamental policy of the country or region determining the basic direction of social development. The China Dream, Five Chongqing and Five Function Areas are all general policies. This type of policy is greatly affected by local development. It is reviewed and approved by the state council or the people's congress. The general policy is the line guiding the development of the region, and the general programme, which does not have specific contents. Basic policies are substantive policies that play a leading role in all areas and sectors of social life. For example, the Belt and Road initiative, judicial practice, party discipline, anti-corruption, environmental protection, and state-owned enterprise reforms are all part of the China Dream construction. This type of policy is usually reviewed and approved by the local government. On the one hand, it is a refinement of the general policy based on the actual situation of the field and the department. On the other, it has the principle of specific policies. For example, Chongqing's tourism, culture, and commercial brand building embody Chongqing's

general policy. The specific policy is the goal and means to realize the basic policy, and is the specific implementation plan formulated to realize the basic policy. The contents of specific policy are specific and clear, including the goals that need to be achieved, the means to achieve the goals, and the specific indicators of achievement. Since Chongqing is a municipality directly under the central government, the administrative structure of Chongqing is two-tier, city and district or county. There is no provincial-municipal-district/county structure as in other provinces. Therefore, when formulating policies, each department adopts a combination of basic and specific policies.

The initial development of place branding theory is not related to policy research, but is inseparable from the development of traditional marketing and branding theory. From fragmented promotional activities in the 1980s to the marketing mix of the 1990s to the holistic place branding of the early 2000s (Kavaratzis, 2007), this evolution is a natural consequence of place branding research borrowing marketing and branding theory. Originally developed in America, marketing is defined as "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large" (American Marketing Association (AMA)); and branding is "endowing products and services with the power of a brand" (Keller, 2003). The above definitions have strong consumer and value orientation. The ultimate goal of marketing and branding is to meet needs and desires. Kavaratzis (2008) believes that the study of place branding is based on two premises: first, the place is formed by people's perceptions as "people make sense of places or construct places in their minds"; second, the method of influencing people's perceptions of place is similar to that affecting consumers' perceptions of specific products and services. Therefore, the basic logical assumptions and logical origins of place branding are no different from traditional marketing or branding and there is no clear theoretical barrier to applying traditional branding theory to place branding (Kavaratzis, 2008). This purely market-oriented approach, as Kavaratzis (2007) himself

points out, has led to a very real and tricky phenomenon that is identity assimilation between places. The stakeholders involved in a place are more complex and diverse than any enterprise or product (Beckmann and Zenker, 2012, Florek et al., 2006, Kavaratzis, 2012). How to make the voices of many stakeholders heard in place branding is an unresolved problem (Kavaratzis, 2007).

In recent years, as research has deepened, researchers have tried to understand place branding from an interdisciplinary perspective (such as politics, urban governance and city policy). Lucarelli (2017) suggests considering place branding as a "processual hybrid policy in which for example the public and the private, economics and politics, and the market and the polis are blurred and co-emerge (i.e. as a process) in a relational and interactive manner". This is validated in numerous European place branding cases (for example Stockholm, Amsterdam and Berlin). The branding of Chongqing also provides solid evidence for Lucarelli's argument, as in the case of Chongqing there are more political fields involved in the branding process. Both theory and practice support the idea that place branding is a hybrid phenomenon and place brands are "produced, shaped and reproduced by a number of very different actors, discourses and events characterised by several rationales and perspectives" (Vanolo, 2017). However, when we suggest understanding place branding in a too wide a way, the boundaries of place branding become vague and the concept is difficult to define theoretically. In the place branding field, one famous assertion is that place branding is not just selling or promoting the place (Kavaratzis, 2005) but a comprehensive process involving image building, reputation improvement, attracting investment, tourists and workforce, creating local identity, and sometimes even infrastructure renewal and ecological work. With or without place branding, are these general place development goals and routine local government works not just the aims of public policy? When and why do these things becomes the objectives of place branding policies?

Most scholars, branding practitioners and policy makers tend to interpret place branding

as a form of urban practice under neoliberal ideology (Lucarelli, 2018, Vanolo, 2018). As a comprehensive ideology, neoliberalism is stepping onto the historical stage by criticizing Marxism, socialism, and communist ideology (Chen, 2017)[58]. Neo-liberalism holds that the best way to enhance human well-being is market competition. It psychologically emphasizes personal interest driving economic behaviour, economically emphasizes free-competitive capitalist market relations, socially supports civil society and autonomous institutions, and strongly opposes state control, state ownership and state welfare policies.

Many studies apply place branding theory, mainly based on neoliberalism, to China (see Chapter 2). The completely freely competitive market advocated by neoliberalism is itself an inappropriate assumption. In essence, apart from the social attributes of people and their status in the production relationship, neoliberalism creates an abstract ideal market as a theoretical premise, away from the economic base and superstructure. Neoliberalism assumes that a freely competitive market is equated with maximizing democratic freedom, because everyone has the freedom to choose. Such assumptions make us lose sight of the manipulation of consumers by the power of capital in consumerism. Human consumption is influenced and controlled by advertising, stories, stars, internet influencers, and the entire context of life. There is no such thing as free choice in consumer behaviour, because products are chosen for consumers. Therefore, many of the issues of place branding, such as the disappearance of resident participation (Kavaratzis, 2008), the neglect of long-term place branding campaigns, and the abuse of place branding in political elections (Vanolo, 2017) are the natural representations of neo-liberalism.

Without doubt, there is a need for place branding research to abandon the common neoliberalist perspective in order to critically analyse current place branding (Lucarelli, 2018) despite the pro-growth essence (Vanolo, 2018). The study of place branding in

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[58] People.cn: http://theory.people.com.cn/n1/2017/1225/c40531-29727630.html

the Chinese context broadens the perspective and enriches relevant theories. Place branding is not a purely market-based technical practice but a political act, the residents themselves are naturally involved. The process of policizing and legalizing place branding, in accordance with socialist ideology and Chinese characteristics, is to legalize the requirements of all classes through the Democratic People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Therefore, to politicize and policize place branding is an effective act of collecting and coordinating social stakeholders. Unlike western place branding, which is dominated by neo-liberalism, regardless of whether social classes can actually influence the placement branding decision-making process, China's place branding clearly responds to and focuses on the needs of various social classes. This does not mean the case of Chongqing is superior to western cases but its study is an essential requirement of the ideology of the socialist market economy.

CHAPTER 7.   CONCLUSIONS

Read a thousand books and travel a thousand miles, the turbidity

in the heart is removed, and the work naturally has a charm.

Tenor of Drawing

Dong Qichang, Ming Dynasty

By exploring the general branding process of Chongqing, the previous chapter elaborates on four major rationales for place branding. It reveals the public policy characteristics of place branding by discussing multiple dimensions (economic, cultural, social and political) of place branding, the subjects, how it functions as a government tool, and the trend of policization. A broader discussion is raised at the end; as place branding is a concept embracing neoliberalism, and place-branding theories developed in western countries are unsuited to countries like China which are dominated by other ideologies. So far, no perfect ideology is identified that can be applied universally. Each has its own historical opportunities and scenarios. After any long-term implementation of ideology, the advantages will be exhausted, and the shortcomings revealed. This is a normal historical evolution.

This dissertation does not aim to solve this ideological problem, nor to criticize the modes of the Chinese political system and government administration. The focus here is to explore place branding from a different perspective and in a different context, to widen our understanding of place branding in a single-party, centralized, developing country, embracing Chinese socialism. It might seem confusing for the reader that this research, on one hand, builds an explorative theoretical framework based on existing western place branding literature, while on the other, criticises these theories, as they do

not fit the basic context of China. Before the final reflection on the proposed framework, let us look at the practices of place branding in China to find out if it really is so different.

7.1 Seeking common ground while preserving differences: Chinese V.S. Western place branding

7.1.1. *Reasons for places engaging place branding*

The driving force for places engaging in place branding has always been attracting investment, which is also the most direct benefit of place branding activity. In the case of Chongqing, it is the fundamental reason why place authorities started branding campaigns (see Section 6.2.1). At the same time, place branding is considered a plan for the future of the region, and a compass of future development. The most obvious evidence is the various modernization and construction projects involved (see Chapter 4 and Section 6.2.3). The combination of local strategy and place branding is an important feature of Chongqing place branding, which has obvious Chinese characteristics. Firstly, many localized branding strategies are difficult to clearly distinguish from the place development strategies. Whether it is the country's positioning of Chongqing or the positioning of districts and counties (within Chongqing), there are top-down instructions with clear policy objectives. For example, the early years of the State Council's 314 overall deployment of Chongqing, included: three major positioning (an important growth pole in the western region, an economic centre in the upper reaches of the Yangtze river, and a municipality directly under the central government); a development goal (being the first to build a well-off society in the western region); and four tasks (increase work to promote agriculture, take the town to the countryside, and solidly promote the construction of a new socialist countryside; effectively transform the economic growth mode, accelerate the pace of adjustment and reform of the old industrial base; focus on solving the problems of people's livelihood

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and actively build a harmonious socialist society; comprehensively strengthen urban construction and improve urban management). The Chongqing Municipal Government and the Tourism Bureau positioned Yunyang county as the Yangtze River Three Gorges International Golden Tourism Destination, the city's eco-industrial and commercial logistics base, and a landscape garden eco-city. These positioning have a clear brand positioning characteristic, and work as an overall regional development plan. Although these positioning are considered normative, the combination of positioning and place development strategies does indicate what a place should be, which is a fundamental function of place branding. Chinese government management is undergoing transformation (under the context of comprehensive deepening reform), and Chinese city governments today are characterized by entrepreneurialism. In the face of inter-place competition, entrepreneurial place management requires place authorities to adjust regional management strategies from a strategic perspective. This is why some areas in the case study have implemented branding strategies that compete with similar places in Chongqing, while the use of place branding as a tool for inter-place competition is rare in other cases.

Although the construction of resident identity has always been considered a function of place branding in the existing literature, there is no clear evidence of how to build this identity. There is an extraordinary phenomenon in Chongqing, that residents are highly involved in the branding process. Although this participation is not at the decision-making level, resident participation is not simply completing or implementing the government's top-down policies or tasks. The residents themselves have a certain autonomy and freedom. The government strategy for residents has always been expressed in the form of official documents, and reflected in government work assessments. Since the construction of resident identity is a top-down arrangement (such as a clear definition of civilized citizens and moral constraint), it can be understood from this perspective that residents can only participate passively. In practice, residents have a lot of space to act freely. Although officials have clearly

defined which resident identity should be built, the residents themselves may choose not to participate in such activities and ignore government requirements. Taking spiritual civilization construction as an example, although the propaganda department clearly defines what spiritual civilization is, it does not define which activities are spiritual civilization construction activities. Therefore, residents' spontaneous community activities can be defined as part of spiritual civilization construction. Official activities organized by government organizations are not always responded to by residents, so the government now seek a combination of official activities and resident autonomy. The construction of spiritual civilization is about the government promoting, rather than neglecting, resident participation. This is not the same as the practice of resident identity building in western place branding, and is related to the form of the Chinese government. In official statements, the people are the source of the power of the Chinese government. The Constitution states: "All power of the People's Republic of China belongs to the people". This explicit right of the people comes from the Constitution, and signifies an ideological distinction from the common constitutional monarchy or republicanism. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why resident participation has always been an important part of the Chinese government's place branding work.

Another interesting question worth pursuing is whether and how the branding elements and principles of Chinese place branding differ from those of the west. Firstly, there is no significant difference in the brand templates used. For example, common function-based brand (green city, liveable city, smart city, creative city etc.), national or provincial-level positioning (industry gathering highlands, import and export centre, logistics centre, financial centre etc.), and specific brand conversion (such as the Natural Yunyang brand) can all be regarded as landmarks based on place of origin theory. Some templates are very common, such as the construction of cultural cities or smart cities. These universal templates are widely used in various regions of Chongqing, sometimes as the main brand, and sometimes as a sub-brand. Chongqing does not

specify the use of unique branding elements. Visible elements, such as landmarks, infrastructure marketing, mega events, visual communication (slogans, logos, advertisements etc.), and invisible elements such as culture, resident style, and regional spirit are quite commonly used both in Chongqing place branding and throughout China.

The feedback from the government departments in Chongqing on the principles of branding is relatively uniform and comprehensive. The government departments emphasize the participation of stakeholders in place branding campaigns, which is considered key to increasing brand authority. They emphasize unification and continuity, even though in most cases this is not a reality. The principle of unity is reflected in three ways. Firstly, there is a distinction between overall brands and sub-brands (such as Chongqing's tourism brands and commercial brands which are part of the city brand). Secondly, the shaping of a place brand reflects a unified leadership. A unified specialized organization and leadership organization take the corresponding responsibility, but despite the continuity of brand strategy, due to the uncertainty of political personnel changes, many brands cannot retain their long-term unity. Thirdly, there is a unified storyline integrating political, economic, cultural and other resources. There are principles, including the originality of place brand (with an emphasis on abandoning templates and common brand positioning) and emotional attachment, which are not fully implemented in practice. However, the importance of these principles is recognized at least by branding authorities. These branding principles are not fundamentally inconsistent with western place branding practice or traditional branding theory.

7.1.2. *Management, organization and governance of place branding*

From the perspective of practice, we can draw a clear conclusion that the brand management, organization and governance of Chongqing are very similar to those in the west. The integration of place brand with architecture, urban planning, and urban strategy,

along with the involvement of professional academics, international think tanks and professional brand companies are common. A considerable number of Chongqing government departments organize study tours around the world. Integrating the opinions of experts (not limited to place branding professionals) into regional policy is considered an efficient government management model. A large number of places have established brand management agencies or chosen existing government departments to act as brand managers. This reflects quite a few successful western cases. Brand promotion and marketing is handed over to professional branding companies, and, from the perspective of brand management, China's place branding is quite modern and westernized, which itself relates to branding as an exotic product. There is one major difference in brand communication, which is the use of official media. Unlike many other countries, China's largest media is the official media, also known as the Party's mouthpiece. A lot of standardization and streamlined communication is done by the official Chinese media. For example, the official release of city image promos, specific brand strategies or plans, regional development strategies and other information related to place branding is all done through official media channels. The combination of official media and mass media is considered necessary in China and is the guarantee of the authority of the information disseminated.

7.1.3. *Place branding in a unique political system*

To sum up the discussion, the place branding of Chongqing, as it is described in this dissertation, is not essentially different, in terms of policy and practice, from that in the West. But from the perspective of the branding bodies, China's place branding is completely different, mainly because of the participation of the government. Overall, Chongqing's brand is very fragmented because of the different areas of responsibility of each department (tourism, business & commerce, culture, spiritual civilization, etc.). However, there are attempts to achieve coordination in place branding strategy and practice in China as elsewhere. Although no place branding case is seen that systematically integrates all aspects of place branding, the feedback from Chongqing

shows that place brand is a system which includes objective, visible regional shaping (infrastructure, urban development and planning, regional products and industries) and the perception of invisible audiences (services, history and culture, resident image, etc.). Systematic brand engineering includes the overall integration of the contents of the place brand (tourism, business, resident identity, investment, culture, etc.). This comprehensive and systematic integration is an ideal state for place branding, and there are many difficulties in real life operation. Due to the number and diversity of stakeholders involved in place branding, western multi-party government countries are basically unable to achieve a high degree of integration, but as a single party country, China has the practical and theoretical basis to implement systematic, comprehensive brand construction.

From the beginning of the reform and opening up in 1979 to the recent comprehensive deepening of reforms, the Chinese government has always emphasized the market-oriented economy, which provides a strong realistic basis for China's market-driven place branding. This is one reason why there is no significant difference between Chinese place branding and western practice. The impact of politics on Chinese place branding cannot be ignored and is clearly different from practice in other places. This impact, according to Berg and Bjrner (2014), is reflected in three ways: the top-down impact of ideology on the positioning of the brand and the slogan (from the national level to the region); the media controlled by the CCP propaganda department that actually take responsibility for brand communication; and political influence in the administration and governance of Chinese place branding. These three aspects can be seen as the major difference between China's place branding and the west. Section 5.4 describes a parallel system of influence at the city level, with the administrative influence headed by the city mayor, and the political influence led by the local secretary of the CCP at city level. The division of power and responsibility between the government administration and the Party causes difficulties in practice, as the administrative leader is responsible for specific branding work, strategic issues, and

localizing the Party's policies, and the Party leader is responsible for the ideological work. Therefore, it can be considered that the part of the branding that involves the government administration is more market-oriented and westernized, while the ideological part has more Chinese characteristics.

In China, the political nature of place branding has an important externalization performance aspect that is ubiquitous, outdoor advertising. Changes in billboards are closely related to the development of Chinese cities, with the following main characteristics: commercialization, internationalization, regional differences, and an emphasis on resident quality and spiritual civilization construction (Lewisl, 2002). The government is constantly and actively combining political information, public welfare propaganda and business information. Advertisers are required to use some locations to post relevant content. As a result, advertising companies have begun to combine commercial advertising with government advocacy in various ways.

In Chongqing (and almost every city in China), in addition to slogan-style advertisements, there are many specific requirements and norms for the behaviour of citizens. "Citizen quality" and "urban civilization" have become key words of political propaganda (see Section 6.2.1 and Picture 31). The emphasis on quality and civilization is not simply ideological. Cartier (2016) believes that these slogans are not so much political brainwashing as part of a civilized city assessment system. As mentioned in Chapter 5, spiritual civilization construction is a development goal juxtaposed with material civilization in China. Urbanization and market-oriented reform are the most important material foundations and main driving forces of spiritual civilization construction. Lewis (2003) believes that through this kind of communication, the government has increased the visibility of political communication and allowed the public to receive such political information more frequently. Under the dual influence of business and market, the combination of traditional urban politics, public welfare propaganda, and place brand communication has become a kind of place branding (Parkerson and Saunders, 2005).

Chinese place branding contains more political propaganda than western practice, however we cannot arbitrarily make the statement that this is only the case in China as it is also seen in western practice (see Parkerson and Saunders, 2005).

7.2 Constructing a place brand model based on government process

This section provides a synthesis of existing models, theories and the case study for this research, to construct a new place-branding model with details of government processes and major branding components (see Figure 26).

The whole process starts with the formation of local general policy, which is proposed and normally approved by the local People's Congress. General policy is not necessarily place branding nor does it contain any branding plans, however it normally clarifies the positioning and what kind of local identity to construct. Based on this general policy, administration departments generate basic policy plans that combine the ideas from think tanks and reports from implementation departments. A leading group, including top party leaders and government leaders, normally works as a coordinator to make sure individual departments do not make conflicting or contradictory basic policies. These policies and plans contain detailed branding positioning, slogans, aims and goals. When the branding policy and plan in a particular area is approved by the People's congress or city government, it is conveyed to government departments and institutions for implementation. Here again a leading group (normally leaders from the basic policy making departments) works as a coordinator of the implementation departments and institutions which decide brand articulation and architecture, requiring cross-department and cross-institution cooperation. Cross-department brand activities (culture, business and tourism) are very common, which is why the coordinator is needed. The propaganda department is always involved with all branding activities. The specific brand campaign has three aspects: government led or controlled official and non-official media conducting communication; market entities (including state-owned enterprises

and purely private enterprises) carrying out regional project construction or investment; and various activities organized by public institutions, low-level government departments, and mass organizations. The propaganda of the media can be divided into domestic and overseas markets according to the work of the propaganda department. The domestic market is again divided into the local and external audience. Although the propaganda department completely dominates the propaganda work, the completion of the communication process can also be done by a professional media company. Market entities' regional project construction and investment is the focus of government work because there are clear quantitative indicators to be completed in the basic plan. The various activities organized by low-level government departments, institutions and mass organizations are the basic components of branding. This part of the content is quite rich, from the marketing activities organized by the business area management office, to the festival activities organized by the neighbourhood committees to various mass activities organized by the government, all under the guidance of the basic policy. Implementation departments and institutions supervise, guide, coordinate and cooperate on the subjects involved.

In this system, think tanks undertake the role of market research and collect public opinion, which is properly considered in the early stages of decision-making. The feedback and evaluation of the entire system come from the report and conference of the implementation department with the basic policy making department and high level decision making group. Markets involve a large number of interest groups, large-scale project builders and investors all of which can greatly influence government decision-making, because many branding plans are accompanied by relevant investment promotion policies, so large project builders and investors have a lot of voice in regional brand positioning. However, because the political process behind branding and the political levels involved are high, beyond the access of this study, the market entity is an implementer in this model.
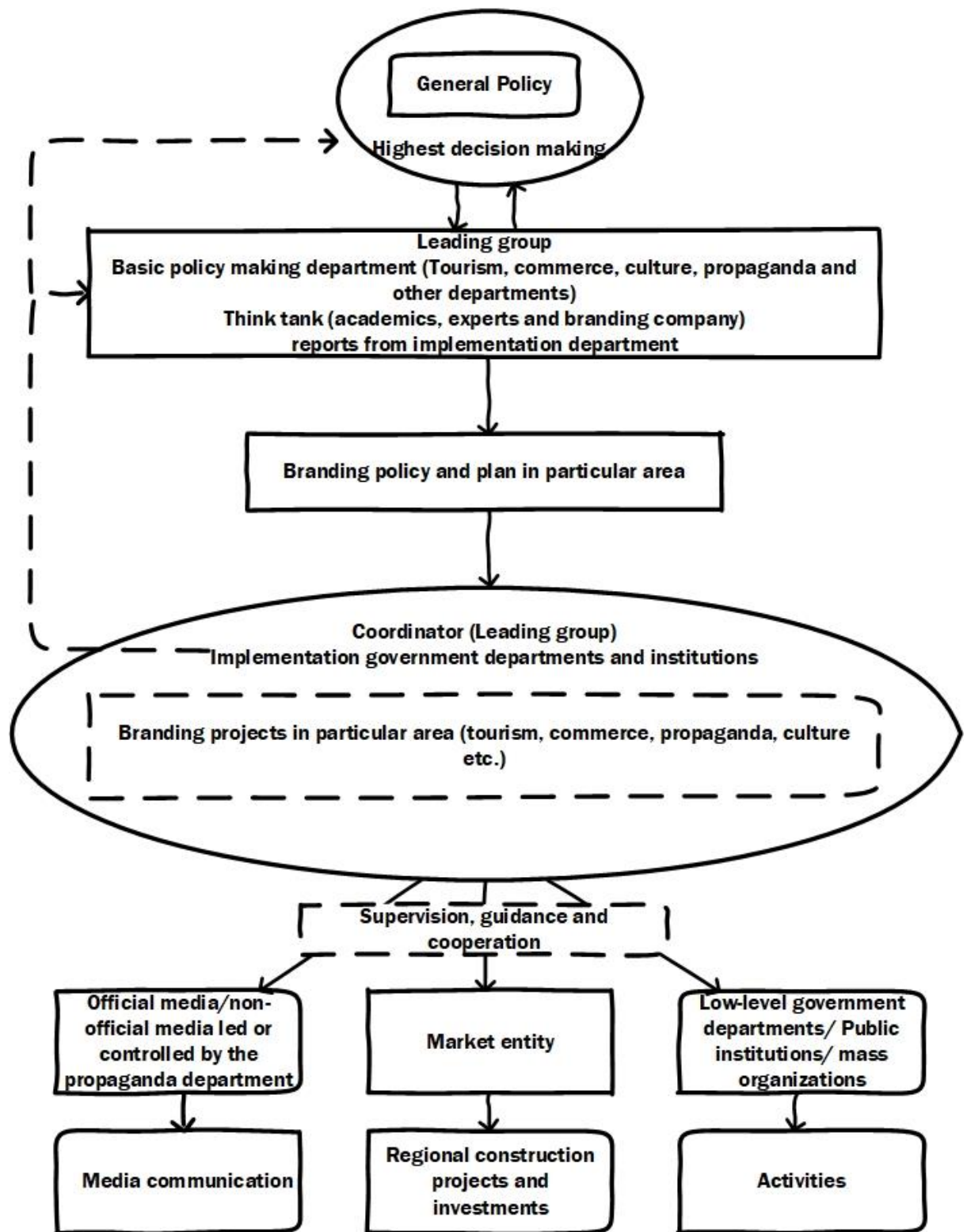
Figure 26.   The place branding process

As mentioned, several place branding components from existing place branding models are part of the branding process. These components are evidence that China's place branding is similar to the west, as described in Table 9.

Model	Positioning	Identity	Infrastructure	Articulation	Architecture	Communication	Masses & interest groups	Evaluation
Relational network (Hankinson, 2004)	●		●			●		
City image communication (Kavaratzis, 2004)			●			●	●	●
Destination branding model (Cai, 2002)		●	●			●	●	
City brand management (Gaggiotti et al., 2008)	●		●			●		
SPBM model (Hanna and Rowley, 2011)		●	●	●	●	●		●
Place branding communication model (Braun et al., 2014)						●	●	

Table 9. Place branding components

The **highest policy maker** is different in different cases. In Chinese cities the highest policy makers are the People's Congress, the People 's Congress Standing Committee and the Mayor's Office. At the beginning of a policy making process, the highest policy

maker gives a directional proposal to determine how the place brand is constructed in the future. **Identity** and **infrastructure** include various elements and the government departments in charge of those elements. Generally, these two branding factors overlap and interact with each other within managing departments, as identity refers to regulating audience perceptions (Florek et al., 2006), and tangible and intangible infrastructure determines how a place is perceived. This component is formulated by specific government departments, as is **articulation** and **architecture.** Brand architecture includes categories such as destination, FDI attraction, business and brand endorsement. The **coordinator (leading group)** is essential as it maintains effective organizational structures (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008) and accommodates conflicting needs (Hankinson, 2015). **Masses** and **interest groups** are the audience of brand communication. Masses are divided into residents and visitors, and interest groups include investors, competing places, private promotion agencies, cultural organizations & NGOs. Sonya and Rowley (2011) mention **research groups** which include academic and governmental research institutions. The involvement of international organizations and foreign experts varies from case to case.

7.3 Summary and contribution

Before discussing the main theoretical and practical contributions, and bringing up some limitations, let us review the study as a whole. This dissertation analyses the branding process of Chongqing through case study. Three research questions are outlined and answered, concentrating on the role of government departments, the general branding process and the nature of place branding in China. The theoretical foundation of this study is twofold: existing place branding theories; and government process and policy literature. Based on the theoretical framework, the study undertakes an in-depth exploration of three major aspects of place branding: tourism; commerce and business; and resident identity construction, through three major cases studies of Chongqing.

Without major differences in the reasons for engaging place branding, branding elements, brand management or organization from western practice, China has a unique character that can only be understood in context. The government and the Party dominate all aspects of place branding. The government is not only the funding sponsor of branding, but also (sometimes) the main investor in local urban-projects. Government departments are the major place brand managers and marketing activity initiators. By acknowledging place branding as a systematic project, leading groups that include local leaders act as coordinators, promoting cross-departmental cooperation. The leading group achieves its function through political interaction between the Party and the government, effectively improving cross-department efficiency, which is a unique government working method in China.

By introducing public management theories including public policy, government tools and the governmental process, this study analyses the political aspects of place branding in China. Politically, place branding is an efficient way to convey the ruling concept not only from local leaders but from central government and Party committees, therefore it is a form of power exercise by the political elite working as policy instrument or government tool. Functionally, branding projects are intertwined with investment promotion policies, which are themselves recognized by the government as essential elements of branding. Ideologically, place branding includes education of the public, through the intensive communication of ideological information, establishing a future image of the country or region.

Before summarizing the contributions of this research, let us review the branding case of Chongqing to illustrate the characteristics and lessons. Firstly, the case of Chongqing verifies that a top-down approach can be effective. Even though this kind of effective implementation is realized under a relatively centralized political system, this is not a restriction or impediment to other places' top-down approach. The government's

participation can maximize the balance of various interest groups. There are many stakeholders in place branding. If the market is completely balanced by the market, the interest groups will fail (such as residents' absence). At the same time, such a plan from the country's vision to the provinces and cities can better ensure the brand's consistency, which is more conducive to national branding. Secondly, although government departments can participate in place branding very well, most regions do not have a dedicated branding department, so it is impossible to integrate inter-place resources to the greatest extent, thereby forming a regional core value and core competitiveness. The successful case of Yunyang in Chongqing shows that the branding department set up by the government can well realize the function of branding (such as Amsterdam) organized by the market. Thirdly, there is an urgent need for branding professionals in Chongqing. Except for a few successful cases in this study, most districts and counties' branding work is publicity. The content of the work is closer to fragmented marketing. From the field research many government workers have limited knowledge of place brand, so they cannot implement the branding plan formulated by the higher government. Fortunately, the government itself realize this problem and trying to solve this problem by recruiting professional staff, academics and agents.

7.3.1. *Theoretical contribution*

Place branding, as a relatively young and cross-disciplinary field (Lucarelli and Berg, 2011), requires more theoretical construction and critical reflection on practice (Björner, 2017b).   This study proposes a new theoretical framework, and adds a new perspective on existing concepts, which help to broaden the field of place branding. The study reviews the empirical study of Chongqing and the process of place branding in China. Therefore, the research conclusions and concepts proposed in this paper can be used as the basis for the further place branding research.

Firstly, this study offers a discussion of the nature of place branding beyond the neoliberalist perspective and western context. Giving a universal definition of place

branding, as mentioned, is not the aim of this research as much as fuelling place branding "ideas and debates" based on various contexts and understandings (Vanolo, 2018). This study, starting from the economic, cultural, social and political dimensions of place branding (see Kotler, 2002, Gold and Ward, 1994, Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013, Braun et al., 2013, Lucarelli, 2015, Kavaratzis et al., 2015, Ooi, 2004), explores how the government, as the main subject, manages to coordinate and balance the dimensions of place branding. It embrace the idea that place branding can be used as a government tool to guide place development (Kavaratzis, 2005, Govers, 2013, Cleave et al., 2016, Ye and Björner, 2018). In response to the argument that we need to expand our critical analysis beyond neoliberalism (Vanolo, 2018) to a pluralistic and interdisciplinary perspective (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008), this study expands place branding to the public policy field by proposing two trends: place branding plans and strategies are intertwined with public policy; and place branding plans are made into policies by government processes.

The second contribution of this study is related to the role of the government in place branding. Even though much of the literature acknowledges the government as an important stakeholder (see Kotler, 2002, Berg and Braun, 1999, Bouchon, 2014, Clifton, 2014, Klijn et al., 2012, Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015), there is no clarification of how the government should involve itself in place branding or help related institutions build successful place brands. By revealing the role of the government in the branding process, this study clarifies the publicity of place branding (especially constructing resident identity). Unlike the previous discussion of the importance of the residents' perspectives in audience research (see Fan, 2014, Govers, 2013, Insch, 2011, Insch and Florek, 2010, Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008, Braun et al., 2014), this research explains the publicity of place brand and explains why residents, as major stakeholders, are always missing in practice. Since most western place branding institutions are non-governmental and funded by specific industries and corporate interest groups, and branding funding sponsors find it difficult to realize direct benefit from good resident

identity, the partial neglect of residents by branding institutions is an understandable market behaviour. The government, as a public manager, needs to balance the needs of the market and the public, after all, place branding is a strategy of social resource allocation (Dinnie, 2011).

The third theoretical contribution of this research is the construction of a Chinese place branding model based on government processes. Even though the concept of government process and related public administration theories are not new, this paper represents a rare attempt (with the extraordinary exception of Lucarelli, 2018) to connect place branding directly to these concepts and theories. Through this new model, the study provides current place branding researchers a clear picture of the Chinese place branding process and how it works as a government tool influencing place development and people. Unlike Björner's (2017) research which centres on the strategic, political and ideological results of place branding through the conceptualization of imagineering, the proposed model of this study well explains the source of these results. It also provides evidence for the influence of the political system in Chinese place branding from the national to the local level (Björner, 2017a). This model contains major elements from mainstream place branding models (see Hankinson, 2004, Kavaratzis, 2004, Cai, 2002, Gaggiotti, 2008, Braun et al., 2014, Hanna and Rowley, 2011). Even though Chinese place branding is largely controlled and managed by the government, it contains the major branding elements common in western theories. After all, place branding is "neoliberalism, utilitarianism and boosterism at play: branding is essentially a pro-growth strategy" (Vanolo, 2018).

7.3.2. *Practical contributions*

In addition to the theoretical contribution, this study carries out a case study in China which makes a practical contribution to place branding research (in English) in a western context (Lucarelli and Berg, 2011). As noted in Section 2.4, there is abundant Chinese literature on place branding covering a wide range of disciplines. As China is

gaining more influence in the world, the language barrier should reduce and it should attract more attention from researchers and practitioners around the world.

Directly borrowing western theories is quite common in Chinese place branding research. However, as a complex and dynamic social process, place branding need to be understood in a local context and analysed case by case (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2011, Kavaratzis et al., 2015). This does not necessarily mean that Chinese place branding theories and practice are fundamentally different from those in the west, but we need to see the differences and connections between the two. The conclusions of this research provide the practitioner a clear picture of Chongqing brand. As a rising star in southwest China and an Internet influential city, the branding practice of Chongqing, despite being insufficient, provides a reference and blueprint for other places that have no brand or are in the early stages of brand building. Meanwhile, even though the government and political system is different in China, this does not means the case of Chongqing cannot provide reference for western cities and regions. The Chinese government manages to coordinate major aspects of place branding (such as tourism, commerce and culture), which is rare in western practice. This allows us to examine whether the minarchism or minimal statism advocated by western countries is effective in dealing with issues such as place branding that involve a wide range of social dimensions.

Finally, the connections between western place branding theories and Chinese practice is worth discussing. According to (Björner, 2017b), "the way Chinese mega-cities are dreamt up and envisioned, proactively and strategically planned, governed and communicated, is a hot topic today and will be for many years to come". However, China is often described as a contradictory aggregate. On one hand, it claims to be as socialist country, while on the other, it is criticised as being authoritarian and having state capitalism. After the reform and opening up, and with the development of the market economy, people's interest and awareness is clear. People's awareness of their

rights and civic awareness have also been awakened by the market economy. There is a huge contradiction between a dictatorship and a culture of civic awareness and the awareness of rights. China committed itself to comprehensively deepening reforms to achieve simplification of government and a more comprehensive market economy, but in the practice of place branding the government still dominates. In this context, we can see the possibility of applying western place branding theories to China and the rationale for doing so, but we need to understand Chinese place branding in its own context. China, in many areas, is not at a stable stage, and place branding itself is a dynamic process. This dynamic process in a dynamic context requires the researcher to continually explore place branding in theory and practice.

7.4 Reflections, limitation and future research

Looking back over the whole dissertation, only a limited amount Chinese place branding literature is cited and discussed, even though I put a lot of effort into reviewing it in Chapter 2. As mentioned, a lot of Chinese place branding literature directly cites or adopts the famous place branding theories from Kotler, Kavaratzis, Ashworth or Dinnie. Therefore, it is more reliable for me to cite and discuss their original work rather than some Chinese definition. What is more, I cannot see any localization of western theories or solid theoretical construction process proposed by this literature. Another fatal issue is that there is a lack of a normative research paradigm in most Chinese language literature (only 50 of the 440 papers reviewed mention the use of a questionnaire method, and others do not have any clear research method), therefore, it is very hard for a researcher to discuss the conclusions of these research papers objectively. Place branding research in China, is still a small field, and the results mainly concentrate on communication and marketing. China's place branding research has experienced a case-based urban promotion phase, a combination of research methods in urban communication and marketing phase, and in recent years a big data-based research phase. However, the lack of theoretical research has led to

stagnation in China's place branding research. Therefore, the conclusions of this study provide theoretical support for future research.

Even though place branding in many areas has economic objectives (i.e. tourism and inward investment), this does not mean place branding is a zero-sum game, as influence on a particular target group in a particular field may evoke interest in other fields for the same target group (Kavaratzis et al., 2014). The social dimensions of place branding, for example community building, may benefit rather than hinder the economic objectives. The involvement of public management departments or institutions in place branding could well solve the problem of market failure, which would be worth learning in the Chongqing case. However, throughout the case, there is a basic question that has not been fully answered: What is place brand? or, to put it an easier way: What are the branding elements? Ashworth (2011) argues that place branding should not be undertaken unless there a product that exists in the community worthy of promotion. What then, is the actual product of a place? Is it the infrastructure, facilities, culture, landscape, incentive policies or some spiritual product as it appears in the case of Chongqing? This question needs further exploration.

The government, certainly, is the agent of Chinese place branding and there is a clear top-down planning approach to be seen in Chinese practice. However, does this mean the government actually constructs place brands? The answer is yes, if we simply consider place brand as a name, term, design, symbol or other feature that identifies a place. Yet it is a definite no when we consider brand as the people's perceptions and experiences. Answering this question is not an easy task, as it does not require a clear definition of place brand, but cautious analysis based on individual cases.

Although cross-sectoral collaboration is common in Chongqing branding, these collaborations happen more in the promotion and marketing activity rather than in the top design of a holistic brand. The government sector's brand awareness is very weak

and lacks systematic thinking. Due to the lack of synergy between departments, it is difficult for the government to consider the parallel creation of multiple brand systems. Regional leaders and political changes also affect the continuity of branding (which is not so much the case in western practice), and how to solve this issue is a question for researchers and practitioners (Hankinson, 2010).

Various limitations of this study are identified. Firstly, there is only one municipality included in the field research. Even though Chongqing itself is big enough to provide sufficient sub-cases, the uniqueness of the context should not be ignored, as Chongqing is a developing city in China. Chongqing also has a particular city positioning in China and the world from the central government, which influences the branding of Chongqing and means some of the findings may not be applicable even to other Chinese cities. Thus, it requires broader investigation in other part of China to construct a powerful theoretical statement.

Secondly, inter-place cooperation and cross-place/city/region cooperation, which are important aspects of place branding, are not considered in this study. Brand evaluation and measurement does not show a clear method or acceptable norm. There is brand architecture, but the framework cannot reveal how this structure is constructed. Propaganda departments control almost every part of brand communication but word of mouth management is shockingly absent in this case. This may be because China uses a different term "public opinion guidance" (舆论引导) to replace word of mouth. All the above issues need further investigation and critical analysis.

APPENDICES

Attachment 1. Summary of the Five function districts of Chongqing, Source: Chongqing Municipal Government website (W9), the Thirteenth Five-year Plan for Chongqing's National Economy and Social Development (P23).

Area	Scope	Position	Tasks	Methods
Urban function core district	The whole Yuzhong District and areas within the inner ring of five districts: Dadukou, Jiangbei, Shapingba, Jiulongpo and Nan'an, covering about 294 square kilometres	The core metropolitan area of Chongqing shall fully reflect the function of Chongqing as the national central city in politics & economy, history & culture, financial innovation and a modern service centre; show Chongqing as a city with a famous history and culture, beautiful landscape, wisdom and modern cityscape; strengthen the construction of the central business district and important business cluster to make Chongqing the metropolitan centre with high-end elements, powerful radiation effect and nationwide influence.	No over-consideration of economic growth, and emphasis on structural adjustment and function optimization, the proportion of total industrial output value will be significantly reduced, and the proportion of added value of the service industry will increase substantially.	Improve urban functions, optimize industrial structure, enhance the image of modern cities, appropriately disperse population, refine urban management, and protect the ecological environment.
Urban function extended district	Except the urban function core district, the area of 9 main urban districts of about 5179 square kilometres	The main component of Chongqing metropolitan function district. It concentrates to show the economic radiation and service influence of a national central city. It is the	In the optimization of structural adjustments in this region, the economic growth has been emphasized. By 2020, the urban	Orderly expansion of urban space, group planning and layout, integration of production

		city's science & education centre, logistics centre, integrated transport hub and important gateway for opening to the outside world; it is the advanced manufacturing cluster, ecological barrier of the main city and habitable district for the new urban population in the future.	functional expanded district will achieve a GDP of 1,070 billion yuan and an industrial output value of 2,200 billion yuan, accounting for 37.5% and 44% of the city's total respectively. At the same time, 21 large-scale population agglomerations will be formed and the new population will increase by about 4 million in the next 10 years.	and development of cities and towns, and protect the ecological environment in the transitional zone between urban core functional areas and urban development new areas.
Urban new development district	Fuling District, Changshou District, Jiangjin District, Hechuan District, Yongchuan District, Nanchuan District, Dazu District, Qijiang District, Tongliang County, Tongnan County, Rongchang County, Bishan County, Wansheng Economic and Technological Development Zone and Shuangqiao Economic and Technological Development Zone, covering about 23.2	The effective radiation district of city function core district and extended district in Chongqing, and the important component of metropolitan area. It is Chongqing's main battlefield of future industrialization and urbanization, an important area for gathering new industry and population, an important manufacturing base, a demonstration area of the "four modernizations" synchronous development, a pilot area for win-win cooperation between Sichuan and Chongqing and between Chongqing and Guiyang, and a	By 2020, the urbanization rate will increase to 63%, and the resident population will reach 12 million, accounting for 36% of the city's total population. The total industrial output value will reach 2,250 billion yuan, accounting for 45% of the city's total.	Taking the development of the industrial economy as the primary task, adhering to the simultaneous development of the "four modernizations", the urban and rural areas should be coordinated first, making full use of the natural divisions formed by mountains, rivers, and farmland, and the conditions of ecological

	thousand square kilometres.	key area for solving "big city disease".		barriers, and building a clustered, networked, harmonious human-nature Industrial clusters and modern landscape garden town clusters (大产业集聚区和现代山水田园城市集群).
Ecological conservation development districts in northeast of Chongqing	Wanzhou District, Liangping County, Chengkou County, Fengdu County, Dianjiang County, Zhong County, Kai County, Yunyang County, Fengjie County, Wushan County, Wuxi County, covering about 33.9 thousand square kilometres.	The national key ecological function area and main agricultural production regions, the important ecological barrier of the Yangtze river basin and characteristic economic corridor of the upper stream of Yangtze river, Three Gorges of Yangtze river international golden tourism belt and characteristic resources processing base.	To achieve ecological conservation, to highlight changes in the concept of development and development methods, and to adhere to the follow-up development of the Three Gorges resettlement, poverty alleviation and development in the joint poverty-stricken areas. In ten years or so, the plan will lead to the transfer of 1.3 million people, the permanent population will be reduced to	The development of ecological civilization will be given a more prominent place. It will guide the relative aggregation of the population and the gradient transfer of the overloaded population. It will focus on conservation and protection of the mountains and rivers of the Three Gorges reservoir area and improve the level

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			about 7 million, and the forest coverage rate will be more than 50%.	of basic public services.
Ecological protection development districts in the southeast of Chongqing	Qianjiagn District, Shizhu County, Xiushan County, Youyang County, Wulong County, Pengshui County (autonomous county), covering about 19.8 thousand square kilometres.	The national key ecological function area and an important biological diversity protection area, Wuling Mountain green economy development highland, an important ecological barrier, ecological folk culture tourism belt, poverty alleviation & development demonstration area, and city minorities gathering area.	The ecological civilization construction will be given prominence. Within a decade or so of planning, the population will be transferred to 800,000, the permanent population will be reduced to 2 million, and the forest coverage rate will be more than 50%; the combination of poverty alleviation development and the development of ethnic regions will be guided. The relative aggregation of the population and the orderly gradient of the overloaded population.	Highlight the primary task of protecting the ecology, speed up economic and social development and protect the ecological environment, and build a beautiful home with an intensive and efficient production space, a liveable space, and an ecologically beautiful landscape.

Attachment 2. Interview Respondents

No.	ID	Category	Organization/Department	Remark in Chinese

1	I1	Practitioner	Hexigten Tourism Group	克什克腾旗旅游集团总经理
2	I2	Government official	Nanping Modern Service Industry Cluster Management Committee	南坪现代服务业集聚区管理委员会
3	I3	Government official	Nanhu Community	南湖社区
4	I4	Practitioner	Wulong Karst Tourism (Group) Co., Ltd.	武隆喀斯特旅游（集团）有限公司总部
5	I5	Practitioner	Wulong Karst Tourism (Group) Co., Ltd.	武隆喀斯特旅游（集团）有限公司营销中心
6	I6	Practitioner	Eleve Branding Company	重庆奥意品牌
7	I7	Government official	Culture Jiulongpo, Culture, Radio, Film and Television Bureau of Jiulongpo District	文化九龙坡，九龙坡区文化广电新闻出版局
8	I8	Government official	重庆市旅游局	重庆市旅游局
9	I9	Practitioner	Top of Form	重庆国际电子商务产业园

			Top of Form Chongqing International E-commerce Industrial Park	
10	I10	Government official	Tourism Bureau，Wulong District	武隆旅游局陈局
11	I11	Government official	Culture Commission, Yuzhong District	渝中区文化委江科长
12	I12	Government official	Top of Form Qujiang District Tourism Bureau Propaganda Department	綦江区旅游局宣传科
13	I13	Government official	Development and Reform Commission, Qijiang District	Top of Form 綦江发改委姜师梅
14	I14	Government official	Spiritual Civilization	綦江精神文明办公室

			Office, Qijiang District	
15	I15	Government official	Jiefangbei CBD Management Committee	解放碑 CBD 管委会
16	I16	Government official	Chongqing Municipal Committee of Commerce, Market Division	重庆市商委市场处左主任
17	I17	Government official	Chongqing Municipal Committee of Commerce, E-commerce Division	重庆市商委电商处何主任
18	I18	Practitioner	Anju Subsidiary of China Railway Estate, China Railway Group	铜梁中铁安居王总与李部长
19	I19	Practitioner	Hualong Network (www.CQNEWS.net)	华龙网营销总监张盼盼
20	I20	Government official	Propaganda Department	渝中区宣传部
21	I21	Government official	Group meeting with	县政府办公室吴主任，商务局吴局长，农委陈

			Yunyang county leaders (Director Wu of the County Government Office, Director Wu of the Bureau of Commerce, Director of the Agriculture Committee, Wang Kechang from Poverty Alleviation Office, Yang Kechang, E-Commerce Division)	站长，扶贫办王科长，电商科杨科长

Attachment 3. Printed materials

No.	Title	Category	Source	Remark in Chinese
P1	Jiefangbei central business district of Chongqing Investment guide	Brochure	Jiefangbei CBD Management Committee	解放碑中央商务区投资指南

P2	New commerce, New Nanping	Brochure	Nanping Modern Service Industry Cluster Management Committee	新商业新南坪
P3	Chongqing Yuzhong District incestor's guide	Brochure	Jiefangbei CBD Management Committee	渝中区投资指南
P4	Nanan District Civilization and Etiquette Handbook	Brochure	Propaganda department of Nanan District	南岸区文明礼仪手册
P5	Three cares of Qijiang	Brochure	Tourism department of Qijiang District	三养綦江：养生，养老，养心
P6	Building the Spiritual Coordinates of Renaissance Revival- The Central Party Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the Core Takes Care of the Documentary Spiritual Civilization Construction	Newspaper comments	Guangming Newspaper, 30/09/2017	构建复兴伟业的精神坐标-以习近平同志为核心的党中央关心精神文明建设纪实
P7	Origin of Chongqing city of fascination	Brochure	Jiefangbei CBD Management Committee	巴渝母城，魅力街区

P8	Big pattern of Wulong	Book	Wulong tourism department	武隆大格局
P9	Anti-Japanese war culture brand of Chongqing	Book	Yuzhong District Culture Commission	重庆抗战文化品牌
P10	Government documents	Government Document	Qijiang propaganda department	綦江区宣委工作报告，决议，通知，计划等
P11	Government documents-leaders' speech on government meeting	Government Document	Chongqing tourism department	区县领导在区县会议上的讲话发言稿
P12	Jiefangbei CBD annual work report	Government Document	Jiefangbei CBD Management Committee	解放碑中央商务区管理委员会 2016 工作总结级 2017 年工作计划
P13	Government documents-working reports	Government Document	Chongqing Municipal Commission of Commerce	重庆市商务委员会工作报告，总结与汇报
P14	Tourism department annual report of Qijiang District	Government Document	Qijiang district tourism department	綦江区旅游局 2016 年工作总结与 2017 年工作计划
P15	Tourism department annual report of Wulong District	Government Document	Wulong district tourism department	武隆区旅游局 2016 年工作总结与 2017 年工作计划
P16	Several preferential policies for	Government	Qijiang District development and	重庆綦江区鼓励投资的若干优惠政

	encouraging investment in Qijiang District of Chongqing	Document	reform commission	策
P17	Annual working report of Yuzhong district culture commission	Government Document	Yuzhong district culture commission	渝中区文化委 2016 年工作总结
P18	Suggestions on Implementing the Party's Nineteenth Congress Spiritual and 2017 Work Summary and 2018 Work Arrangements	Government Document	A county propaganda department	A 地区贯彻落实党的十九大精神建议及 2017 年工作总结和 2018 年工作安排
P19	Regional Work Propaganda Department's 2017 Work Summary and 2018 Work Arrangement	Government Document	B county propaganda department	B 区委宣传部 2017 年工作总结和 2018 年工作安排
P20	Regional Work Propaganda Department 2016 Work Summary	Government Document	B county propaganda department	B 区委宣传部 2016 年工作总结和 2017 年工作安排

	and 2017 Work Arrangement			
P21	Promoting the Green Rise of Two Wings Region of Chongqing with Tourism Industry	Newspaper	Chongqing Daily, 26/11/2013	以旅游产业化促两翼绿色崛起
P22	The Twelfth Five-Year Plan for Chongqing's National Economic and Social Development	Government Document		重庆市国民经济和社会发展第十二个五年规划纲要
P23	The thirteenth five-year plan for Chongqing's national economy and social development	Government Document		重庆市国民经济和社会发展第十三个五年规划纲要
P24	the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Construction of Chongqing as International Famous Destinations	Government Document		重庆市建设国际知名旅游目的地"十三五"规划
P25	The 13th Five-Year Plan for the Development of Modern Business Services in Chongqing	Government Document		重庆市现代商贸服务业发展"十三五"规划

P26	The 13th Five-year Plan for Cultural Development in Chongqing	Government Document		重庆市文化发展"十三五"规划
P27	Guidance of the General Office of the State Council on Promoting the Development of All-for-one Tourism	Government Document	http://www.cq.gov.cn/gwywj/2018/3/22/1561166.shtml	国务院办公厅关于促进全域旅游发展的指导意见
P27	Proposals on Scientifically Dividing and Accelerating the Establishment of Five Functional Zones by CPC Chongqing City Committee, Chongqing Municipal People's Government	Government Document		中共重庆市委 重庆市人民政府关于科学划分功能区域、加快建设五大功能区的意见
P28	Innovative cases of spiritual civilization construction in	Government Document		綦江区精神文明建设创新案例

	Qianjiang District			
P29	Guiding Opinions on Deepening the Creation of Mass Spiritual Civilization	Government Document		关于深化群众性精神文明创建活动的指导意见

Attachment 4. Webpages

No.	Title	Category	Web page address	Source and accessed date	Remark in Chinese
W1	Nanhu Community, Nanan District, Chongqing City: Relying on Mass Social Organizations to Build a Community "Wei Yi Fang"	Official media release	http://hb.people.com.cn/n2/2017/1206/c192237-31003985.html	People.cn, accessed on 15/08/2019	重庆市南岸区南湖社区：依靠群众性社会组织打造社区"微益坊"

W2	Nanhu Community, Garden Road, Nanan District, Chongqing	Official media release	http://www.zycq.org/show/1036829.html	China Volunteer, accessed on 15/08/2019	重庆市南岸区花园路街道南湖社区
W3	"Xinhua Viewpoint" (Endeavor new era) Chongqing Nanhu community service innovation: "Poly is a fire, scattered is a starry sky"	Official media video	http://news.163.com/17/1127/15/D48PENOV00018AOQ.html	Netease News, accessed on 15/08/2019	《新华视点》（奋进新时代）重庆南湖社区服务创新："聚是一团火，散是满天星"
W4	"Benefiting People and Benefiting Homeland" - A Look at the "National Most Beautiful Volunteer Service Community"- Nanhu Community	Official media release	http://cq.cqnews.net/html/2017-03/15/content_40970125.htm	CQnews,net, accessed on 15/08/2019	"益人益己益家园"——来看南湖社区的"全国最美志愿服务社区"炼成记

W5	准入前国民待遇 (*zhunru qian guomin daiyu*): Pre-establishment national treatment (PENT)	Official media release	http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2015-03/20/content_19862635.htm	Chinadaily, accessed on 15/08/2019	
W6	Three revelations of Wulong Tourism development in 20 Years	Official government Release	http://www.wlly.gov.cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=63&id=1185	Wulong tourism department website, accessed on 15/08/2019	武隆旅游 20 年三大启示
W7	Chongqing Grand theatre	Official media release	https://web.archive.org/web/20100416154643/http://ent.cqnews.net/zt/cqdjycn/zjdjy/200912/t20091222_3897634.htm	CQNews.net, accessed on 15/08/2019	
W8	Construction of "Five	Official media	http://theory.people.com.	CPCNews.cn, accessed	"五个重庆"建设：科学发展观内

	Chongqing": Vivid Reflection of the Connotation of the Scientific Development Concept	release	cn/GB/11482265.html	on 15/08/2019	涵的生动体现
W9	**Position of Five Function Districts in Chongqing**	Official release	http://en.cq.gov.cn/Government/OfficialRelease/2013/9/23/1064607.shtml	Chongqing Municipal Government website, accessed on 15/08/2019	
W10	Hongyan alliance culture developing management centre	Official website	http://www.hongyan.info/	Chongqing Municipal Government website, accessed on 15/08/2019	重庆红岩联线文化发展管理中心（重庆红岩革命历史博物馆）
W11	Liu Yunshan emphasized at the symposium on deepening China dream publicity and education: Promote the formation of	Official government release	http://www.npopss-cn.gov.cn/n/2013/0409/c219468-21063509.html	National planning office of philosophy and social science website, accessed on 15/08/2019	刘云山在深化中国梦宣传教育座谈会上强调：推动形成实现中国梦的强大精神力量

	a powerful spiritual force for realizing the China dream				
W12	The slogan governing is condescending formalism	Media Review	http://view.163.com/special/reviews/slogan1213.html?from=index	Netease, accessed on 15/08/2019	标语治国是居高临下的形式主义
W13	The birth and clapping of the slogan of " preparation for war and disaster, and for the people"	Official Media Review	http://dangshi.people.com.cn/n/2014/0728/c85037-25355978.html	CPCNews, accessed on 15/08/2019	"备战、备荒、为人民"口号的问世与叫响
W14	Eating at no cost, trying hard to produce		http://news.china.com/history/all/11025807/20160427/22533083.html	China.com, accessed on 15/08/2019	大跃进国务院副总理谈公社:猴头燕窝按需供给
W15	Shibati will retain the original street alley		http://cq.people.com.cn/n2/2018/0203/c365402-31	People.cn, accessed on 15/08/2019	十八梯改造后将保留原有街巷肌理和名字

	texture and name		216090.html		
W16	Party and government organs official document handling work regulations		http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/ 2013-02/22/content_233 7704.htm	Accessed on 15/08/2019	党政机关公文处理工作条例
W17	Selected Works of Socialist Spiritual Civilization Construction		http://cpc.people.com.cn/ GB/64184/64186/66695/i ndex.html	accessed on 15/08/2019	社会主义精神文明建设文献选编
W18	Resolution of the CPC Central Committee on the Guiding Principles for the Construction of Socialist Spiritual Civilization		http://www.people.com.c n/GB/news/6056/200110 23/587955.html	accessed on 15/08/2019	中共中央关于社会主义精神文明建设指导方针的决议

Attachment 5. The context of China

This section gives a descriptive review of China's state polity, government management model and political ideological context, rather than a discussion of the current political situation. The aim of this section is to offer the reader a fundamental understanding of the social and political context in which this study is conducted, and a comprehensive political picture of China to help the reader grasp the background to this study.

a)   Governance of CCP, administrative system reform and service-oriented government construction

The National People's Congress (NPC) of the People's Republic of China is the highest organ of state power. Its permanent body is the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. The National People's Congress and the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress exercise the legislative power of the state. The State Council of the People's Republic of China, the Central People's Government, is the executive organ of the highest state power organ and the highest state administrative organ. The National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, in accordance with the Constitution, established people's congresses in all provinces, municipalities directly under the central government, counties, cities, municipal districts, townships, nationality towns and towns, and produced people's governments at the same level, supervisory committees, people's courts, and people's procuratorates. The people's congresses at all levels are democratically elected, and are responsible to the people and subject to the supervision of the people. Direct elections are held at township and district levels[59]. The elected township-level, district-level and county-level people's congresses elect a higher-level people's congress, and these representatives elect the NPC deputies.

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[59] Official central government website: http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/

According to the Constitution, the national body of the People's Republic of China is a socialist country under the leadership of the working class based on the alliance of workers and peasants and the people's democratic dictatorship. The polity of the People's Republic of China implements the system of people's congresses in accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, and the National People's Congress is the highest authority of the state. The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress performs most congressional functions and powers and implements democratic centralism[60]. However, the government's administration is actually led by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. During the closure period of the National People's Congress, the Central Political Bureau and its Standing Committee, chaired by the General Secretary of the Central Committee, exercise its functions and powers. In practice, the Communist Party of China (the Party) leads administrative organizations, legislatures, supervisory organs, judicial organs, procuratorial organs, democratic parties, enterprises and institutions, and religious organizations at all levels.

Administrative system reform includes the transformation of government power structure, the adjustment of government organization, and the transformation of government functions, the administrative management system, and the innovation of administrative means. Since the reform and opening up in 1978, China's administrative system has undergone eight major reforms, which can be roughly divided into three stages (People.com, 2018)[61]: 1) focusing on institutional streamlining and personnel diversion, and establishing an administrative system that meets the requirements of the socialist commodity economic system (1978-1992); 2) in order to reduce microeconomic interventions, initially establishing an administrative system that meets the requirements of the socialist market economic system (1993-2002); and 3) taking the construction of the public service system (service-oriented government) as the core, and deepening the

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[60] Ibid.
[61] http://theory.people.com.cn/n1/2018/1024/c40531-30360246.html

reform of the socialist administrative system with Chinese characteristics by improving the government's functional system (2003-2018). The third stage highlights the real transformation of government functions around the construction of the public service system, focusing on the optimization of the government organization structure around the construction of the public service system, improving the administrative operation mechanism with the focus on public services, increasing financial input, and striving to promote the equalization of basic public services.

A concept which needs to be clarified is that, in China, a government department mainly refers to an administrative unit (行政单位) and some public institutions (事业单位), a phenomenon unique to China. The administrative unit, according to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, is a unit that carries out national administrative management, organizational economic construction and cultural construction, and maintenance of social public order. It includes the organs of state power, administrative organs, judicial organs, procuratorates, and other organs and party organizations that implement budget management. Public institutions refers to social service organizations organized by state agencies or other organizations that use state-owned assets for education, science and technology, culture, and health for the purpose of social welfare[62]. Superior departments of public institutions are government administrative units. Their behaviours are based on relevant laws. The decisions they make are mostly mandatory. The sources of their funding are mostly financial allocations from government.

The construction of a service-oriented government in China has its own characteristics and draws on the theory of western service-oriented government. According to the official definition of the government, the service-oriented government refers to a government that continues to meet the growing public needs of urban and rural

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[62] Interim Regulations on the Registration and Administration of Public Institutions (事业单位登记管理暂行条例).

residents. Service oriented government is constructed under the guidance of the concept of people-oriented and governing for the people; the public service function is raised to the main or core function of the government by optimizing the government structure, innovating government mechanisms, regulating government behaviour, and improving government efficiency. The service-oriented government has the following main characteristics: 1) within the government function structure, the public service function becomes the main or core function of the government; 2) within the government organizational structure, the public service sector becomes the main or core department of the government; and 3) within the structure of government fiscal expenditure, public service expenditure becomes the main expenditure of the government. Building a service-oriented government enables all levels of government to provide public services actively and effectively, and also adjust the structure of fiscal expenditure and increase the proportion of government public service expenditure.

The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China emphasized the reform goal of "building a service-oriented government that the people are satisfied with". In recent years, the reform of "decentralization, management, service" (i.e., streamlined administration, power and institute decentralization and administration integration, and optimization of services) is considered a powerful move to "build a service-oriented government that the people are satisfied with", and "streamline administration and institute decentralization (简政放权)". By clearing the administrative approval of items and other specific measures, the borders and mutual relations between the government, the market and society are clarified, and the position of each governance subject in the national governance system is repositioned, which lays the structural foundation for the construction of the service-oriented government. Power and institute decentralization and administration integration (放管结合), along with innovation and strengthening supervision, clarify the functions and powers of the government in macro-control, order maintenance, etc., ensure that administrative reforms are on a healthy and sustainable path, and provide institutional guarantees for building a service-oriented government. The optimization of services (优化服务) not

only provides better and more efficient services to the market and society, but also shows that the government and the entire governance system should use services as basic orientation, clearly indicating the direction of the reform. The reform path and development context of the service-oriented government clearly show that the theory and practice of service-oriented government has distinct Chinese attributes and is a localized reform plan based on the reality of China.

b) Political ideology of China

Political ideology is a special form of, or a special aspect of, political culture. It is particularity manifested in the political thoughts and concepts that are supported by political power and spread as much as possible. Unlike political thought, ideology is judged by correctness, while other political thoughts are based on their rationality as the criterion for judging their merits (Zheng and Li, 2004). Ideology is a set of logically related values and beliefs that provide a simplistic picture of the world and serve to guide people's actions. Political ideology is an important means of rationalizing and legalizing the policy actions of those in power (Zhang, 2012). In China, Marxism still occupies a dominant position in ideology. This ideology is closely related to the ruling class and has become an important value base for political rule and social management.

The political ideology is chronically bound with the leaders of China and can be roughly divided into Mao Zedong thought, Deng Xiaoping theory, the "three represents", the concept of scientific development, and Xi Jinping's new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Mao Zedong thought is a political, military, and developmental theory advocated by Mao Zedong and widely practiced in the 20th century following the Chinese revolution. It is generally considered to be the development of Marxism-Leninism in China. The recognition of Mao Zedong thought by the Communist Party of China is important for its achievements in the new-democratic revolution, the Anti-Japanese War, the victory in the Kuomintang Civil War, and the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

After the reform and opening up, the Chinese Communist Party defined Mao Zedong thought as the crystallization of the collective wisdom of the first generation of the Communist Party of China, not Mao Zedong's personal thoughts. Mao Zedong thought is a product of the combination of the basic theory of Marxism-Leninism and the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution. It is the first major theoretical achievement of Marxism in China, the theoretical thought and experience summary proved by practice. The formation of the theoretical system laid a solid foundation for the construction of a society with Chinese characteristics. Mao Zedong thought has rich content, including the new democratic revolution, socialist revolution, socialist construction, the construction of a revolutionary army and military strategy, ideological and political work, cultural work, and party building. Mao Zedong demonstrated the extreme importance of policy and strategy issues in the revolutionary struggle, pointing out that policy and strategy are the life of the party and the starting point and destination of all practical actions of the revolutionary party. The party policy must be formulated according to the political situation, class relations and actual conditions and changes, and the principle and flexibility must be combined. Mao Zedong thought pays special attention to building the party from the ideological point of view, and proposes that party members must not only join the party in organization, but also join the party mentally and pay attention to transforming and overcoming various non-proletarian ideas with proletarian ideas. Mao Zedong applied dialectical materialism and historical materialism to all the work of the proletarian party, and formed these positions, viewpoints and methods with Chinese characteristics, which are considered to be an enrichment and development of Marxism-Leninism.

Deng Xiaoping theory is the theory of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. Deng Xiaoping theory is considered to be a major theoretical achievement of the sinicization of Marxism, and is a theoretical summary of the socialist construction experience that the Chinese Communist Party has acquired different from the Soviet model. This theory is reflected in Deng Xiaoping's various speeches, reports and

conference resolutions after the third plenary session of the 11th CPC Central Committee in 1978. For the first time, Deng Xiaoping theory systematically answered a series of basic questions related to the fundamental questions of what socialism is and how to build it. It clarified the development stage, fundamental tasks, development motivation, external conditions, political guarantees, strategic steps, party leadership and dependence, and national unity, guiding the party to formulate the basic line in the primary stage of socialism. Deng Xiaoping believed that in order to improve the political system, it was necessary to separate the party and government. Deng Xiaoping's theory of the economy can be summed up as a socialist market economy.

The three represents is based on Jiang Zemin's investigation work in Guangdong Province presented on February 25, 2000. It is the first comprehensive interpretation of the party's historical experience and how to adapt to the new situation and new tasks. The specific contents of the three represents is that the Chinese Communist Party always represents the development requirements of China's advanced productive forces, the direction of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people. It is the foundation of the party's party building, the foundation of governance, and the source of power. The important thinking of the three represents is a set of practical achievements of the Chinese Communist Party in exploring the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and also providing the Chinese Communist Party with a theoretical basis for long-term governance of the People's Republic of China.

In his speech on July 28, 2003, General Secretary Hu Jintao of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China put forward a methodology called the **scientific outlook on development**. The plan was to adhere to the people-oriented principle, establish a comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable development concept, and promote the all-round development of the economy, society and people, in accordance with urban and rural development and the coordinating regions. This methodology

aimed to promote the reform of various undertakings in development, coordinating economic and social development, coordinating the harmonious development of man and nature, coordinating domestic development and opening up to the outside world. The specific contents of the scientific development concept include the people-oriented development concept, the comprehensive development concept, the coordinated development concept, and the sustainable development concept. The scientific concept of development is the inheritance and development of the important thinking of the Party's central leadership collective on development. It is a concentrated expression of a Marxist world outlook and methodology of development. It is the same as Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong thought, Deng Xiaoping theory and the three represents. The essence of the scientific concept of development is the Marxist concept of development. The core of the scientific concept of development is people-oriented - serving the people. The theoretical basis of the scientific development concept is the scientific methodology of Marxist materialist dialectics. The scientific concept of development is under the "special analysis of specific situations", which is under the guidance of this Marxist theory, in accordance with the scientific methodology of materialist dialectics, advancing with the times, seeking truth from facts, and analysing and treating all problems in the development process, thereby maximizing the overall development, coordinated development and sustainable development of productivity and all social undertakings.

On October 18, 2017, at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping first proposed "**the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics**". Xi Jinping's thoughts cover economics, politics, the rule of law, science and technology, culture, education, people's livelihoods, nationality, religion, society, ecological civilization, national security, national defence and the military, "one country, two systems" and the reunification of the motherland, the united front, diplomacy, and party building. The most important and core content is eight clarifications: 1) clearly adhere to and develop socialism with Chinese characteristics.

The overall task is to realize socialist modernization and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. On the basis of building a well-off society in an all-round way, the Party builds a strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious and beautiful socialism in the middle of this century; 2) clarify the main contradiction in the new era of Chinese society, the contradiction between the people's growing needs for a better life and the unbalanced development. This adheres to the people-centred development ideology and promotes the all-round development of people and the common prosperity of all people; 3) clarify that the overall layout of the socialist cause with Chinese characteristics is "five in one" and the strategic layout is "four comprehensive", emphasizing firm road confidence, theoretical self-confidence, institutional self-confidence, and cultural self-confidence; 4) clarify and comprehensively deepen the overall goal of reform, which is to improve and develop the socialist system with Chinese characteristics, and promote the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity; 5) clarify that the overall goal of ruling the country according to law is to build a socialist rule of law system with Chinese characteristics and build a socialist country ruled by law; 6) clarify that the party's military goal in the new era is to build a people's army that listens to the party's command, has a good work style, and builds the people's army into a world-class army; 7) clarify that the diplomacy of a big country with Chinese characteristics should promote the construction of a new type of international relations and promote the building of a community of human destiny; 8) define socialism with Chinese characteristics through the leadership of the Communist Party of China. The greatest advantage of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics is the leadership of the Communist Party of China. The Party is the highest political leadership. The general requirements for party building in the new era and the important position of political construction in party building are highlighted.

Another important guiding ideology and ruling idea put forward by Xi Jinping is the **China Dream**.

"Improving the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is the greatest dream of the Chinese nation since modern times. The goal of building a well-off society in an all-round way when the Communist Party of China is 100 years old will be realized. By the time of the 100 years anniversary founding of the People's Republic of China, the building of a strong, democratic, civilized and harmonious socialist modernization will be achieved. The goal of the country will certainly be realized, and the dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation will surely be realized" (Xi Jinping, *the Governance of China*, 2014).

Realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is the slogan of the China Dream. The integration of individual, state and national interests is its essential feature. The three "musts" (must take the Chinese road, must carry forward the Chinese spirit, must unite the Chinese power) is the specific path to realizing the China Dream.

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