

SWOT Analysis for Revolutionary-Themed Tourism at the Memorial Site of the Former Headquarters of East China Field Army and New Fourth Army (China)



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ABSTRACT: The development of revolutionary-themed tourism is an important initiative to strengthen the dissemination of red culture and promote the spirit of patriotism. In recent years, the government has strongly supported revolutionary-themed tourism as a new type of tourism in the context of cultural and tourism integration. The study applies SWOT analysis to analyze revolutionary-themed tourism's advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, and threats at the memorial site of the former headquarters of East China Field Army and New Fourth Army in Linyi City, China. It proposes developing strategies for building a distinctive brand, strengthening the cooperation of scenic spots, and advertising and marketing.

KEYWORDS: Revolutionary-themed tourism; SWOT analysis; Development strategy; Memorial Hall; Linyi City

I. INTRODUCTION

Revolutionary-themed tourism refers to the activities carried out by visiting revolutionary memorials, revolutionary memorial sites and revolutionary museums with the theme of revolutionary history and red tourism resources^[1]. Revolutionary-themed tourism, an innovative form of education that integrates red education and in-depth travel, has flourished nationwide in recent years. With its unique experiential learning method, it has become an indispensable and important form of education in the growth process of young people and is also an essential direction for transforming and upgrading the cultural and tourism industry^[2]. In September 2024, Chinese national leaders emphasized at the National Education Conference that it is important to focus on the use of the successful cases of the significant changes in the new era to give full play to the function of the red resources in nurturing people and to continue to expand the space and position for practical and network-based nurturing of people^[3]. Therefore, Linyi City should also seize the opportunity, relying on local characteristics, focusing on giving full play to the educational function of red tourism resources and promoting the sustainable and stable development of revolutionary-themed tourism. The purpose of this study is to analyze the current situation of revolutionary-themed tourism and to explore its development strategy by using SWOT analysis to enhance its educational value and to promote Linyi City's economic development and the inheritance of red culture, which is conducive to the sustainable development of the revolutionary-themed tourism resources in Linyi City.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS

The memorial site is located at No. 1, Military Department Street, Hedong District, Linyi City, China. Here is the last military headquarters of the New Fourth Army and the birthplace of the East China Military Region, the East China Field Army, as well as the seat of the leadership centre of the Party, government and military in East China at the early stage of the War of Liberation. It is an essential site in the history of the Chinese Revolutionary War and has significant historical and educational value^[4].

The memorial site covers a total area of 17.33 hectares, including the memorial hall of the New Fourth Army's Former Headquarters, the memorial hall of the East China Field Army's Former Headquarters, the exhibition hall of Shandong Confidential Traditional Education, the memorial hall of the East China Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the memorial hall of the East China University of Military Science and Politics, the memorial hall of the Pre-Supporting Committee of Shandong Province, the former residence of Chen Yi, the former residence of Zhang Yunyi, the residence of Su Yu, and the residence of Liu Ruilong (Fig.1).

Among them, the memorial hall of the former headquarters of the East China Field Army has a construction area of 10,000 square meters, and it is the only memorial hall in China that comprehensively displays the glorious history of the East China Field

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Army. The exhibition hall of Shandong Confidential Traditional Education, with a floor area of 1,900 square meters, is the first national secrecy education exhibition hall and the first national secrecy education demonstration memorial hall^[5].

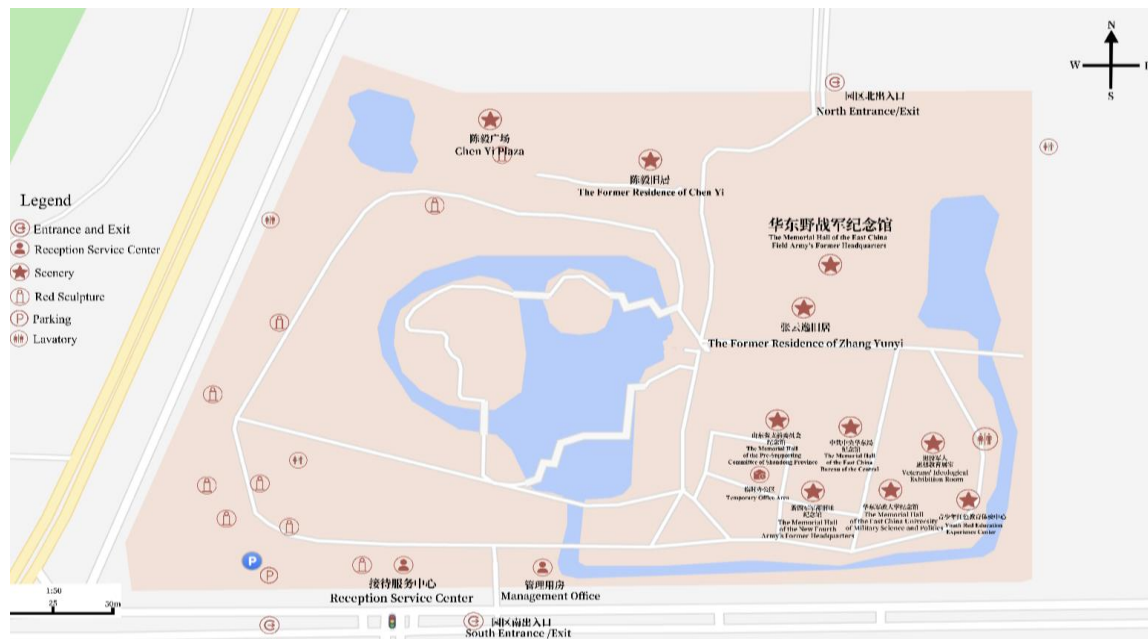


Fig. 1 Guide map of the main attractions of the Memorial Hall

In 2004, the memorial site of the former headquarters of the East China Field Army and New Fourth Army was identified as the Yimeng Spirit Education Memorial Hall, which became one of the important attractions of the revolutionary-themed tourism line in Linyi City. In 2005, the Memorial Hall was identified as a provincial key cultural relics protection unit, and it was listed as one of the seven major key projects for the creation of the National Famous Historical and Cultural City. In August of the same year, Linyi restored the Memorial Hall following the principle of repairing the old as the old. As of 2024, the memorial site has been open to the public for nearly 20 years. Now, it holds the titles of National Patriotic Education Demonstration Memorial Hall, National Key Cultural Relics Protection Unit, National Second-grade Museum^[6], National Confidentiality Education Demonstration Memorial Hall, National Red Tourism Classic Scenic Spot, and National AAA Scenic Spot.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

The SWOT analysis method emerged in the 1980s, known as situational analysis and self-diagnosis. It is the English acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, which refers to the face of the reality of the situation from an objective point of view, a comprehensive generalization of the internal and external conditions and other aspects, and conduct accurate research and analysis of a method^[7]. This analysis comprises four concern models: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Fig.2).



Fig. 2 Model of SWOT analysis method [8]

The primary purpose of SWOT analysis is to consider the internal and external factors of social organizations, analyze both internal strengths and weaknesses, clarify external opportunities and threats, and form a four-quadrant matrix to make decisions based on internal and external dimensions. Through the SWOT analysis method, it is convenient for us to deeply understand the development status of the memorial site of the former headquarters of East China Field Army and New Fourth Army in Linyi City

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and to provide operational and strategic countermeasures and suggestions for future development of the revolutionary-themed tourism.

IV. SWOT RESULTS ANALYSIS

A. Advantages

1) Abundant resources

The memorial site of the former headquarters of the East China Field Army and New Fourth Army has rich red resources covering six categories (Tab.1), and 3,524 pieces (sets) of cultural relics featuring the spirit of Yimeng are preserved in the hall. In addition, the memorial site has restored five command sand tables and underground intelligence stations in real life through scenic display and set up eight groups of digital interactive exhibits (such as dynamic maps, 3D cultural relic models, etc.), which significantly enriches the content of the exhibits and adds distinctive highlights. Through the combination of physical objects and historical materials, the base can systematically show the strategic contribution of the East China Field Army and the New Fourth Army in the War of Liberation and the revolutionary spirit of the military and the people being of one mind, which is an important base for patriotism education.

Table 1 The Revolutionary-themed Resource in the Memorial Site

Form	Quantities	Main contents
former site construction	about 10	includes the original appearance of historic buildings such as the command post, meeting rooms, and dormitories
object-type artifacts	more than 600	weapons, military uniforms, household goods, etc.
documentation file	more than 400	telegraph manuscripts, battle orders, martyrs' diaries, etc.
historical photos	more than 1200	scenes of battles, civil-military interactions, character activities, etc.
video file	more than 22 hours	documentary, oral history and other dynamic records
thematic exhibition scene	10	permanent exhibits by timeline and battle theme

2) Superior geographic location

The memorial site is 5.6 kilometers away from the Linyi Municipal Government in a straight line, about 15 minutes drive from Linyi North Railway Station and 20 minutes drive from Linyi Qiyang International Airport, with Yimeng Cadre College in the north, Binhe Scenic Spot in the west, Yizhou Ancient City in the south, and the school community in the east, with its well-connected location, beautiful natural landscape, and perfect supporting facilities (Fig.3). From the point of view of the distribution of the revolutionary-themed memorial sites in Linyi City, it is in the center and convenient and quick to visit the surrounding those memorial sites.

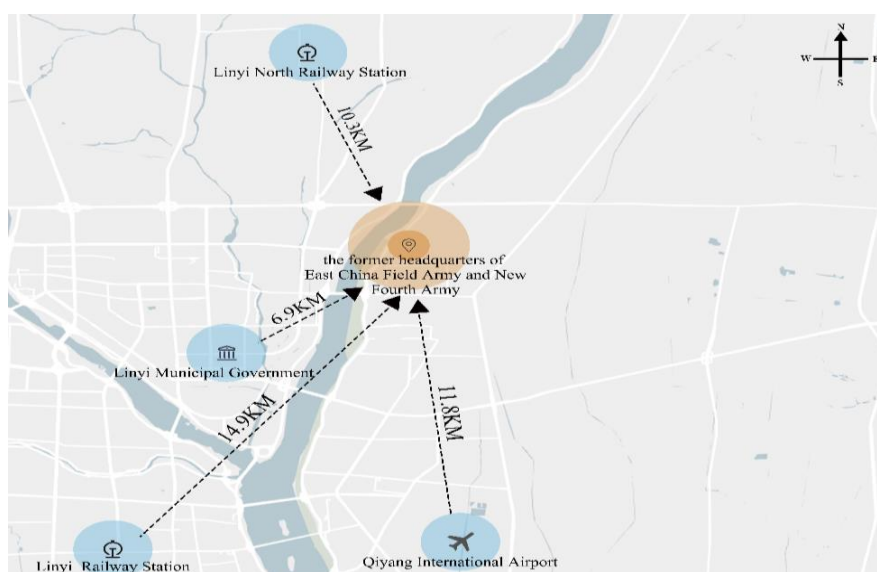


Fig. 3 Location map of the memorial site

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3) Outstanding educational functions

The memorial site of East China Field Army and New Fourth Army's former headquarters has a revolutionary-themed teaching system and 20 staff members, including 10 full-time instructors. The memorial site has set up three teaching panels and two thematic courses in the past two years. Three central teaching panels consist of 'Intimately intertwined like water and milk, sharing both life and death', 'the original aspiration and founding mission of the communists', 'firming of ideals and beliefs, and service of high-quality development'. The thematic courses are Fish and Water Songs on the Red Fertile Soil and Teaching of Yimeng Revolutionary-themed Microfilm.

The internal red education facilities of the memorial site are constantly upgraded. According to the memorial site 2024 work highlights and 2025 work plan^[9], the memorial site of the park landscape garden, grass, water, power grid, public toilets, pavement, the park broadcasting system, and other internal infrastructure for the overall enhancement of the improvement, the layout and decoration of the reception room, seminar rooms, lecture halls, and other training venues, the opening of the teaching plaza, the on-site teaching sites and other learning. The memorial site has opened more than 10 learning sites, such as teaching plazas and on-site teaching points, to maximize the protection of red education hardware and facilities.

B. Disadvantages

1) Lack of supporting facilities for tourism

In the past three years, the memorial site has focused on expanding the function of red education, strengthening the internal infrastructure of the position, and constructing red education facilities. However, it is not complete in terms of external supporting facilities, which is mainly reflected in the transportation and catering aspects of the Memorial Hall. First, the memorial site is located in the Hedong District of Linyi, with only one bus line arriving. It does not cover other transportation hubs, such as the airport and the high-speed railway station, which reduces the consideration of travel for local and foreign tourists. Secondly, there is no specialized dining reception area in the memorial site to meet the demand of tourists for dining and resting.

2) Insufficient publicity and promotion

The memorial site has rich red tourism resources and continues to invest funds into the development of red educational resources and courses. The publicity and promotion of the Memorial Hall are mainly on its official website, the official platform of WeChat, local cooperative primary and secondary schools and party schools, and the promotion of other network platforms is small, so the tourists who can receive the publicity and promotion are mainly in the local and neighbouring cities, and the publicity is not strong enough.

3) Single tourism experience

According to the memorial site 2022 and 2023 tourist survey report^[10, 11], the tourist groups, most of the school organized group audience youth audience and peer-to-peer visits to the audience, and the primary purposes for visiting are to gain knowledge, educate their children, and engage in Party spirit education activities. The memorial site is mainly for local trips to sightseeing and educational activities based on group activities tourists. The survey report shows that the audience hopes that the contents of the memorial site exhibits can be more prosperous and that there will be more audience participation programs and matching tourist souvenirs. When visiting, most tourists expressed a lack of interactive experience and considered the revolutionary-themed content relatively single.

C. Opportunities

1) Government policy support

Since 2012, China has attached great importance to red resources and the development of revolutionary-themed tourism. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism and other departments formulated the Culture and Tourism Development Plan^[12], clearly defining red tourism's development direction and goals. The Shandong province allocated special funds of 200,000 yuan so that the memorial site could implement the completion of the provincial-level red gene pool construction project. 2024 has undertaken national, provincial and municipal party education and patriotic education classes 618, 37,664 trainees, the cumulative number of tourists of all types of reception of about 380,000 people, and the use of their red education features to create hot-blooded youth Glory Qilu Shandong Youth in Revolutionary Beacon Fire, 2024 Linyi Confidentiality Laws and Regulations Special Exhibition, New Fourth Army Integrity Construction Special Exhibition, Party Discipline Learning and Education Special Exhibition, open exhibition, and undertook more than 340 batches of various training courses and research groups of the central, provincial and municipal governments and received more than 168,000 party members and people from the urban areas in the city. Party members more than 168,000 people^[13].

2) Growth of demand in the tourism market

2025 On January 22, the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism released the 2024 Domestic Tourism Data Situation^[14]. According to the statistical results of the sample survey of domestic tourism, in 2024, 5.615 billion domestic trips were made, an increase of 724 million over the same period of the previous year, a rise of 14.8% year-on-year. In 2024, the total spending of

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domestic tourists on trips amounted to 5.75 trillion yuan, an increase of 0.84 trillion yuan over the previous year and 17.1% year-on-year^[15]. The market demand for red tourism is growing, and the traditional form of red study tours has failed to meet tourists' increasingly changing tourism needs^[16]. In this context, the memorial site actively carries out red education activities and takes red study tourism as the central task of the museum, which has a broad development prospect.

3) Application of digital technology

East China Field Army Headquarters Memorial Museum and the New Fourth Army Headquarters Memorial Museum, in the application of digital technology, are facing a broad opportunity for development. Many scenic spots focusing on red education present revolutionary history to the audience in a more vivid and intuitive form by creating an online red education resource platform, developing a series of theoretical classes for party education teaching, and arranging immersive revolutionary theme dramas and microfilms. This helps to expand the influence of scenic spots and provide richer red education resources for party and government organizations, enterprises and institutions, as well as schools and universities, to promote the inheritance and promotion of red culture.

D. Threats

1) High pressure of homogenized competition

China possesses abundant revolutionary-theme tourism resources, including numerous memorial halls dedicated to the New Fourth Army. These sites are distributed across various locations, such as Jingdezhen, Yancheng, Jurong, and Hankou. Despite their geographical diversity, these memorial halls exhibit significant similarities in both form and content. They predominantly adopt a traditional linear narrative structure in planning and construction, presenting historical events chronologically. Exhibits primarily consist of historical photographs, replicas of cultural relics, and documentary materials. The presentation methods lack innovation, and there is insufficient personalized educational tour design for different age groups, which hinders the ability to resonate with and engage visitors. Consequently, this can lead to visitor fatigue and diminished satisfaction with the memorial sites.

2) Diversification of tourists' interests

With the progress of society and the significant improvement of people's living standards, tourists are experiencing unprecedented diversification of demand and interest in tourism. In revolutionary-theme tourism, the traditional way of visiting and touring - static displays and guided tours are the main modes. It is not easy to fully meet the growing diversified needs of modern study tourism in this field. Tourists are no longer satisfied just as a spectators, passively accepting the instillation of historical information. They are more eager to become a participant through a more in-depth, interactive way to experience the charm of the red culture, from which to draw spiritual strength. Determining the market positioning of red study tourism in response to the changing needs of tourists is a big challenge for the memorial site.

Table 2 SWOT Analysis of Memorial Site

		Internal factor	
External factors		Advantages	Disadvantages
		1.Abundant red resources 2.Superior geographic location 3.Outstanding educational function	1.Lack of supporting facilities for tourism 2.Insufficient publicity and promotion 3.Single tourism experience
Opportunities	1.National and Linyi Municipal Government policy support 2.Growth of demand in the tourism market 3.Application of digital technology	Advantageous Opportunity Strategies	Disadvantageous Opportunity Strategies
		1.Utilize red resources to create a distinctive brand 2.Enhance the level of facilities and optimize the tourism experience 3.Strengthen publicity and promotion to expand the influence	1.Increase capital investment and improve infrastructure 2.Innovate tourism products and enrich tourism experience 3.Strengthen talent training, improve service quality
Threats	1.High pressure of homogenized competition 2.Diversification of tourists' interests	Advantageous Threat Strategies	Disadvantageous Threat Strategies
		1.Follow the national policy guidance and seek project support 2.Tap market demand and develop customized tourism products 3.Utilize digital technology to enhance the level of intelligent tourism	1.Enhance cooperation and differentiation with competitors 2.Diversify tourism products to meet the diversified needs of tourists 3.Strengthen the awareness of protection and realize sustainable development.

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V. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

A. Utilizing its advantages and building a distinctive brand

Although the memorial site has made revolutionary-theme education the center of its work and launched a series of courses and activities for such tourists, the audience of such activities is primarily local people. In this regard, the memorial site in the existing red study education is based on continuous deepening, constantly optimizing the course content, and allowing the surrounding tourists and foreign tourists to launch various red study tourism activities. Secondly, the memorial site should vigorously shape the brand image by designing a unique logo, slogan, and visual system to create a recognizable brand image. At the same time, focusing on brand storytelling through promotional films, exhibitions and other forms to show the historical background and red cultural connotation of the memorial site in response to the call of the Linyi Municipal Government to create a Red Yimeng, Fashion Linyi tourism and leisure destination brand^[17]. The memorial hall should also focus on the development of scenic tourist souvenirs and red cultural and creative products, combined with the characteristics of the memorial hall, the development of artistic and innovative products with commemorative significance and practical value^[18], such as red-themed stationery, clothing, household goods, to meet the needs of tourists' shopping, but also to attract foreign tourists, driving the memorial hall of the overall benefit of the red study tour.

B. Enhance the level of facilities and strengthen the cooperation of scenic spots

First, the memorial site should strengthen the construction and maintenance of roads, parking lots, restrooms and other memorial site infrastructures to enhance visitors' convenience and comfort. At the same time, additional barrier-free facilities should be installed to ensure that all visitors can enjoy a good visiting experience.

Secondly, the memorial hall should enhance the display facilities in the context of intelligent tourism and develop intelligent red study tours. Scenic spots in the development of red study products in the process, to increase the growth of study tourism products, increase its participation and interactivity, create study boutiques, and improve competitiveness. In the development process, we should enhance the dynamics of the study products based on static display, use 3D virtual reality technology (Virtual Reality, VR) and other displays of the year's revolutionary scenes^[19], restore the reproduction of the actual scene, to create an immersive red tourism reality classroom, so that tourists can feel the charm of red culture in the interaction.

Thirdly, the memorial site should strengthen cooperation between scenic spots. The memorial site and neighbouring scenic spots could establish a cooperative relationship and jointly launch a joint ticket and other preferential policies to attract more tourists. At the same time, joint marketing activities can be carried out, such as jointly organizing red cultural festivals or theme exhibitions, to enhance overall visibility.

C. Develop marketing strategies and do a good job of advertising and marketing

The memorial site should carry out market segmentation according to the age, gender, interest and other characteristics of tourists and clarify the target audience groups of the memorial hall. Nowadays, the red study tour is not only limited to young people. The Central Economic Work Conference of China pointed out that we should pay attention to the silver-haired economy^[20]. The memorial site should firmly grasp this policy, broaden the gaze of the red study tour market to the elderly market, and do a good job of marketing strategy.

In terms of advertising and marketing, in addition to traditional paper media advertising and promotion, it can also broaden the publicity channels through public numbers, microblogs, jittery voice, small programs and other ways. Relying on the intelligent tourism platform, tourists can participate in the sustainable development and construction of red tourism, post-management, and activity planning. In addition, to solve the disadvantages of red tourism covering a single group of people, the memorial hall can change the traditional marketing and publicity channels and use more short videos, photo blogs, video blogs, and Xiaohongshu soft articles that are popular among young people to broaden the contact surface of young people's information, to increase the audience of red tourism in the memorial hall. The red tourism of the Memorial Hall will increase the audience of the red tourism of the Memorial Hall.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The study applies SWOT analysis to analyze revolutionary-themed tourism's advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, and threats at the memorial site of the former headquarters of East China Field Army and New Fourth Army in Linyi City. The development of revolutionary-themed tourism in Linyi should take the following measures: utilizing its advantages to create a characteristic brand; enhancing the level of facilities and strengthening the cooperation of scenic spots; developing a marketing strategy; and promoting advertising and marketing.

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