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Abstract

This chapter focuses on different educational experiences undergone during the study of local history and culture in rural communities of Pearl River Delta in Guangdong, and ethnic minority communities of Yunnan in Southwest China. The author argues that, when undergraduate college students want to study local knowledge during an anthropological fieldwork training program, there occurs a special experience of mutual interpretation about identities between local informants and students, because they are in a certain dialogue when introducing themselves for different purposes. For the local informants, when they share their understanding of local history and culture in an everyday life context, they feel the need to be selective and strategic when considering how to explain their lives. However, when students share their own experiences with the informants about their understanding of local knowledge, the fieldwork training program becomes a dialogue between the students and the informants. Both parties view the opposite side as their "Other," or reference when they think about the "Self." Once the interview or participation goes deeper, the style and attitude of self-representation also changes to cope with the "Other's" behavior. In this process of interaction, local informants will be pushed by the students to respond to questions. This kind of response, therefore, becomes a reflexive judgment or an assessment to recall their life history while facing the questioners. In general, this kind of fieldwork training program provides a real-life situation for students and local people: the two parties are mutually taking the opposite side as their "Other" to redefine their self-images, which is a common course of action taken when trying to redefine identities by working with others through communication and interaction. Meanwhile, another gain of this training program for both students and local informants will be the interpretation of local culture and local knowledge.



Keywords (separated by '-') Local knowledge - Interpretation and identities - Fieldwork study - Fieldwork training experience

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# Chapter 14
# Mutual Interpretation of Identities and Local Knowledge Anthropological Fieldwork Training Programs Among Ethnic Minorities in Yunnan and Rural Communities in Pearl River Delta in Guangdong

**Jianxiong Ma**

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The author cites some fieldwork reports in this article. The author worked as the instructor in the Nansha fieldwork workshops, or a joined instructor in the Weishan fieldwork training courses. I should acknowledge the students and Prof. Stephen Cheung in the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. The writing of this paper has also benefited the communication and discussion with Prof. Cheung. My special thanks should go to Mr. Liu Xishu in Weishan County in Yunnan, without his help, it was impossible to conduct our field study in the Lahu villages in Weishan. However, my depth thanks should go to our friends and informants in Nansha and in Weishan. This research project was partly granted by University Grant Committee–Area of Excellent Scheme: The Historical Anthropology of Chinese Society and *GRF642112 (2012–2013) "Identity Formation and Social Interdependency based on the Bazi System."*

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24 also changes to cope with the "Other's" behavior. In this process of interaction,
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28 program provides a real-life situation for students and local people: the two parties
29 are mutually taking the opposite side as their "Other" to redefine their self-images,
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31 working with others through communication and interaction. Meanwhile, another
32 gain of this training program for both students and local informants will be the
33 interpretation of local culture and local knowledge.

34 **Keywords** Local knowledge · Interpretation and identities · Fieldwork study ·
35 Fieldwork training experience

36
37

## 38 14.1 Introduction

39 Weishan (巍山) Autonomous County of the Yi and the Hui is a county in western
40 Yunnan Province with residents of the Yi and the Hui ethnic minorities as well as
41 the Han Chinese. Of its total population of 304,000, about 100,000 are of Yi
42 nationality; however, there are different ethnic groups under the official title of the
43 Yi nationalities (彝族).[1] Based on the official ethnic classification, three ethnic
44 groups including the Laluo (腊罗), the Misa (迷撒), and the Geni (格尼) were
45 identified as three branches of the Yi nationalities by the Chinese government in the
46 mid-1950s; therefore, all three ethnic groups are under the title of the Yi nation-
47 alities as defined by the state. However, the majority of the 100,000 officially
48 classified Yi nationality are the Laluo and the Misa people, who account for 92 % of
49 the Yi. According to the original myth of the Laluo and the Misa, both were
50 descendants of the mythological ancestor Jiulong (九隆), the son of a dragon. The
51 descendants of Jiulong developed to become many tribes in the Ailao Mountains
52 and one of them, whose surname was Meng (蒙氏), became the royal family of the
53 Nanzhao kingdom (南诏) from the eighth to the tenth century, known as the Xi
54 Nuluo (细奴罗) family who established the Nanzhao kingdom in Yunnan. After the
55 Nanzhao kingdom was replaced by the Dali kingdom (大理国), the Meng royal
56 family changed their surname from Meng to three surnames, the Zi (字), the Cha
57 (茶), and the Zuo (左), in order to avoid massacre and political discrimination.
58 Later, most members of the Misa and the Laluo tribes, mainly from the above three
59 surnames, merged into one large group and called themselves the Laluo (la$^{31}$ lo$^{31}$

[1]See Wei and Hui (2008).

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pa[31]). The title Laluo means the descendent of dragon and tiger, or the people of dragon and tiger.[2] The Laluo inhabits Weishan County in west Yunnan, where the Red River originates and runs toward Vietnam as an international river from the north to the south. The county seat of Weishan is in the basin of this river, while surrounding the basin are the mountains where the Laluo mainly live.

The ethnic group which calls itself the Laluo lives in mountain communities in the west and the east of the Weishan basin, and the cultures of the Laluo in the western and eastern mountains differ significantly, especially in dress style and language, but they do share a system of dance, known as *Dage* (打歌) or *Tage* (踏歌) dances, and the music that goes with the dances. Music and dance perform an important role in the everyday life of the Laluo. For the most important communal festivals, rituals and family gatherings, as well as weddings and funerals, all members of the communities, plus friends and kin relatives, will come together to dance for days and nights. In their social life, different dance gatherings represent different ties of social relationships which are linked with beliefs. Sometimes, rituals are organized to worship ancestors such as the kings of the ancient Nanzhao kingdom, and the ancestors of individual families. Sometimes, dance rituals are also held to celebrate a wedding or the establishment of a new house. However, dances could represent a symbolic access path, "stamped" by dancers, men and women, to guide the dead's souls toward the nether world. Thus, music and dance in Laluo society are very important social events highlighting meaningful cultural value, not just simply a way of entertainment or performing arts in their daily life.

## 14.2 Educational Experiences in the Field

In 2006, in order to introduce Arts students, majoring in performance arts and related programs at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA), to dance culture, professors teaching the subject of "Chinese frontier and cultures" organized a field trip for the students to study Lahuo culture and arts, and since then this program has been maintained for many years. The idea of this fieldwork training course is also about how to introduce the students in performing arts to the cultural context of indigenous arts styles in their everyday life. The author has participated twice in this training course as an anthropological tutor whose expertise is on local ethnicity and minority culture, and his task is to guide students in the study of the so-called "performing arts" or "dancing art" in the field, through which students could better understand the relationship between ritual and its cultural interpretations in the everyday context of the Laluo people in Weishan County.

A different type of education in the field is an anthropological training workshop organized by the South China Research Center at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, (HKUST), entitled "The Workshop of Understanding Pearl River

[2]See Zhongwu (1986).

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Delta." The South China Research Center established a working station in Nansha district of Guangzhou City, housed in HKUST's Fok Ying Tung Graduate School. Based on this workstation in the middle of the Pearl River Delta, the South China Research Center had sponsored undergraduate and graduate students, studying different subjects, including history, anthropology, science or engineering, at diverse universities in Hong Kong, Guangzhou, or other provinces like Jiangxi, Guangxi and Yunnan, to conduct anthropological fieldwork training workshops during the winter and summer vacations. These fieldwork training workshops were normally conducted over 10 days. During the 10-day workshop, students were guided by supervisors and local informants as they went into local villages for interviews, participation, and local document collection. Particularly, students tried to learn local history from the village informants, including their lineage system and local religious activities. Through these study topics students were able to learn some very basic research methods well used in anthropology. After that, students could better understand what participant observation was like and how to conduct life history interviews, as well as to collect local historical archives and write an ethnographic report.

The design of the two training courses in Yunnan and Pearl River Delta is based on the idea of "studying and understanding through participation" in field research. Through this training, students could learn about "local knowledge" from the natives. What we found from both cases was quite interesting: there is a pattern in the natives' narratives that introduced students to their local history and social relations in everyday life. In the beginning, local informants did prepare their introduction before the interviews, since those villagers had had prior experience of receiving visitors who were interested in local history and their daily life. It is not hard to discover their preparation was based on selective memories and drawn from their own understanding of local history and life and, therefore, they were mentally prepared what to tell and not to tell. However, once the interview started, village informants quickly adjusted their style of talking, reflexively responding to questions about how to affirm themselves and the history of their groups. Then, in the following phases, the informants tried to find some narrative explanations which both they and the students could mutually accept. Faced with informants' reflexive responses, students also started to think about themselves, their questions, and their style of asking questions. As a result, students soon learned that this was a dialogue, through which both the interviewers and interviewees had to generate a response for themselves, so that they had more and more questions about the process of doing fieldwork, which really took them beyond the original content of the interview itself. Both students and informants had experienced a mutual response to explain their life in the format of a conversation. In other words, through the training courses, everyone would be sharing a process of "reflexive thinking about ones' own identity, local history and self-consciousness" as shared by students and native informants. Thus, mutual interpretation about self and local history between learners and teachers has become the outcome of interaction in the process. So, this pattern of shared learning has conveyed knowledge and experience for both sides in the field, which has gone beyond the traditional learning style in the classroom. To understand different personal identifies and to mutually interpret "local knowledge"

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has become a reflexive way to think about "self" and "study" in a conversational situation. For the students, what they gain is not only local knowledge, but also the experience of a real situation, through which they have reconstructed or reconfirmed their cultural identity and self-consciousness. The latter is the most important outcome of this truly situational education in the field.

## 14.3 Native Informants' Responses and Their Categorization of Visitors

As a significant historical locality, Nansha has been a meaningful place in political geography in modern Chinese history. Nansha used to be an island in the mouth of Pearl River Delta, but the island gradually developed to become a sand land area linked with other sand land communities in the Qing dynasty due to long-term sand sedimentation in this delta.[3] However, what made Nansha significant in history was the Opium War in 1840. The main water channel of the Pearl River is between two mountains in Nansha in the west, and the mountains in Taiping in the east. This water channel is called the Tiger Gate (hu men). The narrow water gates shaped the main channel of the Pearl River running toward the sea. The geographic feature of Nansha helped define its political significance in history because when the imperial envoy, Lin Zexu, ordered the British businessmen to hand over their opium and then proceeded to burn it at Taiping on the opposite side of the delta to Nansha. It was a famous historic event, "the burning of opium at the Tiger Gate (human xiaoyan)" in 1839. Then, in June 1840, British naval vessels attacked fortresses in Nansha and Taiping mountains, and moved on to Zhejiang's coastal regions. In January 1841, due to the breakdown of negotiations in Guangzhou, the two sides started a war in Nansha. Qing was quickly defeated and, in 1842, the Nanjing Treaty was signed, which led to the cession of Hong Kong to Britain. Opium War has been regarded as the turning point of modern Chinese history and, therefore, learning about the war at Tiger Gate has become a common practice for Chinese students. Obviously local villagers in Nansha have learned the information through different channels, because the local community had been an important part of this history. However, Nansha community does not necessarily share the same version of the Opium War with any official version based on their everyday experience. Villagers have also been exposed to the media and propaganda for decades. Based on this social background, when we guided students to study local culture and history in a half-fishing and half-agricultural community near the historical fortresses in the mountains of the Tiger Gate water channel, informants assumed that the students were coming to receive "official patriotism education" by studying the history of the Opium War. Therefore, for them, the study of local culture and history could be easily shifted to the topic of "how to study patriotism in Nansha."

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[3]See Wing-ho (2005); Jianxiong (2013).

Naturally, based on this understanding, village informants assumed that they should tell students stories about the "burning opium at the Tiger Gate" event, the Opium War or the Anti-Japanese War in Nansha and so on. However, this official version of history was too far removed from their daily experience because they never experienced it and they learned little from the older generations. Additionally, villagers knew little about the complex historical background of these events. The most effective way to satisfy the students, based on what our informants assumed, was simply to translate what they had learned from their readings and the mass media. Our informant in Lu village, Mr. Peng,[4] for example, started by talking about Lin Zexu and the Opium War when students conducted an interview with him. Students reminded him that they had already learned a lot about the subject from their textbooks, and what they wanted to know was about his life in Nansha. This gentle reminder helped him to relax. Then, Mr. Peng told the students what he thought about the Opium War: In the 1950s, some staff were sent by the national office of historical relics from Beijing to Nansha. Their task was to purchase some historical relics of the Opium War from local fishermen, because, Mr. Peng said, the British Navy used some cannon balls which had been engraved with words like "Made in Britain" on the shot shells. If local fishermen could find this kind of shells, it would be very helpful for the central government of China to show as evidence that the British had invaded China. Therefore, the national office of historical relics would like to exchange these shells for an equal quantity of gold. Even if the fishermen in Nansha had never seen any cannon balls or shells, they very much liked share stories like this. This "myth of exchanging cannon shells for gold" could be a local version of history and legend in Nansha, and it is a well-known story shared by the natives. Through this local legend, we can see that the natives have their own interpretation about history, and their interpretation could be very different from what we learn in the classroom. In the local context, the meaning of "history" should be a part of the everyday life for Nansha fishermen, through which they could explain the relationships between themselves and the state. This case reminds us to understand local knowledge in the context of everyday life, so that we can introduce students to the fundamental idea about how to interpret village informants' immediate response in the beginning of their interviews when we started our fieldwork. Two kinds of responses can be easily identified here:

## 14.4 To Classify Students as "Guests" Based on Their Experience

When students from HKAPA first visited the Bi village in the Eastern Mountains area in Weishan County in Yunnan, they found that, just like other villages in this county, the Bi villagers had maintained their traditional lifestyle very well. They

[4]The names of villages and informants are all pseudonymous.

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wear their traditional ethnic clothes in daily life, and practice their dancing in the everyday context of rituals, banquets, and family celebrations. Before our visit, some other student groups from Beijing and Singapore had visited the village for different reasons, such as studying local culture and social change or implementing poverty reduction projects for social development. Therefore, once the HKAPA students arrived, the villagers automatically assumed that all outside student visitors would share a certain background or similar purpose for their visits. The villagers' immediate response to Hong Kong students was very much based on their experiences dealing with the Beijing or Singapore students. In other words, the villagers prepared ready answers for expected questions that they had learned from their previous experiences. In general, the villagers who live in a mountain community could easily categorize visitors into their own cognition concepts. Otherwise, the villagers would not know how to deal with them, as they were on the receiving end of this interaction. Besides, based on their everyday life experience, visitors were often regarded as kinship or friendship guests for certain local social events like weddings, funerals, communal festivals, and so on. Hosting guests could become a certain additional occasion for entertainment at an unusual moment in the daily contexts. Our visit could trigger a complex collective response from the villagers in identifying the Hong Kong students as special guests. On the one hand, they were guests like anyone else who had come to visit them for some social event; on the other, the students were different because they had come from big and far away cities. However, the experience of hosting them helped the villagers to regard the students' visit as an "abnormal event" against their everyday life routines and the students were identified under the social category of "guests" in general. Thus, the collective response to Hong Kong students could serve as a special celebratory event for the community based on our observation of the activities.

## 14.5 Narrative Connection with Some Real Interests

The objective for one of our fieldwork workshops was to study an ancestral hall renovation project in Yuan village in the Pearl River Delta. Our study group was required to collect data about the history of lineages, kinship groups, and the residential sections and temples of this village. Initially, we interviewed some elderly committee members of this ancestral hall renovation project. In the first interview, these elderly men learned that some of the students in our team came from Hong Kong. Immediately they became eager to talk with us and tried to ask two or three students to help them contact their lineage members in Hong Kong so that we might collect some donations for this renovation. Due to this expectation, our interview was seriously sidetracked to conversations about the purpose, significance, and financial problems of this renovation project. They were trying to guide the orientation of our conversation toward their lineage networks in Hong Kong, because many of their lineage relatives migrated to Hong Kong at different times, before or after 1949. Though we were little prepared for this new direction, their narrative

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benefited us, giving us sufficient information about the same lineage kinship network between this village and Hong Kong or overseas Chinese communities. Thus, in the beginning, led by this group of elderly lineage members, our working topic focused on the ancestral hall innovation project and its related interests. In our debriefings after the interview, students discussed this narrative orientation, and they saw it as a very effective starting point for our workshop. In this Nansha case, students had learned that, when informants wanted to lead the conversation, there was a hidden agenda based on their expectations and needs. With this assumption, the informants were eager to work with us, but we could also try to help them based on any possible resources available to us. In this case students learned that local informants tried to understand what we wanted to do with them and they reacted to the outsiders based on their own assumptions and needs, and made known their expectations or requirements at the very beginning when we started our fieldwork.

Learning from the above training course cases, students understand that there would be a step-by-step process of interaction between them and the informants. Based on our general strategy and course design, students could gradually get into the field and start learning the natives' views about their daily life experiences, the so-called "history and culture" in their daily life. However, if we shift our standpoint to the informants' side, when villagers first encountered the students they had already assigned an identity category for the students, viewing them as outsiders based on their own life experiences, interests, and standpoints. In this sense, our fieldwork training course helped initiate students into the current social context of communal relationship. In general, our informants will immediately assign an identity to our students when we want to do fieldwork with them. That identity assumption will change or adjust later again and again throughout the ongoing process. Generally speaking, we learned that informants and villagers will respond to student visitors based on specific life contexts and life experiences and assign a certain type of social category to the visitors; then, accordingly, the informants could develop a way of communication with the visitors based on informants' expectation. This helped form the fundamental basis of our later communication and relationship with the whole community, and had contributed to the future success of this training course. This is a crucial development because setting up a good working relationship can influence the villagers' attitudes and judgments toward our questions and behavior in the community, which will also impact their ways of selecting certain content of "local knowledge" in their life and conveying it to the students.

## 14.6 Reflexivity in the Interaction Between Students and Villagers About Identities

After students got some very basic understanding about the communities and gradually accustomed to local circumstances, next stage of the fieldwork involved direct interviews with the villagers in their homes. After a certain period of

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interaction, villagers became familiar with students' working style and answered their questions in a natural way. For example, during life history interviews informants recalled their life experiences and shared memories about the past, which made them quite emotional. In a sense, students' questions helped the informants avoid a presupposition response against the students. They started to review their past and to assess their current situation. In such a situation, the informant's memory, the selection of information from their past life stories and the assessment of their life experiences made students feel that the informants were actually enjoying this emotional interaction and the reflexivity of their own lives. For example, informants were happy to answer questions and opened up with their life stories, expressed their opinions, interpretations, and observations about society. Especially, when topics like "the Great Leap Forward movement" or "the Cultural Revolution" or events which were important in their lives came up, informants' responses became very strong, and they tended to reevaluate what they did and their relationships with other people. Those social events provided a clear opportunity for informants to think about themselves. They confessed what they had done wrong and described their suffering, making the whole process an important opportunity to reconfirm their values of life, or to release certain burdens from their shoulders, or even to reset their judgment of life. Of course, this was a way of reflexivity with heavy psychology pressure, but this psychological release should be shared with students as it was a mutual response process, which was dependent on immediate feedback and stimulation from the other side. Facing this situation of self-reflexivity by the informants, students also start to rethink about their questions, their own life experiences and their current study situation at school.

When the interview interaction got deeper and closer, mutual interaction between the two sides could lead to more difficult and sensitive questions and discussions. If students tried to analyze response strategies by informants based on their personal backgrounds and their relationships with one another in the community, they would begin to learn the complexity of those social relations and reflect about themselves, the purpose of asking certain questions, the style of questioning and possible consequences for the informants. Mr. Zeng, for one, who participated in a Nasha workshop, became aware that, in the case of Yuan village, "the collected data about personal experiences could include two kinds of information: the first is about the events the informant had experienced, and the second is about the personal emotion that the informant was experiencing".[5] For instance, Mr. Zeng had a long conversation and interview with the informant, Mr. Cui, during fieldwork. When Mr. Zeng tried to understand and analyze Mr. Cui's life history narratives, he realized that, "It is credible when Mr. Cui recalled some ups and downs of his life during the movement of communization. However, when some narrators told you something in great details based on their own memory, this very detailed information could be based on a lot of distortion, because the narrators

[5]See Xuezhou (2007a).

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342 could have hidden something, or have twisted some episodes to make these nar-
343 ratives benefit them. Therefore, we should be very careful to record, understand and
344 analyze these data. In the meantime, we must also understand that this kind of
345 revisionist tendency is very common among storytellers. The behavior should be
346 regarded as a reflection of the social reality in this community because the infor-
347 mants' narratives were shaped by their personal emotions and there is a large gap
348 between personal feelings at the moment of recollection and the time when the
349 events actually happened".[6] Mr. Zeng also analyzed Mr. Cui's life history narrative.
350 He pointed out that the informant's path through life was hard. When he was in
351 middle school, he said that all his teachers had given him very positive evaluations.
352 But Mr. Zeng believed that, based on our life experiences, many teachers
353 encouraged their students, which could have pushed students to work harder, but
354 the push might not have been necessary, or as strong and essential as Mr. Cui
355 thought. But, Mr. Cui's recollection about his teachers' positive comments in his
356 teenage years could help us better understand his hard life and suffering in the
357 political movements of the 1950s and 1960s. In a way, based on the memory about
358 his middle school years, Mr. Cui has figured out a way to benchmark his later
359 unfortunate experiences.

360 When we first started, our topic was about "how we can judge the social reality
361 of oral data," so that we can discover the relationships between communal changes
362 and individual fates in a framework of dynamics between the micro levels of
363 communal, personal, and local social life and macro social historical conditions. By
364 studying these dynamics, we can learn about local history, local society, and their
365 relations with the state in China over the last several decades. However, when
366 students conducted participant and in-depth conversations with informants, ques-
367 tions shifted to a very detailed orientation. The challenge for students is about how
368 to draw some clues from the detailed field data to link micro events to the macro
369 social historical conditions. In the case of Mr. Cui, he was a son of a powerful
370 lineage in the village, so that in the early 1950s, his family was classified as "the
371 landlord" in the political movement of Land Reform. The continuing political
372 pressures caused him suffering, and not until the 1980s, when the Chinese gov-
373 ernment carried out the reform and open-up policy, was he able to establish a family
374 and his own business. Due to this life experiences, Mr. Cui was enthusiastic about
375 renovating their Cui surname ancestral hall and he hoped our students could help
376 them find some relatives or people with the same surnames who would be willing to
377 donate to this construction project. After many days' of interaction and conversa-
378 tion, Mr. Cui changed his attitude toward the students after he understood that the
379 students were going to redraw a historical picture of social change in this village,
380 and it was meaningful for him. So he tried very hard to help students with their
381 fieldwork about history and social changes of this village, and he narrated his oral
382 history in detail with students. Through the whole process, students gradually
383 realized that the workshop was not just a special assignment for studying

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[6]See Xuezhou (2007b).

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**Picture no. 14.1** The dialogue in the *Tage* dance between the Laluo villagers and students

384 anthropology in the field, but also a social event which pushed informants like Mr.
385 Cui to recall his life. Our informant went through a whirling vortex of emotion with
386 us. In the process, he had to seriously record his life experiences and build up his
387 personal statement to explain his past, not only for the students, but also for himself
388 (Picture 14.1). AQ1

389 For the informants, this kind of recollection pushed by students' questions was
390 not always about misfortunes of life, but also about happiness and their ideals. As
391 Mr. Zeng observed, to the informants, long- term conversation and oral history
392 interviews were linked with people's emotions, and it is a process of cognition
393 about how to explain the Self with the Other, and especially, this cognition was
394 established through narratives of one's own history and one's own identity—how
395 he or she defines who he/she is. This experience, as a normal type of self-reporting,
396 has seldom been practiced by the informants. To a certain degree, the recalling
397 process in the interviews could be as serious as about how to judge the value of
398 one's own life, so it is also a way of thinking about the definition of the Self in a
399 certain social context. Individual life history interviews and records, therefore,
400 provide research data on the one hand, but they also stimulate informants to fall into
401 an emotional vortex when struggling to redefine or reconfirm one's own life value
402 and fundamental identity in front of students. Thus, life history narrative becomes
403 an interaction, recognition and explanation, or a pressure applied by the inter-
404 viewers, namely students, to the interviewees, the informants, about the Self. Of
405 course, as text production through interview, oral history is a very personal state-
406 ment after strategic selection of information, when some of the interviewee's life
407 stories remain hidden and others are highlighted. Researchers could consider this
408 process as a way of self-reconfirmation by informants in their interaction and
409 communication with researchers, but students gradually learned that, those hidden,
410 untold stories, as well the details revised in their narratives, should also be detected
411 or "observed" as a part of text production in a communal life context through our
412 fieldwork. However, this process of contextualization indicates a picture of the
413 social reality of this community. In this situation, students could better understand
414 the relationship between "text" and "context" in fieldwork. And, once students

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understand this issue, they become aware of the impact of social historical change on a person's life. When they take their notes after they have understood that, students are able to put people's life experiences that they have learned from oral history into its proper social contexts.

In brief, when village informants become aware that students are paying attention to their life stories, they also assume the role of self-styled judges to recast their past and produce a text of their life history through communication with students. For the students, they are able to set themselves up on a platform of communication and dialogue with villagers, and challenge some of their previous judgments and assumptions or the so-called common sense. In the case of Weishan, the most significant response we can find from the students was that they began to rethink their experience of everyday life in Hong Kong and reflect on what they had learned about ethnic minorities in China.

## 14.7 The Reflexivity Linked with the "Imagination of Ethnic Minorities"

Before they went to Yunnan, the HKAPA students knew that they were going to Weishan County in West Yunnan to do some fieldwork with ethnic minority villages. From students' reports, we had learned there was a kind of stereotypical image of "minority people" in their minds, but this stereotype quickly changed once they got into the community, and this change challenged their own life experience in Hong Kong. After several days of work experience in Bi village in Weisha, a small group of students communicated with a Laluo girl, Xiao Yue, who was 14 years of age, for quite a long time and they also visited Xiao Yue's school and teachers. They wrote:

"Xiao Yue's life in school is similar to ours. What surprised us was Xia Yue's ideal, because her dream is go to study in Singapore and her parents agree with her. In Bi village, we learned how to help the new generation of ethnic minority review their ethnic identity. The life style and education of ethnic minorities are becoming more and more similar to the cities, and in certain ways we could not find significant differentiations. It's hard to match them with the image of ethnic minorities in our minds, because their concepts and ideas are similar to us city people, and to go to study overseas might be an ideal they share with us too. In our conversation with Bi villagers, it is clear that the older generations also support the youth's ideal about having contact with the outside world. Sometimes, the older generations don't like their children to learn the traditional Dage (打歌) dance, and don't like them to wear ethnic clothes. From their expectations, we can see that they are eager to reconcile current needs".[7]

[7]See Fieldwork report (2006).

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After talking with Xiao Yue's teacher, a student recorded the following idea "Many scenes are still in my mind. Xiao Yue's dream to go to study in Singapore, the girls who like Kala OK, and the old grandma who cried when we left……why did they treat us so enthusiastically? Why are there young teachers who are willing to be school teachers in such a small village in the mountains? How do the students know so many names of pop stars? For a long time we have been misled by our textbooks. Unconsciously, we have covered 'ethnic minority' with a mysterious veil. The social facts that ethnic minorities are facing, such as not being able to find a good job in the cities due to discrimination, poverty, aging, quickly losing their traditional culture and so on, would never have come into my mind if I had not seen it in person, and I would not have thought about it either".[8]

During the interview, students learned that the villagers were not like the romantic ethnic "Other" opposite Us. Ironically, both the villagers and "us" who come from the cities are facing similar problems in our lives. Many of the issues discussed have been created by the pressure of economic development and both "us" and "them" have had to respond to the same challenges and to resolve similar issues. If this study opportunity had not been available in the fieldwork training, students would have lost a chance to think about "what the common issues are" between "the issues of ethnic minorities in the mountains" and "the issues of Hong Kong college students." Students then changed the orientation of their discussion: why ethnic minorities had been given a "romantic and mysterious" image. In the following sections, we will see how students gradually learn about the significant influences of the state in remote mountain areas.

## 14.8 The Dual Experiences in a Nation State with an Ethnic Identity

In Bi village, students learned that there was still a big gap between life in a mountain village and "us" in Hong Kong. In particular, students visited three different Laluo villages in Weishan, all of which showed their very strong ethnic identity as the Laluo people. Additionally, it was evident that the Tage dances were for the most important occasions of collective celebrations or rituals, as the villagers take pride in their style of performing art regarding life and social relations. Besides dance, local architecture, traditional clothing, food, and many elements in their life have been maintained in a unique traditional style. Meanwhile, students from Hong Kong were impressed by the villagers' strong ethnic consciousness. In their talks, the most frequently mentioned topics were the Yi nationality identity, the state poverty relief project like the renovation of village schools, road construction, investments in houses and some governmental investments which were significant

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[8]See Fieldwork report (2006a).

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**Picture no. 14.2** The Collection of Me Zedong, The Pre-Modern History of China, and his grandson represent three influential elements in the life of this elderly man, Mr. Luo

in local economic development. On the other hand, these projects also bore some impacts on the traditional culture.[9]

In Bi and other Laluo villages, villagers might interpret their understanding of the relationship between their life and the state by using their experiences. For example, when we visited Luo village, students shared lunch with a family whose surname was Luo. After lunch, students proposed to take a photo with the family. The head of this family, Mr. Luo, said: "Wait for a minute! I should hold something and strike a pose for this picture!" Then he dug out two books: one, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, and the other, *The History of Ancient China*. Then he held his grandson and posed. As a Laluo elderly man, he had experienced a lot in his life as he used to be a village cadre for several decades. In his mind, "Mao Tse-Tung," "Chinese history," and his grandson represented the most significant and influential power of the state, history, culture, his family, and the past, present, and future of his whole life (Picture 14.2).

A student remarked, "We understand that different ethnic groups understand history from their own angle and based on their own experiences so they have different versions of history. But we have also learned a version of history before, which is based on Han Chinese centralism. This centralism has regarded other non-Han ethnic minorities as either the invader or the conquered. It is dangerous because we could be blinded by cultural arrogance, and we could see a more comprehensive history. But this fieldtrip helps us to understand history from another angle".[10]

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[9]See Fieldwork report (2007e).
[10]See Fieldwork report (2007d).

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## 14.9 Reflexivity of Hong Kong Experience in Fieldwork Education

In the case of Weishan, almost all students tried to compare their life experiences in Hong Kong with those of village life in Weishan, after they had conducted short-term fieldwork in the Laluo villages. In their reflexivity, a student tried to put the Self into a comparative framework in an everyday life context, similar to what they had learned in the Laluo villages. He said, “Experience, then you will learn the hardship of the villagers’ life. But once you accept that it is your life, everything has exceeded the level of understanding about ‘hardship’. In Hong Kong, people always live in a very small space. The very narrow living space might not be acceptable for many foreigners, but it is a fact. Once we accept that this is the fact of our life, what remains is how to adapt to it, rather than complain about the hardship all the time. In a village life in Weishan, there are many difficulties for the local villagers, but they have managed very well. The basic need is just a bed and a simple space protecting us from rain and wind. What we really need is not that much actually!”.[11]

From the perspectives of self-reflexivity, life circumstance, historical process, identities, and all other differences could be understood as “individual daily life experiences and needs modeled on large-scale social and historical environments,” so one could get rid of the habit of the simplified dualism of “the poor rural village” against “the rich urban city,” which will seriously distort the complex social conditions of Self and Other construction. In this way, students could better understand the meaning of the Laluo’s dance within the context of local social relationship, and regard it as a part of daily life. If so, students could also try to dialogue equally with the villagers and this dialogue should be based on the life experiences from both sides. This process is crucial to enable students to get rid of their bias of “rural/urban” dualism, and, instead, establish self-reflexivity based on dialogues with villagers as their starting point of “learning from the villagers.” Guided by the teachers, once students became aware of the idea that dialogue would enrich mutual understanding, especially for those students who could think more about empathy and compassion with the villagers. This progress really pushed students to regard “Self” as an object in their fieldwork and their life and their culture could also provide a comparative framework. At this point, the students’ learning has approached a certain level, whereby they could reconfirm their cultural identity through fieldwork.

“People in Bi village didn’t cater to us particularly. When they received us, they did not stop their work and just danced for us like a performance. When we interviewed one person, others continued their work. Faced with such authentic honesty and modesty, we had confidence in our field data. In Luo village, a young village doctor also sang songs as her welcome. From her enthusiastic singing and

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[11]See Fieldwork report (2007e).

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551 playing, I learned of the Laluo's humanity, which is hard to find in our life in Hong
552 Kong. I am lucky that I have had this chance to meet them. After this journey, I will
553 redefine myself and want to relocate my life position. Besides, I also think that
554 everything I have now is not necessarily right and proper. I should learn to give
555 thanks and be satisfied with what I have".[12]

556 In their dialogues, students were aware that trying to actually experience dif-
557 ferent cultures, lifestyles, and communications could go beyond limitations of
558 certain professional study programs, because these experiences could influence, or
559 even change their lives.

560 "When we danced with the villagers, I was always excited. We are learning
561 social 'ethnic dances' in school almost every day, but we have just learned the
562 dance steps, the music, and local customs from our teachers. However, the field-
563 work training gives us a chance to join in with the dancers, to feel their emotion, to
564 see the change of steps. It is clear that the real experience is much better than just
565 listening. And of course, the villagers are willing to teach us, that is obvious to me.
566 I know that both of us are people who like to dance. But there are differences. To
567 me, I am a student studying dance. Here, dance is my program and I experience
568 certain pressure about this task. But for the Laluo villagers, their dance is mainly for
569 social reasons or for fun; their dance could be a simple thing in their life. How I
570 admire them!".[13]

571 This is a precious outcome from the fieldwork. Another student also pointed out
572 that, in several days of interviews and participation, the villagers held her hand
573 when they were not dancing together, without any hesitation. "Our bodies were
574 close, which moved me a lot. Urban people used to look down on people from rural
575 areas due to their sense of superiority. But I was quite moved just because of the
576 villagers' simple, modest faces. The villagers could also have laughed at us when
577 we could not identify rice and wheat in the fields, but they wouldn't. People have
578 different standpoints and life experiences, which is common sense. If we learn how
579 to switch to other people's standpoint, the world becomes lovely".[14]

580 Taking the standpoint of cultural equality and mutual appreciation in the study of
581 the Lahuo dance culture, HKAPA students learned at least three important lessons
582 of knowledge and understanding that they would be hard pressed to get from a
583 classroom in Hong Kong. First, students got to know how dance and music could
584 be a natural part of people's everyday life, in labor, on social occasions, as well as
585 at communal rituals, which is a very fresh experience for college students. Second,
586 students from Hong Kong had a chance to become aware that, to a certain degree,
587 their understanding about self could be clouded by their own urban experiences due
588 to the serious gap between cities and rural villages. Third, students could shift away
589 from their everyday study experience and search for other values or a certain
590 confirmation about their own life experiences.

[12]See Fieldwork report (2007a).
[13]See Fieldwork report (2007e).
[14]See Fieldwork report (2006b).

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591 On the first day, for example, students arrived at the Yun village, in the western
592 mountains of Weishan County, they found:
593 "There was a funeral in the village. Relatives and friends of the family rushed to
594 join this funeral and they had been dancing in the yard for 3 days and were tired
595 when we arrived. It was a family ritual, but also a channel to release their emotional
596 tension. Also, they set up a big banquet in the yard. It seems that a funeral is not a
597 taboo for the Laluo. The family will bury the dead in a graveyard far away from the
598 village, but the villagers worship wooden images, which represent their ancestors at
599 their homes, on the anniversaries of their deaths, as we learned from our
600 informants".[15]
601 "Whether celebrating a wedding, or dancing at a funeral, villagers use Tage
602 dances to express their different feelings and beliefs. A group of people share their
603 happiness and sadness in the dance, and in doing so they express their support for
604 each other. Influenced by this self-expressive attitude in their culture, the Yi people
605 follow the social characteristic of direct expression. But if we take a reflexive
606 review of our life in Hong Kong, people are not willing to express their emotions
607 under the strain of their heavy workload. Because there is a lack of emotional
608 communication in the community, people live in more isolated environments and
609 situations".[16]
610 In the Yin village, in the western mountain area of Weishan County, villagers
611 warmly welcomed student as guests who came from Hong Kong on the village
612 road. Some villagers took photos of students with their mobile phones. One student
613 responded:
614 "At the time, we felt uncomfortable when we saw people taking photos of us.
615 But, taking a reflexive point of view, we, meanwhile, as a group of more than thirty
616 people, are taking photos of the villagers! Why do we present ourselves as 'the
617 modern people' who 'study' the villagers, but we unconsciously reject being
618 'studied'. In Yin village, we met an uncle. When he realized that we came from
619 Hong Kong, he was really excited and praised Hong Kong for its development. But
620 it made a big impression on me, because he said that 'we are the same people! Both
621 of us are Chinese!' His sincerity moved me a lot, and raised my consciousness
622 about my Hong Kong identity, even if I have been influenced by western culture
623 since my childhood; he gave me some sense to think about my homeland, China,
624 and my connection to my motherland. This field trip has given me a chance to
625 comprehend the meaning of equality between people since it is set up as a platform
626 for communication and the sharing of our standpoints. Additionally, some local
627 scholars and artists have recorded the folk songs and dances for their studies, and
628 for the purpose of indigenous cultural education. This was a difficult task but their
629 efforts made it possible to preserve local tradition, and to ensure the tradition is
630 passed down forever. Thus, when we asked for their advice (at the county seat),
631 they were pleased to teach us, because the local artists have a very strong mission,

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[15]See Fieldwork report (2006a).
[16]See Fieldwork report (2007d).

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to preserve their traditions. Immediately, I found that my study program of Chinese dance is very valuable! I now, therefore, understand our teachers telling us that we have to take responsibility for what we learn, besides performance and work, and, as in this mission, understand Chinese dance in depth. Here the responsibility is that, we should not forget to pass on our artistic tradition and what we have learned to the next generation".[17]

During their stay in the local community, there was a significant change in the fieldwork training course for the HKAPA students. In the beginning, students carried a meaningful imagination about the cultural "Other," the ethnic minorities when they first came to the Laluo villages. However, they soon learned how to reflect on "who I am" and "what I am doing" once they established comprehensive communications with local informants and villagers. This conversion is the core of fieldwork training education outside the classroom because students learned how to communicate equally with local people even if they are culturally the "Other." The comparison happened naturally when they stayed at the Laluo village once they found out about the differences in life styles. For instance, here in minority communities, young children have to walk at least half hour to get to school at the age of about six, but they treasure the opportunity of schooling very much. In Hong Kong, many children indulge in video games and dislike going to school, according to students' observations. So, many children in Hong Kong lack the ability to communicate socially with people. For the Laluo villagers, rituals perform an important role in social integration and dances are important social events as well. Besides, the villagers also have many ways to weave their social network and communications. In contrast, to think about Hong Kong in a reflexive way people are so busy that they forget time almost. It looks as if Hong Kong society were rich in materials, but lacked sufficient communication among people.[18]

"In Bi village, we interviewed an elder lady. She was happy to talk with us, but she dressed up in new clothes before she took us home with her, because she thought that it was genteel. After the interview, we said good-bye to her, but we could feel that she was reluctant to part with us and she had tears in her eyes. I was so touched at this moment and it was hard for me too, because I have never encountered such a simple but sincere personality".[19]

After students returned to Hong Kong, for a long time they still thought about Weishan. "I will appreciate this experience for the whole of my life. During the field trip, all we can feel and touch is a kind of Chinese cultural spirit: the endless great and rugged mountains with the field terraces on the mountain surrounding the villages; the enormous scale of the landscape, like a huge Chinese painting; and the natural space that has contained it all, including the view and people, with their

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[17] See Fieldwork report (2007d).
[18] See Fieldwork report (2007e).
[19] See Fieldwork report (2007b).

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harmony and peace, with their taste for simplicity and certainty, and with the fragrance of flowers. I felt I was breathing the air of this into my body and it got into my blood".[20]

## 14.10 Conclusion: What We Have Learned, and How?

Two styles of field training courses have been used to guide groups of students from different academic fields. The first group's field study program, in Nansha in Pearl River Delta, was conducted for the purpose of studying local history and social relationships and students normally stayed with the informants in their communities for about 10 days. The second group's program, in Weishan County in Yunnan, was conducted for the purpose of studying local traditional dance culture and its performance style in an integrated cultural system of non-Han ethnic minorities. Due to the long distance, we could only stay with the informants in the communities for 3 or 4 days. However, both groups of students could bring their questions from the classroom into fieldwork. The daily life contexts set up conditions of communications and dialogues between students and local informants. Students appreciated local informants' help and regarded them as their teachers of social life. They studied the attitudes and understanding of local people about their history, music and dance, and recorded their interpretations about these subjects. Thus, they were exposed to two types of educational environments: one in Pearl River Delta, not far from Hong Kong and the other in the mountains area of Yunnan, far away from Hong Kong, on the frontier of southwest China. Through these training courses, students in both field sites learned the same idea: the basis of dialogues must come from a relationship of equality and mutual trust so that students could participate in communal activities, learn about the villagers' life, and, therefore, understand what they are thinking based on their daily life context. Of course, ideally, this basis needs to be built up over the course of long-term communications, but students come from different academic backgrounds. Teachers from HKAPA have adopted a method of long-term communications, which means they have continued to organize this fieldwork course for several years and visited these villages in Weishan County. In this way, long-term communications could be maintained through "communication between Weishan County and Hong Kong." This is the reason why a course about Chinese frontier culture has been very popular at HKAPA. In this course, students coming from different grades or programs could easily share their ideas and discuss the same questions, both in the classroom and on the field trip. Meanwhile, course instructors also accumulated a great deal of teaching experience in the fieldwork training. Gradually, course teaching has had to be reorientated to participation and dialogues. Throughout the continuing recording and study of the same communities, the study questions are

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[20]See Fieldwork report (2006b).

going deeper and deeper, along with an increasingly broader perspective of understanding about rituals and arts, and their relationship with ethnic minority societies in China.

In Nansha, because the South China Research Center of HKUST has set up a branch office there, continuity of fieldwork training courses has been well-supported by the facilities of this research center. Based on the well-established relationship between the center and the villagers, it is possible to maintain long-term research cooperation in this field site. However, no matter what facilities we benefit from, the most crucial characteristics of this style of outside the classroom training is the anthropological idea of "participant observation." The methodology of participant observation is, therefore, used as the principle of course training guideline. When we organize students and teach them how to get into the community, how to understand different people's speeches, as well as how to observe their behavior and the interaction between Us and Them, all of these so-called fieldwork techniques are based on our understanding of "local knowledge," which is quite different from our experiences in the classroom. For the students, what they can gain from these studies is not only the knowledge, but also their reflexive responses about themselves and their lives in the whole process. In general, study in the field has not only pushed students to experience a certain amount of cultural shock, but also stimulated them to think about their own identity and their life experiences from a comparative perspective. However, this is a double way of reflexive reviews. Village informants should have experienced the same process as students, because they have been involved in a psychological and emotional experience about how to reconfirm their own identities, too. However, this kind of training course is not typical anthropological fieldwork. It is a short-term experience about how to learn an idea through studying in the field, rather than going to the field to study certain social and cultural characteristics of a community. We hope our efforts can benefit future endeavors to change our traditional ways of teaching in some courses about culture, history, and society. Through these experiments, we could adopt some anthropological methods in our efforts to renovate education models and search for some new possibilities in the future.[21]

For the students, special outcomes from these courses are the cognition of self-identity and the reconfirmation of the values of their study programs or subject matters besides the new perspectives of reflexivity they have developed from their field study experiences. For a student in performing arts, for example, the close relationship between village life and traditional arts will allow them to rethink about the meaning of dancing arts, which is a core issue for academic study. "What does Art mean to the villagers? Even if I am not a professional expert, I could regard their life as a kind of art compared with urban life, because arts have been central to

[21]The author's special thanks should go to Prof. Stephen Chuang (张国雄教授) for his constructive comments on the working version of this article. Prof. Cheung reviewed the Weishan training course based on a perspective of folk musician research methodology. Both of us agreed that, these workshops and training programs were not based on a strict academic participant observation, but conducing a concept of participant observation in these programs.

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**Picture no. 14.3** The elderly informant has participated in many historical events in modern China

their daily activities. This fact tells us that, people living in cities have largely lost their originality regarding the arts. The dialogues between urban citizens and Laluo villagers will re-enrich our imagination, and it needs to be watered".[22]

Another student who joined the Nansha course remarked that, in our past history classes, we were told to study written materials, or we were trained to search for fixed texts. However, the anthropological practice which we have tried is through the conducting of fieldwork, and the observation of people's behavior is mainly emphasized. Therefore, "Different experiences accumulated at different times will be combined into a mixture, so that what we observe is a rich, multilayered historical picture, through which the relationships between people have been embedded in a constructing way. If we are just limited and lead by written characters, it is not possible to find out about people's daily life, so it's impossible for us to find out how the written text came to be created, or how something was selected to be memorized as history (Picture 14.3)".[23]

After long-term interactions, on the one hand students reconfirmed the values and significance of their academic research and study subjects, and on the other, they became aware of their roles as "the interviewers" in front of the villagers as "the informants." However, this student identity was based on their academic interests as well as their study programs. The influential elements in their field study were their academic disciplinary knowledge and perspectives. However, both interviewers and informants had practiced mutual ways of "interpreting the self" at these encounters, even if the meanings of their interpretations might vary greatly. For instance, in the Weishan case, ethnic minority villagers highlighted such a contradiction in their interpretation: when some parts of their life drew close attention, they were very curious about from whom and why, due to their marginal

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[22]See Fieldwork report (2007c).
[23]See Xuezhou (2007b).

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situation in Chinese society. Meanwhile, a generational gap existed between the old and the young, especially regarding their attitudes toward cultural heritage matters. For the elderly, the Tage dance was life itself, but more and more youths believed these matters might be a cultural burden. When they realized that college students had traveled from Hong Kong to study this treasured tradition, and that they appreciated it so much, the younger generation was pushed to think about their changing way of life and their responsibility for their cultural heritage. In terms of mutual understanding, when students visited the communities they began to look at things from the side of ethnic youths. Under pressure from the modernization of China, more and more young villagers have left their villages for cities in search of a better future and became factory workers in coastal regions. For those villagers who were left behind, they thought that it might be a way to release their anxiety and pressure if they just dressed up and danced with college students from Hong Kong since everybody on these occasions believed in the values of their traditional ways and gave the youths an opportunity to reflect on their cultures and their futures. At this moment, minority youths became confident about what they could inherit from the older generations, and they became proud of who they were. What is different in the Pearl River Delta is that villagers there had more of a sense about the social differences between themselves and Hong Kong, and for a certain time, both students and villagers were interested in addressing their own questions. That means, for students, the most important question was their academic concerns. Thus, gradually, when conversations shifted to the immediate situation of field study, students would start thinking about how to learn from local perspectives and local knowledge. In general, both cases show that, through mutual interpretation and reflection on "Self/Other" identities in an open and equal dialogue, fieldwork training education would yield the most benefits for students. Accordingly, teachers and students have gone beyond the original model of learning in the classroom, and started a paradigm shift from fixed text knowledge to experiential learning and self-understanding.

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UNCORRECTED PROOF

Author Proof

# Author Query Form

Book ID : **331080_1_En**
Chapter No.: **14**

Please ensure you fill out your response to the queries raised below and return this form along with your corrections

Dear Author
During the process of typesetting your chapter, the following queries have arisen. Please check your typeset proof carefully against the queries listed below and mark the necessary changes either directly on the proof/online grid or in the 'Author's response' area provided below

| Query Refs. | Details Required | Author's Response |
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| AQ1 | Kindly check and confirm the placement of Picture Nos. 14.1 to 14.3 and amend if necessary. | |
| AQ2 | Please confirm if the section headings identified are correct. | |

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| *Instruction to printer* | *Textual mark* | *Marginal mark* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Leave unchanged | · · · under matter to remain | Ⓥ |
| Insert in text the matter indicated in the margin | ⅄ | New matter followed by ⅄ or ⅄⊗ |
| Delete | / through single character, rule or underline or ⊢⊣ through all characters to be deleted | ⅁ or ⅁⊗ |
| Substitute character or substitute part of one or more word(s) | / through letter or ⊢⊣ through characters | new character / or new characters / |
| Change to italics | — under matter to be changed | ⌴ |
| Change to capitals | ≡ under matter to be changed | ≡ |
| Change to small capitals | = under matter to be changed | = |
| Change to bold type | ~ under matter to be changed | ~ |
| Change to bold italic | ≂ under matter to be changed | ≂ |
| Change to lower case | Encircle matter to be changed | ≢ |
| Change italic to upright type | (As above) | ⊥ |
| Change bold to non-bold type | (As above) | ⊥ |
| Insert 'superior' character | / through character or ⅄ where required | Y or ⅄ under character e.g. Y or ⅄ |
| Insert 'inferior' character | (As above) | ⅄ over character e.g. ⅄ |
| Insert full stop | (As above) | ⊙ |
| Insert comma | (As above) | , |
| Insert single quotation marks | (As above) | Y or ⅄ and/or Y or ⅄ |
| Insert double quotation marks | (As above) | Y or ⅄ and/or Y or ⅄ |
| Insert hyphen | (As above) | ⊢⊣ |
| Start new paragraph | ⌐ | ⌐ |
| No new paragraph | ⤺ | ⤺ |
| Transpose | ⊔⊓ | ⊔⊓ |
| Close up | linking ⁐ characters | ⁐ |
| Insert or substitute space between characters or words | / through character or ⅄ where required | Y |
| Reduce space between characters or words | \| between characters or words affected | ⊤ |