

China-New Zealand Research Unit 2017 Annual Report

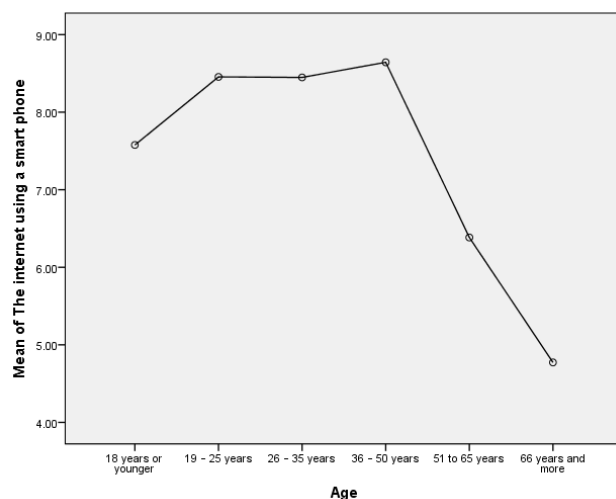
Research at the Terracotta Warriors Museum and the Fuxi Mausoleum, Taihoa.

Among the highlights of 2017 were the completion of reports for the Terracotta Warriors Museum in Xi'an and the commencement of research for the Taihao Wuxi Mausoleum. The former probably needs little introduction given its international recognition of the estimated 5,000 buried warriors and the serried ranks of warriors revealed in Pit One, as shown in Figure One below. In addition there exist two other pits but much of the total 48 acre site still remains unexplored despite the tomb being rediscovered in the early 1970s.

The research used both qualitative and quantitative techniques and involved questioning over 1200 respondents. The focus lay in visitor satisfaction and the determinants of that satisfaction to enable the site management to better understand what motivated visitors, and how they assessed information about the site. One subsidiary aspect of the research examined the existence of inter-generational differences in the domestic market as to motives, perceptions and use of digital sources – a question which given the significant differences in life experiences across the last three generations of those living in China and the way in which the Chinese Communist Party uses the soft power of tourism to consolidate its position is of both academic and practical interest.

The following Figure Two derived from a paper given at the 2018 APAC-Chrie conference in Guangzhou illustrates what one might have expected; namely that intergenerational differences do exist in the Chinese market, and it is proposed that this also determines responses to the Chinese policies on the use of tourism to generate a consciousness of what it is to be Chinese in the contemporary People's Republic.

Figure Two: Age and Smartphone Usage among visitors to the Terracotta Warriors Museum



The key researchers for this project are Chen Hui (Xi'an International Studies University), Chris Ryan (WMS) and He Hong (The Qinshihuang Mausoleum).

While not as well known in the western world The Fuxi Mausoleum attracts at certain times of the year over 100,000 visitors a day as pilgrims, sightseers and the simply curious descend upon the site. Wuxi is a semi-mythical figure revered as one of the first emperors of China and to whom is

attributed some of the earliest foundations of Chinese culture. He is also associated with the *I Ching* – The Book of Changes – dating from his period in the 9th century BCE. Philosophically some of the earliest notions of the dualism that characterises Chinese classical thought around the *yin-yang* notions of unity through opposites stems from this period. Today the site is associated not only with Fuxi but also Buddhist pilgrimage and folkloric religious practices associated with fertility, childbirth and ancestor worship.

The research, undertaken by Nancy Zhang (Beijing Union University) and Chris Ryan (WMS) again examined visitor motives and perceptions and is continuing into 2018/19. It is informed by significant amounts of historical secondary data that is being made available by the site management. Although the site has attracted past research from historians and those interested in the cultural aspects of the site, it is thought that the current project is the first structured analysis of the Mausoleum as a tourist attraction. Again, this work undertaken in 2017 was the subject of a paper presentation at the 2018 APAC-Chrie Conference.

Work with Tourism Research Australia on Chinese visitation patterns

In another initiative the Unit worked with George Chen from Tourism Research Australia (TRA) in a study of regional dispersal of Chinese tourists in New Zealand as part of a comparative study of Chinese tourists in Australia. That contribution will be featured in a TRA report to be released in 2018. This report took up much of the first 5 months of 2017 in terms of collection and analysis of data. The emphasis was on factors inhibiting travel away from the main centres.

Success of doctoral students

Among other activities, it is a pleasure to record the success of doctoral student Jin Yi who successfully defended her thesis on the structures and influences village based tourism organisations in Shandong Province. Mary Anne Ramos Tumanan also returned from China and her immersion in the Huizhou villages of Anhui after a period of 6 months to commence writing her doctoral thesis while Qui Que (Freeman) started his period of data collection in Huangzhou.

Recognition of Researchers

Among the wider membership of the Research Unit Professor Gu Huimin's career was encapsulated in an article commissioned by Metin Kozak, the editor of the *Anatolia* (Indexed in Clarivate Analytics' Emerging Sources Citation Index) as an entry that journal's series of eminent academics who have made a significant contribution to the development of tourism and hospitality research. Equally Dr. Zhang Xiaoyu won grants for the development of a Film Tourism Research Unit at Beijing Union University.

It would also be amiss of us not to note the retirement of Associate Professor Tim Lockyer from the Waikato University Management School. Nonetheless Tim continues to be heavily involved in the work of the Unit and in 2017 spent some three months at Zhejiang International Studies University. We look forward to his continuing role as he sees fit.

Publications in 2017

Zhou, C.N., Qiao, G; Ryan, C (2017), How might Chinese medium sized cities improve competitive advantage in the event tourism market? *Event Management*, 21 (1): 109-118.

Ryan, C., & Wang, Y. (2017). Huimin (Grace) Gu: A key academic in China's hospitality industry. *Anatolia*. 28:3, 487-492.

Li, P., Zhou, B., & Ryan, C. (2017). [Hiking in China: A fuzzy model of satisfaction](#), *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 22, 90-97.