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In the Name of Conservation

Reflections on the Interpretation and Justification of China's Urban Heritage Practices by Taking Shanghai's Lilong Neighbourhoods as an Example

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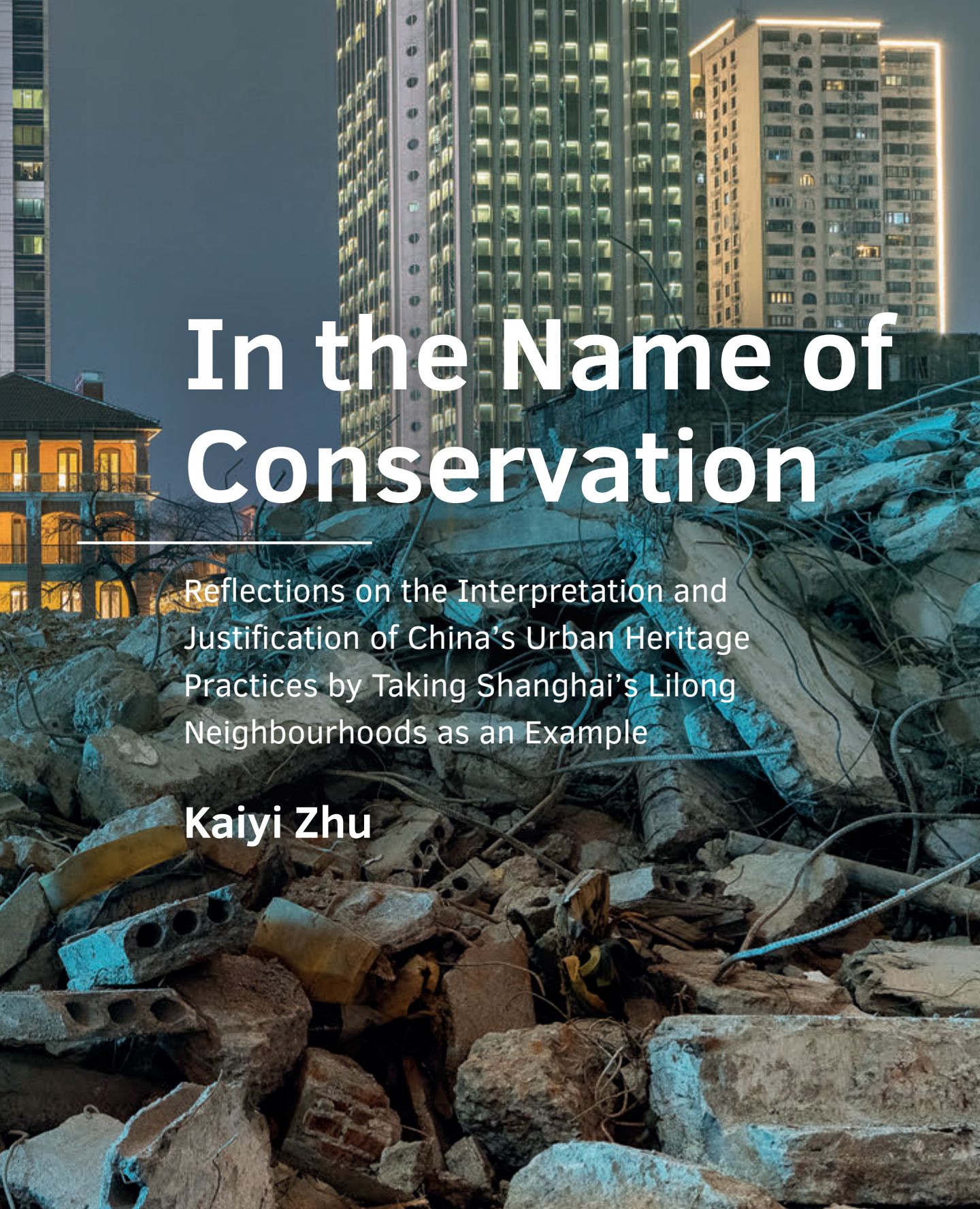
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Kaiyi Zhu

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TOC

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TOC

In the Name of Conservation

Reflections on the Interpretation and Justification of China's Urban Heritage Practices by Taking Shanghai's Lilong Neighbourhoods as an Example

Dissertation

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chair of the Board for Doctorates
to be defended publicly on
Monday 16 January 2023 at 12:30 o'clock

by

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TOC

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For father ZHU Qingyong and mother BAI Qifeng

TOC

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6.1 The awards of Xintiandi granted by the municipality of Shanghai. The information is available at https://www.shuionland.com/en-us/about/Awards, accessed September 10, 2021. 247

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7.2 Huangpu Government especially refers to the honours of Tianzifang in the news release on its official website. Data source: available online, https://www.shhuangpu.gov.cn/qq/004004/004004012/subpageSingle.html, accessed 5 October 2021. 309

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2.1 [Left] Cover of the original publication of Lin Zhen's travelling notes. On it is written "Reminiscences of Western Travels, by Lin Kung King of Amoy China, Who visited the United States in 1847—1849 and was afterwards employed as Linguist to the U.S. Consulate at Amoy". [Right] The images are from the archive of the New York Public Library that has a copy of Lin Zhen's book Reminiscences of Western Travels. Source: The Project Gutenberg EBook of First Chinese Traveller to the United States, by Lin Shao Xiang, and various. Released on March 26, 2017. First Chinese Traveller to the United States: Lin King Chew, Reminiscences of Western Travels & Relevant American Press Reports, 1847-1850, available at https://www.gutenberg.org/files/54433/54433-h/54433-h.htm#am1, accessed on 13 January 2021. 75

2.2 On the left page of the book, Lin Zhen wrote "there is a (institution called) museum ("yuan" in the excerpt, with this term, Lin refers to bowuyuan) to collect the world's treasures, open for all to visit (**有院集天下珍奇, 任人游玩**)". Source: available at https://www.gutenberg.org/files/54433/54433-h/54433-h.htm#am1, accessed on 13 January 2021. 76

2.3 A group photo of Bin Chun's mission before their departure to another continent. Source: Yang, Zhiyou, 2015. Bin Chun: Dong Tu Xi Lai Di Yi Ren [Bin Chun: The First Man from the East to the West, available at http://history.sina.com.cn/his/zl/2015-02-11/1030116513.shtml, accessed on 20 January 2021. 77

2.4 This photograph shows the visit of Bin Chun's mission to the Art and Industrial Art Exhibition in Stockholm, Sweden, in July 1866. Source: Image courtesy of Tita and Gerry Hayward, University of Bristol Library (www.hpcbristol.net). 77

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8.33 The black timber front gates of Bugaoli along the street front of the West Jianguo Road. Source: author, 2018. 361

8.34 A group photo of Ms Wang (rightmost), the author (middle), and an aged local resident in his 70s (leftmost). Source: Marie-Therese van Thoor, 2019. 362

8.35 The post on the right receiving 1846 “likes” is the one entitled with “Shanghai | Don’t go to Tianzifang anymore, the century-old alleyway is right here!” It was posted by “Kyle脚步不停”, 6 January 2020. 366

8.36 By searching the keyword “Cité Bourgogne” on Instagram, the post by “la_joie_des_petites_choses” was liked the most as of author’s searching time. This post is in French about the overall atmosphere in the release on 20 July 2015. 367

8.37 It is impossible to distinguish between dirty areas and clean areas in one living space that is usually the living space for one family. In general, the average area for each family is nine square meters in Bugaoli. Source: author, 2018. 370

8.38 According to the receipt, the monthly rental fee for the dwelling in the No.8 Bugaoli is 21.80 CNY. Source: author, 2018. 372

8.39 During the interview with Professor Ruan Yisan (left) in his office, Shanghai. Source: Marie-Therese van Thoor, 2019. 373

9.1 The urban planning appraisal of the Protection Area HP-45-II, in which the building “Great World” marked with red colour is under a strict conservation requirement from being rebuilt, while the decisive authorities have allowed the buildings marked with different yellow colours to be rebuilt for historical appearances and torn down according to internal provisions for practical measures. Most listed Protection Areas of lilong neighbourhoods include architecture coloured with yellows only according to urban planning appraisals. In this respect, redevelopment of historic neighbourhoods becomes imperative and unobstructed in terms of procedure review and approval, under the shield of carefully crafted justification. Source: SPNRB, 2021. 389

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List of Acronyms

BNC	Bugaoli Neighbourhood Committee
CPC	Communist Party of China
CRPS	Cultural Relics Protection System
CRPU	Cultural Relic Protection Unit
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
MCFCS	Municipal Council of the French Concession of Shanghai
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
SMACH	Shanghai Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage
SBCR	State Bureau of Cultural Relics
SHAB	Shanghai Housing Administration Bureau
SMC	Shanghai Municipal Council
SMLC	Sun Moon Light Centre
SPNRB	Shanghai Planning and Natural Resources Bureau
SSCA	Society for the Study of Chinese Architecture
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHS	World Heritage Site

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Summary

The modern concept of heritage conservation is an imported idea in China. Involved actors of different generations have gone through more than a century to understand, interpret, adapt, utilise, implement, and appropriate the concept in the localising process of a foreign idea since the 19th century. Being involved in an increasingly dynamic international movement of authorised heritage discourse, Chinese authorities have promulgated a series of laws and regulations for promoting and standardising the cause of heritage conservation, integrating into the international heritage-related narrative. In a trend of heritagisation, many historical buildings and sites have become heritage sites under a national legislative framework. However, the legislation has had a limited binding effect on stakeholders' actions in their contemporary urban practices. Many listed immovable built cultural heritage sites in Chinese cities have encountered various degrees of artificial damage in the country's urbanisation. In this century, increasing stakeholders have denied the damage to cultural heritage and cities' historic environments while justifying their urban transformation approaches as innovative methods of heritage conservation. Involved actors made a variety of interpretations of the concept of "conservation" which is known as "保护" in Chinese to justify the diverse operations and approaches in practices. This thesis argues that the imported nature of the concept of "conservation" determines the potential for misinterpretation in local use. From learning a new idea through transnational exchanges to applying it in China's urban practice in the process of conceptual localisation, this thesis questions "Why and how have evolving actors interpreted, adapted, implemented, appropriated and justified the concept of heritage conservation in transforming historic neighbourhoods (with case studies of the Shanghai *lilong* housing neighbourhoods)?"

Taking the opening of China's treaty ports as a turning point, this doctoral research takes a fundamental first step by investigating the localisation process of the concept of "conservation" in China and its engagement in the protection of built heritage. To reveal "how did leading Chinese practitioners introduce the Eurocentric concept of heritage conservation in China and place it in the context of urban practice", it investigates the initiations of different individuals and social groups to introduce heritage conservation according to their respective experiences and understanding of China's treaty port era. It examines the gradual recognition of a new concept between 1842 and the 1940s, an early stage of transnational exchanges of modern

knowledge under the impacts of colonial powers. The awareness of the need and feasibility of protecting national treasures began with the introduction of museology and the rampant theft and smuggling of a huge quantity of Chinese antiquities. It demonstrates the ongoing infiltration of the new idea among elite and authoritative groups, its increasing influence on the top-down formation of Chinese heritage discourse, and the development of relevant ideas, regulations, and practices. This thesis then explores "how did the highly flexible interpretation mechanism of urban heritage conservation emerge and evolve in China during the localisation of an imported and Eurocentric concept?" To answer this question, it investigates architects' engagement in the Chinese heritage movement and their promotion of the protection of immovable built cultural heritage. By taking the leading generation's conservation experience and Chinese cultural traditions to treat architecture into consideration, it analyses the incompatibility of the Eurocentric conservation theory in the Chinese context. Under the establishment of the Cultural Relics Protection System, this thesis further analyses the changes in this increasingly abstract and ambiguous conservation concept in China's application to immovable heritage. This research reveals many emerging challenges and problems resulting from real practices and emerging from the different temporalities of conservation theories, legislation, and practices. It aims to point out the key to different interpretations of conservation and difficulties in practice—the entanglement of interests behind the scenes.

Among all the categories, modern heritage has been challenged the most in contemporary practice and encountered different degrees of damage in the name of conservation. This thesis thus takes the historic sites in Shanghai, the first city that took the initiative in listing its post-treaty legacies (built in China's present and modern era) as cultural heritage. By analysing the genesis and rising recognition of Shanghai's post-treaty legacies, this research notices the increasingly emphasised nationalistic and patriotic significance of heritage when protecting and listing historic sites, and proposes the controversial character of sites built under the previous colonial power. Historical *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods in Shanghai, being the largest remained post-treaty legacies that present a microcosm of Shanghai's modernisation and urbanisation process in the late 1980s, have been largely included not only in urban transformation but also local heritage-related practice in the city. By taking these historical *lilong* neighbourhoods of Shanghai as case studies, it reveals "how have the evolving actors interpreted, adapted, implemented, and appropriated conservation principles in different ways, and how have they justified various urban transformation measures and approaches as urban conservation?" Chapters 6, 7, and 8 compare the practical tangible and intangible changes in each case and the interpretations of their approaches from the perspectives of different participants. In the three comparative cases, the Site

of the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China in Xintiandi, the hybrid historic community including residences of diverse architectural typologies and industrial factories in Tianzifang, and the listed “Cultural Relic Protection Unit” status of Bugaoli in an integrated form, are the anchor points for the stakeholders’ justification and eloquence. This thesis takes into account opinions from both academia and society, and from both above and bottom. In addition to discourse analysis of case-related publications, the research also analyses expressions included in national and municipal regulations and standards, operational orders from provincial, municipal, and district or street governmental sectors, as well as opinions from investors, enterprisers and retailers, local residents, and the general public (online and offline).

Sorting various understandings of heritage conservation through a lens of history and verifying the differences in interpretation by referring to contemporary cases, this research sees the richness and diversity of ideas and viewpoints. The analytic process and results help to build a system of perception in a dynamically evolving heritage discourse, challenging the authorised heritage discourse and even the “universally” approved ones. To conclude, this thesis addresses and confirms that the concept of conservation in China is obscure and it is a matter of opinion in urban practice for its character as an imported idea. There is always a gap between local practice and global narrative. Temporalities, recognition of history and culture, and practical interests interact and lead to differentiated understanding and application of the concept. In an era when authoritative heritage discourse is becoming more pluralistic and changeable, it is essential for local practitioners in China to hear voices from different standing points and lead them into communications, to respond to the challenges and opportunities that built heritage will encounter under any new trend of urbanisation.

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Samenvatting

Het moderne concept van erfgoedbehoud is een geïmporteerd idee in China. Betrokken actoren van verschillende generaties hebben meer dan een eeuw doorgemaakt om het concept te begrijpen, te interpreteren, aan te passen, te gebruiken, te implementeren en toe te eigenen in het lokalisatieproces van een buitenlands idee sinds de 19e eeuw. De Chinese autoriteiten zijn betrokken bij een steeds dynamischere internationale beweging van het geautoriseerde erfgoeddiscours en hebben een reeks wetten en voorschriften uitgevaardigd om de zaak van de erfgoedconservatie te bevorderen en te standaardiseren en zich te integreren in het internationale erfgoedverhaal. In een trend van erfgoedvorming zijn vele historische gebouwen en sites erfgoedlocaties geworden binnen een nationaal wetgevend kader. De wetgeving heeft echter een beperkt bindend effect gehad op de acties van belanghebbenden in hun hedendaagse stedelijke praktijken. Veel onroerende erfgoedsites in Chinese steden zijn in verschillende mate kunstmatig beschadigd door de urbanisatie van het land. In deze eeuw hebben steeds meer belanghebbenden de schade aan het cultureel erfgoed en de historische omgeving van steden ontkend, terwijl ze hun aanpak van stedelijke transformatie rechtvaardigden als innovatieve methoden voor het behoud van het erfgoed. Betrokken actoren maakten een verscheidenheid aan interpretaties van het concept “behoud” dat in het Chinees “保护” wordt genoemd om de verschillende operaties en benaderingen in de praktijk te rechtvaardigen. Deze dissertatie stelt dat de geïmporteerde aard van het begrip “behoud” bepalend is voor het potentieel voor verkeerde interpretaties in lokaal gebruik. Van het leren van een nieuw idee via transnationale uitwisselingen tot de toepassing ervan in de Chinese stadspraktijk in het proces van conceptuele lokalisatie, stelt deze dissertatie de vraag “Waarom en hoe hebben evoluerende actoren het concept van erfgoedbehoud geïnterpreteerd, aangepast, geïmplementeerd, toegeëigend en gerechtvaardigd bij de transformatie van historische wijken (met casestudies van de *lilong* woonwijken in Shanghai)?”

Met de opening van China’s verdragshavens als keerpunt neemt dit doctoraatsonderzoek een fundamentele eerste stap door het lokalisatieproces van het concept “conservatie” in China en het engagement ervan in de bescherming van gebouwd erfgoed te onderzoeken. Om te onthullen “hoe toonaangevende Chinese beoefenaars het eurocentrische concept van erfgoedconservatie in China introduceerden en het in de context van de stedelijke praktijk plaatsten”, onderzoekt het de initiatieven van verschillende individuen en sociale groepen om

erfgoedconservatie te introduceren volgens hun respectieve ervaringen en begrip van China's verdragshaventijdperk. Het onderzoekt de geleidelijke erkenning van een nieuw concept tussen 1842 en de jaren 1940, een vroeg stadium van transnationale uitwisseling van moderne kennis onder invloed van koloniale machten. Het besef van de noodzaak en haalbaarheid van de bescherming van nationale schatten begon met de invoering van de museologie en de ongebreidelde diefstal en smokkel van een enorme hoeveelheid Chinese antiquiteiten. Het toont de voortdurende infiltratie van het nieuwe idee bij de elite en gezaghebbende groepen, de toenemende invloed ervan op de top-down vorming van het Chinese erfgoeddiscours en de ontwikkeling van relevante ideeën, voorschriften en praktijken. Deze thesis onderzoekt vervolgens "hoe het zeer flexibele interpretatiemechanisme van stedelijke erfgoedconservatie is ontstaan en geëvolueerd in China tijdens de lokalisatie van een geïmporteerd en eurocentrisch concept?". Om deze vraag te beantwoorden wordt het engagement van architecten in de Chinese erfgoedbeweging en hun promotie voor de bescherming van onroerend gebouwd cultureel erfgoed onderzocht. Door rekening te houden met de conservatie-ervaring van de leidende generatie en de Chinese culturele tradities om architectuur te behandelen, wordt de onverenigbaarheid van de eurocentrische conservatietheorie in de Chinese context geanalyseerd. Met de oprichting van het systeem voor de bescherming van culturele relikwieën analyseert deze scriptie verder de veranderingen in dit steeds abstracter en dubbelzinniger wordende conservatieconcept in China's toepassing op onroerend erfgoed. Dit onderzoek brengt vele nieuwe uitdagingen en problemen aan het licht die voortvloeien uit de reële praktijk en die voortkomen uit de verschillende tijdstippen waarop theorieën, wetgeving en praktijken inzake natuurbehoud tot stand komen. Het wil wijzen op de sleutel tot verschillende interpretaties van behoud en moeilijkheden in de praktijk - de verstrengeling van belangen achter de schermen.

Van alle categorieën is het moderne erfgoed in de hedendaagse praktijk het meest op de proef gesteld en heeft het in naam van het behoud in verschillende mate schade opgelopen. Deze thesis neemt daarom de historische sites in Shanghai, de eerste stad die het initiatief nam om haar erfgoed van na het verdrag (gebouwd in China's huidige en moderne tijd) als cultureel erfgoed te inventariseren. Door het ontstaan en de toenemende erkenning van het erfgoed van Shanghai na het verdrag te analyseren, merkt dit onderzoek de steeds meer benadrukte nationalistische en patriottische betekenis van erfgoed op bij het beschermen en inventariseren van historische sites. Historische lilong-woningen en -buurten in Shanghai, die de grootste overgebleven erfenissen van na het verdrag zijn en een microkosmos vormen van het moderniserings- en urbanisatieproces van Shanghai aan het einde van de jaren 1980, zijn niet alleen grotendeels opgenomen in de stedelijke transformatie maar ook in de lokale erfgoedpraktijk in de stad. Door deze historische Lilong-wijken van Shanghai als casestudies te nemen, wordt onthuld "hoe de

evoluerende actoren de conservatiebeginselen op verschillende manieren hebben geïnterpreteerd, aangepast, uitgevoerd en toegeëigend, en hoe ze verschillende stedelijke transformatiemaatregelen en benaderingen hebben gerechtvaardigd als stedelijk behoud?" De hoofdstukken 6, 7 en 8 vergelijken de praktische materiële en immateriële veranderingen in elk geval en de interpretaties van hun aanpak vanuit het perspectief van verschillende deelnemers. In de drie vergelijkende gevallen zijn de site van het eerste nationale congres van de Communistische Partij van China in Xintiandi, de hybride historische gemeenschap met woningen van verschillende architectonische typologieën en industriële fabrieken in Tianzifang, en de status van " Eenheid Bescherming Culturele Relikwieën" van Bugaoli in een geïntegreerde vorm, de ankerpunten voor de rechtvaardiging en welsprekendheid van de belanghebbenden. Dit proefschrift houdt rekening met meningen uit zowel de academische wereld als de samenleving, en zowel van boven als van beneden. Naast discoursanalyse van casusgerelateerde publicaties, analyseert het onderzoek ook uitingen in nationale en gemeentelijke verordeningen en normen, operationele bevelen van provinciale, gemeentelijke en wijk- of straatoverheden, en meningen van investeerders, ondernemers en winkeliers, omwonenden en het grote publiek (online en offline).

Door verschillende opvattingen over erfgoedconservering te sorteren door een historische lens en de verschillen in interpretatie te verifiëren door te verwijzen naar hedendaagse gevallen, ziet dit onderzoek de rijkdom en diversiteit van ideeën en standpunten. Het analytische proces en de resultaten helpen om een perceptiesysteem op te bouwen in een dynamisch evoluerend erfgoeddiscours, waarbij het geautoriseerde erfgoeddiscours en zelfs de "universeel" goedgekeurde discoursen in vraag worden gesteld. Ten slotte wordt in deze scriptie aan de orde gesteld en bevestigd dat het begrip behoud in China obscuur is en dat het in de stedelijke praktijk om een geïmporteerd idee gaat. Er is altijd een kloof tussen de lokale praktijk en het mondiale verhaal. Temporaliteiten, erkenning van geschiedenis en cultuur, en praktische belangen werken op elkaar in en leiden tot een gedifferentieerd begrip en toepassing van het concept. In een tijdperk waarin het gezaghebbende erfgoeddiscours pluralistischer en veranderlijker wordt, is het essentieel dat lokale beoefenaars in China stemmen van verschillende standpunten horen en ze in communicatie brengen, om te reageren op de uitdagingen en kansen die gebouwd erfgoed zal tegenkomen onder elke nieuwe verstedelijkingstrend.

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1 Introduction

China has gone through more than a century of improving its heritage and conservation-related regulations laws and regulations since the early 19th century. However, the legislation has had a limited binding effect on stakeholders' actions in their urban practices. Many listed immovable built cultural heritage sites in Chinese cities have encountered various degrees of artificial damage. Different reasons have caused these unoptimistic results. The designated status of different historic sites in China's legislative framework for protecting cultural heritage do not always make a decisive difference. In discourse, stakeholders have denied the damage to cultural heritage and cities' historic environments while justifying their urban transformation approaches as innovative methods of heritage conservation, and they have made a variety of interpretations to justify their operations and approaches. In 2000, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) promulgated the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China with the approval of the National Cultural Heritage Administration and demonstrated a commitment to aligning with international heritage principles. To work in line with the national political strategy, stakeholders, such as local governments, developers, designers and heritage practitioners, have created various interpretations to justify their measures and approaches applied on built cultural heritage. The need for interpretations has arisen from the fact that many of the transformed subjects are legally listed, being a cultural heritage unit or part of a conservation area. The intention of the state government to emphasise the significance of Chinese cultural heritage and standardises conservation practices through formulating legislations is not always considered acceptable by multiple involvers. The phenomenon is particularly prominent when the historical object of practice is a recently built and easily accessible building in people's everyday lives.[1]

The Chinese heritage-related legislative framework and regulations have given a flexible, hands-on environment based on stakeholders' diverse understandings and interpretations of conservation. The high rate of fault tolerance in practice is at odds with the irreversible nature of heritage, which cannot regain an authentic

1 In this thesis, "recently built" architecture specifically refers to buildings built after the opening of China's treaty ports listed in the Treaty of Nanking (1842). In a Chinese context, significant built structures are categorised as modern heritage, which denotes built heritage related to modern Chinese history.

historical imprint once damaged. Contemporarily, two major governmental sectors in China, one administration in charge of cultural heritage and the one in charge of planning and natural resources, manage immovable built cultural heritage buildings, sites and areas. The two sectors collaborate and determine the possibilities for the implementation of each heritage-related project. Under these circumstances, stakeholders have to rationalise their measures and actions within the newly established legislative framework to obtain approvals and permissions from the relevant authorities for project conduction.

Urbanisation creates many problems for historical urban sites, structures, and landscapes. While downtown neighbourhoods consisting of significant historic buildings and sites are facing dramatic decay and collapse, these buildings, being carriers of history, have become a protection object in the legal system for their outstanding value as cultural heritage. Their natural demise on a physical level and their designated status as a part of cultural heritage show the dual character of historic buildings. In practice, stakeholders involved in commercial development consider the functional and practical relevance of modern heritage more than other values. Chinese cities have thus sees increasing economy-led urban transformations conducted in the name of conservation. This approach not only ensures the profitability of the stakeholders, but also preserves the listed status (as cultural heritage) of many historic buildings. In the first two decades of the 21st century, the rhetorical justification of urban development as conservation was most often found in the promotion of commercial real estate (re)development and tourism. The heritage discourse focusing on the conservation correctness and validity of practical projects is a product of time from the early 21st century. Before 2000 China did not promulgate the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China, and the term “conservation” was not well-known to the general public or applied in urban practices. Furthermore, since 2021, the term “urban regeneration” has dominated the discourse and gradually replaced the use of the term “conservation” in heritage practices in urban space according to a national strategy. It is worth noting that urban conservation is not always the goal, but rather the development that is promoted in its name.

1.1 Research Focus

In the name of conservation, stakeholders interpreted their measures differently. In his 2009 Chinese publication and 2017 English publication, Professor Chang Qing, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences who is based in Shanghai and studies architectural history and theory, categorised the urban transformations at the time of Shanghai's historical *lilong* neighbourhoods into four major models. The "four conservation models (Figure 1.1–1.2)" are the Xintiandi model, Tianzifang model, Jianyeli model, and Bugaoli model (also known as the cultural relic conservation model), and their physical expressions vary (Chang 2017, 16–19). In addition, Xiaohua Zhong and Xiangming Chen (2017) selected three cases of the four for analysis. The authors indicated a confrontational relationship between urban conservation and urban (re)development, and used the three cases (Xintiandi, Tianzifang, and Bugaoli) to illustrate the following three stages in the transformation of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai's evolving urban process: demolition (Xintiandi), rehabilitation (Tianzifang), and conservation (Bugaoli). The cases are different in their operational forms, dominant stakeholders, and measures. This thesis does not agree with any of the classifications. Shanghai's historic neighbourhoods, consisting mainly of *lilong* buildings, successively experienced transformations justified in the name of conservation by applying varying degrees of conservation approaches between the late 20th century and early 21st centuries. The examples in Shanghai reveal two questions common in practice in the first two decades of the 21st century: "What is conservation?" and "Why is it that the concept of conservation can be interpreted into various different understandings in Chinese urban practice?"



FIG. 1.1 An aerial view of Xintiandi, from south to north. It shows the almost complete change in the pattern of the lilong neighbourhoods in the historical Taipingqiao area, surrounded by a host of new commercial stores and high-rise buildings. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 1.2 An aerial view of Tianzifang, presenting a visual clutter in material and colour in the historical Taikang Road area. Source: author, 2021.

This thesis hypothesises that people's different goals in each urban transformation project lead to their diverse interpretations in the name of conservation. Arbitrary interpretations emerge as different participants in Chinese urban practices have weaved appropriate rhetoric to disguise their interests under the cloak of the English term "conservation". In this respect, it proposes to see the different transformation models from the perspectives of the key involvers and their respective goals. Therefore, for the goal of commercial redevelopment, both Xintiandi and Jianyeli projects find themselves in the same position in this thesis. The discussion about and debate on whether Xintiandi, Tianzifang, and Bugaoli are conservation projects has never ceased, and each scholar has their own criteria for assessment. This thesis concerns the reasons why participants can use the rhetoric of conservation in these cases and how. It is also curious about the actual corresponding changes that have taken place in these sites in the name of conservation.

For a long time, the imported idea of heritage conservation has evolved within a specific Chinese context. Chinese professionals and authorities have proposed various vocabularies such as *baohu* (protection or conservation), *baocun* (preservation), and *baoguan* (custodianship) to protect historic objects and sites.[2] Such practitioners were neither familiar with the English terms "conservation" and "restoration", nor knew well the changing international heritage discourse, although Chinese society was exposed to the idea in the late 19th century. The publication of the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China in 2000 brought about the terminological use of "conservation". However, in a Chinese context, the subtle change in terminology could not fundamentally influence the behaviour custom and style on cultural heritage and value judgements that have been built up over a century. Implementation of the principles has become a tool for endorsement in the process of integrating Chinese heritage practice into global discourse, and it provided rich paths of getting different heritage-related measures to be considered acceptable. Under these circumstances, to achieve different goals and to cater to diverse interests, stakeholders have used creative conservation measures because "the adoption of applicable conservation methodologies in the China Principles is encouraged" (ICOMOS China 2015, 105). However, there is no detailed and accurate explanation of the content and scope of "applicable conservation methodologies" and the circumstances of their use. For example, Chang (2017) points out an awkward situation in practice, brought about by the governmental planning sectors of Shanghai that usually see the buildings that are listed to be "retained" but

2 The Chinese term *baohu*, meaning conservation or protection, is written in Chinese as "保护".

not as "cultural heritage" obstacles to urban development.[3] Stakeholders thus speculatively label their actions such as reconstruction, relocation, or renovation with the rhetoric of conservation, to demonstrate the respect for cultural heritage as project participants.

As mentioned above, the use of the term "conservation" was popular in Chinese heritage discourse in the first two decades of the 21st century under a national strategy. National legislations and administrative orders mostly caused the popularity of such discourse. In the decentralisation of administrative rights, although each local government has the power to designate, manage, regulate, and develop the locally built cultural heritage on their own, the central government still holds the power to intervene in the direction of recognition, ideology, and political strategy in dealing with cultural heritage. Before the enthusiastic use of the term "conservation", authorities used the term "protection" as the translation of the Chinese word *baohu* in formulating Chinese heritage-related policy documents and regulations.[4] By comparison, the term "protection" has a more generic character, with the meaning of physical prevention against vandalism for safety. The use of the term "conservation" has indeed led professionals to consider internationally recognised conservation principles, providing a more dialectical view of the destruction of historical legacies in China's practice.

It is particularly common and widespread in China to adjust interpretations of practices under the specific mainstream vocabularies of a certain context, in line with national strategies and propaganda calibres. The use of different terms—from *baoguan* to *baohu*, from "protection" to "conservation", and the subsequent practical measures are the reflections of the involvers' understanding and recognition of cultural heritage. Whatever the approaches and interpretations used, there has indeed been a remarkable increase in awareness of heritage conservation over the last century or so. Nonetheless, people's different goals not only reflect on stakeholders' specific approaches in contemporary practice, but also the formation of the unique Chinese heritage discourse. Undergoing several regimes in its history, the leading decision-makers' preferences and choices have dominated the

3 In the Chinese heritage-related legislative framework, the national authorities used the term "cultural relic" to describe all categories of ancient and historic objects and sites and issued the Cultural Relics Protection Law. In the process of integrating into a global context, in 2003 the term "cultural heritage" started to gradually replace the use of the term "cultural relic" in translation when reflecting the Chinese term *wenwu*.

4 In official translation, the state council has been following the use of the term "protection" since promulgating the Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China (Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Wenwu Baohu Fa) in 1982.

evolvement of the heritage conservation movement in each historical period. The results caused by different historical conditions have entangled, and contributed to the prevalence of the term “conservation” for over twenty years. People cannot change the past, but they can always play with the art of interpretation. This thesis aims to explore the goals of heritage-related influencers and their interpretations by going through two layers. First, it analyses the leading domestic experts’ absorption and introduction of the new and imported idea in a conceptual localisation process from a holistic perspective. Then, this research investigates the diverse and changing goals of stakeholders and their operational approaches in an age of increasing urbanisation and heritagisation after the promotion of conservation principles in 2000.

1.2 Problem Statement

Chinese urban practice has coincided with a boom and explosion of international heritage discourse. Stakeholders involved in heritage-related issues have gone with the flow and made full use of a highly flexible interpretation mechanism in contemporary practice. The 21st century heritage practice has generally followed the experience of previous generations, whether or not this is appropriate or inappropriate. The publication of the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China has not only officially led to the discussion of the normativity of Chinese heritage practice in the name of conservation, but has also significantly accelerated the process of heritage industrialisation. Under this process, many historical buildings and sites are valued as cultural heritage and designated into various heritage lists by local and national authorities. In cities, a historical site may include historic built structures of different categories and values. The protection of an urban historical site thus becomes more complicated, and is a far cry from the practice of storing or exhibiting antiquities in museums in the late 19th century, when the forerunners first introduced the idea of heritage conservation to China.

For transformation projects justified in the name of conservation, the ever-expanding concept of conservation has also provided multifaceted interpretations, appealing to the interests of multiple leading stakeholders, programmed aesthetic standards, and market-led consumption habits. However, the aggressive international heritage movement and radical urban transformation have significantly compressed the time for establishing a systematic paradigm of conservation measures for local practice.

The lack of mature methods to manage, inspect, protect, and monitor heritage conservation has created many disorganised expressions of conservation in urban space. Heritage conservation, an imported idea through transnational exchanges, and the complexity of urban transformation itself have together led to the uncertainty of urban heritage practices in China. This section points out that there are four main factors in the interpretation of heritage conservation that contribute to the dilemma of "a thousand ways to interpret". They are (1) a rapidly growing heritage industry, (2) fragmentation and incompatibility of urban development and urban conservation at this stage, (3) local alienation of the Eurocentric concept caused by ideological differences and the long-lasting Chinese social and cultural traditions and rites, and (4) the different rhythms of participants' involvement in heritage practice and their mutual entanglement.

1.2.1 Expanded heritage scope and heritagisation

Post-World War II development and globalisation have led to the increasing concern about a broader range of historic buildings and sites. In the second half of the 20th century, people saw the increasingly expanded definition and scope of heritage and the ensuing progressed conservation measures (Harvey 2001). In 1964, the Second International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments approved the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (the Venice Charter) and emphasised its significance for heritage diversity.[5] Although practitioners of each country usually respect and follow the paradigms with international recognition for political correctness in local practices, the encouragement for the integration of discourses of different countries has not taken this concept of heritage conservation out of the Eurocentric framework. Nonetheless, the changing international standards and resolutions have provided heritage an increasingly immense possibility and uncertainty (Vecco 2010). From the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO 1972) to the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (UNESCO World Heritage Committee 2005; UNESCO 2011), experts and international institutions have progressively extended the scope of heritage from built sites to natural sites, from tangible to intangible, and subsequently proposed further approaches (Ahmad 2006; Vecco 2010; Rey-Pérez and Pereira Roders 2020). With the international recognition of the Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation,

5 ICOMOS adopted the Venice Charter in 1965.

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a simple physical transformation led by architectural maintenance or intervention has no longer been the only indicator to evaluate the rationality, correctness, and even justice of urban heritage conservation. UNESCO also advocates in Target 11 of its Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) that transferred urban historic areas need to better serve the society for a more inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable future.[6] Under such circumstances, both international heritage strategies and domestic development objectives have endowed the term "conservation" increasing richness.

This international trend has also led to an active motion in China to list many previously neglected built heritage sites under legal protection. Many reasons have interacted and resulted in an explosion of cultural heritage. The weighting of emerging categories such as modern heritage, vernacular heritage, and historic areas has increased overall heritage classification (Vecco 2010). A trend of heritagisation, turning historical buildings and sites into heritage sites through legislative and legal methods, becomes prominent in a steadily cultural economy. In China, the unique post-treaty heritage, defined as architectural or infrastructural legacies established as a result of China's opening of treaty ports with significant values in this thesis, has caught much attention as one major component of modern heritage.[7] This type of built cultural heritage is basically found in the centre of several major Chinese port cities, such as Shanghai, Tianjin, and Xiamen. Unlike the classic conservation and restoration of ancient monuments, urban conservation of the post-treaty heritage emerges as a result of the dynamic heritage discourse and the expanded heritage scope and definition, as well as a critical rethinking of post-colonial legacies. It regards a richer historical context and more diverse value considerations in an integrated sense (Wang and Gu 2020; Ashrafi, Kloos and Neugebauer 2021). Conservation of historic urban areas is more about a process rather than a one-off action. Rapid heritagisation has brought paradox in contemporary urban practice (García-Delgado, Martínez-Puche and Lois-González 2020). Urban development and urban conservation, the dualities of urbanisation, raise many problems around the future of heritage.

6 United Nations, Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11, accessed on 20 December, 2020.

7 The treaty history started in China in 1842, when the Qing court signed the Treaty of Nanking with the Great Britain on August 29, 1842, to end the first Opium War. The Qing China subsequently signed various unequal treaties with different imperialist powers in the 19th century for its military defeat.

1.2.2 Development and conservation

Conflicts between urban development and urban conservation are a problem of global concern. Although this thesis sees urban conservation and urban development as dualities of transformation rather than conflicts, the problems lie in the increasingly obscure boundaries of conservation measures. The dynamics in the international heritage movement have made the exiting discourses compete and conflict with one another, reflecting the varied expertise and interests of different communities (Waterton, Smith and Campbell 2006). A systematic review demonstrates that the enlarged, value-based dimension in heritage assessment has seen little development in the advancement from the conceptual to the operational level of heritage approaches (Ginzarly, Houbart and Teller 2019). In this respect, even in a global context, the dynamics in the heritage movement mainly reflects on its increasing diversity and inclusiveness rather than theoretical development and practical operations.

The increasing inclusion of heritage discourse and conservation interpretation did not always bring social inclusion in development. Daly and Winter (2012) and Chapagain (2013) argued the dominating role of centralised planning in Asian and African (i.e., non-European) countries. The authors have an overly simplistic understanding of many obstacles and problems in local operations due to their lack of practical experience in these regions. Indeed, Non-European countries have their own understandings and applications of the ever-changing concept of heritage conservation. However, scholars have demonstrated through different perspectives the important and indispensable role of cultural heritage in sustainable urban development (Berg 2017; Guzmán, Pereira Roders and Colenbrander 2017), and that the state of built cultural heritage in many non-European countries does not sit well with the public. In the 21st century, interpretative diversity of the concept has somehow become an excuse to accelerate urban transformation in many historic areas, leading to a squeeze on local middle-class residents' living space in city centres. Regarding the conservation of post-treaty heritage in Chinese historical port cities, the controversial nature and mutable implication of heritage, and the lack of public participation are present. The entangled practical difficulties have made contextualised local endeavours difficult (Graham 2002; Demas 2002; Singh 2008).

In China, the central government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has gradually decentralised the tasks, supervision, and powers regarding conservation, and has encouraged local input since the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976).[8]

8 The Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) was a political campaign. During this infamous "revolution", the traditional Chinese culture, ethics, and morals, as well as countless historic legacies were severely damaged.

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In local practice, heritage approaches towards urban beautification and harmonisation in urbanisation have caused the appropriation of many listed cultural heritage sites (Den Hartog and González Martínez 2022). The post-treaty heritage, not commonly valued in China, becomes one of the most popular objects for appropriation in urban heritage practice. The phenomenon is extremely prominent in relatively developed cities with excellent revenue, as the government is capable of affording development in the name of conservation as a cultural endeavour. Both the municipal and district governments of Shanghai have recognised the cultural, historical, social, and economic significance of these urban legacies with the efforts of Shanghai's academia in moving forward in line with the international heritage discourse explosion. The national decision to list Shanghai as a "Famous Historical and Cultural City" in 1986 for its modern heritage and the abolishment of the welfare housing system in 1998 have interactively promoted and accelerated Shanghai's heritage practice. As historic buildings and sites built in the previous French Concession and International Settlement are located in today's inner city, occupying the most flourishing and popular area, urban transformation in Shanghai's historic centre is subject to this impact the most. Apart from the heritage-related values, the local government of Shanghai has seen increasingly rising land prices benefiting from the demographic and geographical dividends in the inner city and has been inclined to make the most of it.

Since developers first engaged in Shanghai's urban development, the transformation of historical *lilong* areas have had the danger of falling into a dire situation in terms of consumer society and segregation. As argued above, inclusion in conservation interpretation has not led to inclusive results in heritage practice, and it has even offered more severe effects over urban gentrification. With the accentuation of consumerism and globalisation, although the pursuit of diversity has become the goal of the elite in this century, the increasingly gentrified communities have demonstrated their strong exclusivity (He 2010; Arkaraprasertkul 2019). Briavel Holcomb and Robert Beauregard (1981) levied the criticism in their publication that the lower class, precisely, people with low incomes, people engaged in manual labour, and residents excluded in urban revitalisation initiatives, could not naturally integrate into an already high-end community and lifestyle. It is difficult to break through the circled elite community. When the government first recognised the commodity attribute of *lilong* housing in the 1990s under its land leasing policy, the rough and shallow features made by its history and the fragility and obsolescence of *lilong* architecture and neighbourhoods, started to gain condemnation (Baudrillard 1998). The salient or idiosyncratic offerings and the beauty of the cityscape have become the measure with which to evaluate the success of transformation, and is appreciated and popular in the urban development process (Garnham 2005; Scott 2006; Zukin et al. 2009). Baudrillard (1998, 46) claimed that,

under the cover of “cultural innovation” and “fashion”, the only way to sustain the order of production is paying the price of extermination. This allegation is perhaps parochial. Nonetheless, in the process of urban transformation, groups with high consuming ability have tended to self-segregate with no awareness of reshaping the ever-changing consumption in *lilong* communities. Under such circumstances, individual consumers replaced a broader collective as the target that the elite prefers to attract and as the practitioner of a labour subculture, protecting the newly created cultural innovation and fashion for identifying and consolidating their social roles. Redevelopment-dominated gentrification, a more economically friendly method, has made a comeback as an unstoppable force in government-facilitated urbanisation. In the aggressive urban gentrification and other similar strategic revitalisation processes, the middle and upper classes in Shanghai have attempted and at times succeeded in taking back the inner city (Lees 2008). Currently, rather than promoting each other, urban development and urban conservation have become mutually restrictive. This is far from the international goals and principles of bridging the past and the future by emphasising the significance of heritage.

1.2.3 Localisation of the Eurocentric concept

Chinese society has evolved sluggishly in the process of embracing new international conservation-related principles, discourses, and values. The concept of heritage conservation and relevant practices originated on the European continent. This foreign idea for protecting ancient things was introduced to China in the 19th century and gained extensive attention in the 20th century. In the over one hundred years of the heritage movement in China, there has not been a single school distinguishing itself and dominating the conservation discourse in Chinese practice, or even influencing changes in international discourse. In its history, pioneers introduced the concept of heritage conservation into China at different points in time through different methods. Their various interests and social status influenced “in what way they presented the concept of conservation” and “how the new knowledge was received locally”. The introduced Eurocentric concept has apparently met obstacles during the localisation process. This thesis suggests that the differences in understanding of cultural and historical legacies in Chinese society are the main reasons for this outcome. This consideration includes the following three dimensions: (1) the temporal and spatial differentiation between China’s heritage studies and the international heritage movement, (2) the differences between the Eurocentric and internationally approved conservation principles and Chinese antiquities collecting traditions, and (3) the gap between the decision-making community and the public in the uptake of the new concept.

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After the opening of the treaty ports in the 19th century, the trend toward learning from Europe has become irreversible. The first problem is found in the difference in the time span devoted to developing a new discipline. Compared with the evolving process in Europe, which emerged in the 16th century, this study happened only within a moment in China in the early 20th century. The national authorities promulgated the Antiquities Preservation Law (1930), the first law of its kind aimed to legislatively manage Chinese legacies, without much grounding in theory or practice. In addition, in the developing process of promoting and localising the concept of heritage conservation, Chinese society suffered wars, social unrest, and the Cultural Revolution, which all led to a disconnect between the development of Chinese heritage discourse and the evolution and stretching of modern international heritage discourse.

The second problem regards the differences between Chinese traditions of collecting antiquities and the internationally recognised conservation principles. The first layer of difference lies in the literati habit of only collecting and transmitting movable cultural objects rather than protecting immovable buildings or sites for their cultural significance. On the one hand, the European concept has emphasised the conservation and transmission of immovable heritage, especially built structures, with intangible cultural content emerging later. On the other hand, the traditions of "figuration" (*zaoxiang*) and the custom of leaving "inscriptions" (*tiba*) on collectible objects are long established among Chinese connoisseurs (Li 2014). In these, Chinese precursors usually created something for the integrated presenting image, through which the idea of hierarchy or imperial power could be represented and conveyed; connoisseurs preferred to make inscriptions to reflect their ownership of the artefact as collectors. These habits, and rites in a sense, do not fully meet UNESCO's requirements for authenticity in design, materials, workmanship, and settings.[9]

The third potential problem has emerged as national and local authorities have increasingly formulated various conservation-related regulations and provisions in the 21st century and listed large numbers of historical buildings as heritage sites. Nonetheless, the public could not share the same perspectives with the decision-makers. Heritage study in China began with a variety of measures from the top down. The Qing court, the central government of the Republic of China, and the state government of the People's Republic of China all made initiatives to promulgate legislation and create

9 The World Heritage Committee revised its "Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention" in 2021 (https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/). According to guideline No. 13 included in in the session "Values and authenticity", it states that "authenticity judgements may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information. Aspects of the sources may include form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors (97)."

relevant policies and administrative bodies for establishing a system. However, in the process, the public could not fully follow the guidelines and meet the requirements from the above. Practices aimed to build mass consciousness became particularly difficult after the Cultural Revolution. People's respective understandings of cultural heritage have thus exacerbated the uncontrollability of contemporary heritage practice.

1.2.4 Temporalities in heritage practice

Participants have different preferences for understanding and selecting cultural heritage values.[10] Growing concern for intangible values of urban heritage helps shift attention from space to time. The concept of temporality becomes important in urban heritage conservation as multiple actors participate in a single case and take actions based on their own interests. Human society does not follow absolute universal time, which is usually abstract, transcendent and homogenous (Benjamin and Eiland 2003). Each city has its own rhythm of urban development (Henckel and Susanne 2013). The unequal distribution of economic, political, cultural and subjective structures in a city produces its own temporalities (Sassen 2000). In big cities, there are numerous temporalities shaped by political, legislative, economic, material geographic and technical forces that cross multiple dimensions and disciplines in the dynamic processes of human society (West-Pavlov 2012). In the past, the needs of multiple temporalities have led to the spatial expansion in cities. With excessive development of urban land, problems and pressure of imbalances in urban areas open space for new construction is largely absent, and development pressures focus on existing sites. Understanding time helps to recognise the interdependence of temporary occurrences and eternal time. Once established, urban areas evolve at different speeds. In the context of urban heritage conservation, phases of economic development require demolition, reconstruction and reuse as a result of social conditions and changing economic and political circumstances. A variety of urban players are in constant dialogue and often struggle over spaces in the city and opportunities for development. Urban temporalities, according to the participating actors, may include various temporal regimes formulated by national and local regulations, economic activities, common culture and history, media communication, or individual memories.

10 The majority of the following two paragraphs beginning with this sentence are taken from the journal article co-authored by Kaiyi Zhu (the author of this thesis) and Carola Hein (2020, 3–4). Zhu, K., Hein, C.M. Temporalities and the conservation of cultural relic protection units: legislative, economic and citizen times of the Bugaoli community in globalising Shanghai. Built Heritage 4, 11 (2020). https://doi.org/10.1186/s43238-020-00012-8

There are several influential temporal regimes in the transformation of Shanghai's historical lilong neighbourhoods. They have a heritage designation status in legislation, the professionals' discussion and debate, the economic goal of creating a tourism brand, residents' activities, and mass media communication. Legislative time defines the effort-consuming process of promulgating a statutory law. Compared with dynamic economic trends, legislative time develops with decision-makers' cautions and deliberations. As this paper will argue, legislators often cannot keep up with the rapidly changing urban environment of the 21st century. Opinions of academia lie somewhere between legislative time and economic time, reflecting scholars' thoughts, worries, visions, or critiques of an existing situation. Academia time therefore is not only a constraint on fast-changing economic activities, but also a bridge between the top and the bottom for communication. It contributes to the formation and correction of legislation. Citizen time refers to the activities of local residents who are involved in any urban conservation practice; this definition emphasises both rights and obligations of local inhabitants in their community. The temporal regime of citizens involves subtle points of focus, a community's internal processes and changes that are usually neglected in a holistic transformation. In addition, information exchanges are becoming more frequent with the rise of internet media, influencing the views of different groups, from professionals to the general public. Legislative time, academia time, economic time, citizen time, and media time vary from state and city to neighbourhood, from collective to individual, and from persistent discipline to dynamic performance.

1.3 Research Relevance

The four problems—international expanded heritage scope and heritagisation in China, conflicts between development and conservation, difficulties of localising a Eurocentric concept, and temporalities in heritage practice—present the accumulation in time and space regarding urban heritage practice. The current dilemma of urban conservation is a long-term one. The problems are found in many Chinese cities, challenging contemporary heritage practices. The aim of the research is to understand how different people have used the concept of heritage conservation for their own purposes and interests in the process of its introduction into China and application to Chinese practice. In this thesis, it aims to use the past to understand the present of China in the field of heritage conservation. It is noted that previous publications either investigate histories or specific cases that pose debates, leaving a gap in between. For example, Professor Song Zhang's (2008) book, *An Introduction*

to Integrated Conservation: A Way for the Protection of Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment points out the difficulties of urban conservation by sorting out the theory and practice of conservation planning and design practice in China and abroad. By taking one city or many cities as research study subjects, authors hardly ever comment positively on those global cases. From Jacobs (1961) to Zukin (2009), scholars have repeatedly emphasised the irreparable exclusivity created by economic elites in the inner city, and Tung (2001) indicated that, even in the leading countries in the field of urban conservation, practitioners have not established a successful experience worth learning from.[11] Shifting the lens from the globe to China, scholars coincidentally overemphasise the influence of economic and market factors on the conservation of historic areas in a Chinese heritage conservation narrative as well. Influential factors, including housing commercialisation, urban redevelopment and gentrification, and migration all become important reasons that have caused the vanishing of Shanghai's (and many other historical port cities') post-treaty historic neighbourhoods (He 2007; Iossifova 2009; He 2010; Arkaraprasertkul 2018; González Martínez 2021). The enthusiasm of the academic community for the critique of capital has narrowed the path towards a comprehensive discussion. However, these external factors indeed accelerated the rapid and radical transformation of many historical areas in China's historic cities including Shanghai, but the understanding of the protection of built heritage among Chinese society has not undergone substantial change. Rapid urban development in China results in participants not having sufficient time to reflect on the importance of heritage elements in urban practice under the circumstances of international conceptual expansion related to heritage scope and conservation measures (Xie and Heath 2017). It simultaneously reflects a quality of urban practice that has long neglected heritage elements and developing pathways through conservation.

Shanghai's post-treaty legacies, sharing the same historical context as the introduction of the concept of heritage conservation, resonates at the level of historical research. The selection of the historical *lilong* neighbourhoods to investigate conservation of urban heritage in Shanghai is motivated by the operational uncertainty and complexity of this typical urban heritage category. In general, this unique type of urban legacy contains the following layers of identities and conditions that need to be considered when utilising a conservation-oriented strategy in a transforming process: (1) being a relatively new category in heritage

11 In his book *Preserving the World's Great Cities: The Destruction and Renewal of the Historic Metropolis*, Anthony Max Tung (2001) compares and summarises well-known historical cities around the world, such as Warsaw, Cairo, Moss, Beijing, Singapore, Amsterdam, Athens, London, Paris, Venice, New York, Kyoto, and Mexico City.

scope, in both local and global discourse, (2) being one of the numerous functionally ageing buildings and neighbourhoods in a fast-growing modern cosmopolitan city, and (3) being a controversial urban legacy in Shanghai with attached dual identities—colonial imprint and common memories of the city's growth and transition. For its complex and layered nature, since the late 1990s, when the Xintiandi project started, discussions and debates regarding the question "what is the correct and appropriate conservation-oriented urban transformation of Shanghai's *lilong* neighbourhoods" have never stopped. Shanghai's initiative in listing its local modern heritage has promoted the discussion of China's post-colonial heritage. It has also poignantly reflected the beginning of China's heritage conservation—a process led by patriotism and nationalism—through the discussion of legacies built under post-colonial forces. Cultural heritage in this city, occupied as the largest foreign settlement for the longest time in China, thus illuminates thinking about heritage discourse and practice from a more comprehensive and critical perspective.

From the social issue perspective, analysis of this topic contributes to a more rational approach to the treatment of urban heritage—centred on the questions of "What is urban heritage?" and "What is heritage for?"—which sustains urban development for the future. In China's society, inner-city residents in big cities such as Shanghai and Beijing have experienced and are experiencing booming urbanism and the abandonment of traditional lifestyles. Obviously, such persistent negligence has caused a massive decline in the historic *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai. Since the 1980s, about 70 percent of Shanghai's historical *shikumen lilong* architecture has been demolished, and a considerable number of such historical neighbourhoods will inevitably disappear as a result of the relevant conservation plan.[12] In the case of Shanghai, such intentional or unintentional damage not only leads to the vanishing of a traditional Chinese lifestyle and community, but the erasure of a certain cultural history (regardless of whether it is a positive or negative presence in the evaluation).

In addition, there has been an increase in the number of stakeholders caused by the active capital market and a decentralised heritage operating model. Main stakeholders have shifted from the single central government to many players, including local governments at different administrate levels, developers, architects, local residents, merchants, and key option leaders on social media. This trend has become extremely evident since the 1990s, as Shanghai implemented its land

12 Liu, Pai. Liu, Pai. "Hu Yue Qi Cheng Jiushi Shikumen Lilong Bei Chai, Zhuanjia Yu Shikumen Shen Yi [Approximate Seventy Percent of Old Shikumen Architecture was Demolished in Shanghai, and Experts are Calling for Application for World Heritage Site with Shikumen]." Eastday, last modified on October 2 2015. Available at http://wap.eastday.com/node2/node3/n5/u1ai528147_t72.html, accessed on 28 May 2017.

leasing policy in 1992 and the central government abolished its welfare housing system in 1998.[13] In the 21st century, international heritage practitioners have witnessed too many new ideas and terms, and will see more heritage production related to the concept of conservation. More stakeholders will join in heritagisation and heritage practice, and abuse the concept of conservation for reputations.

This thesis gives a non-definitive assessment of the cases, linking the presenting facts of them to history as a reflection. It aims to strengthen the definitional differentiation of conservation and other heritage approaches. Through such clarification, conservation, being one method in urban transformations, can obtain an equal position among various heritage measures, being a selectable choice or not rather than an excuse. Therefore, it not only can prevent stakeholders from the blind pursuit of heritage conservation, but also can restrain destructive behaviour towards urban heritage under the guise of conservation. In general, whether the cases are conservation or not does not matter given the context, but to figure out the reasons for and the results of the various players in the name of conservation is essential for this research.

1.4 Research Questions

Drawing on the four major problems and the specific cases, the distinct-different scenarios described as the four conservation models reveal one of the conjectures of this thesis: in China's urban practice, various urban transformation methods applied in historic areas can be attached to a conservation-related significance, as long as the interpretation for justification is acceptable by the relevant government approval authorities. Each project has its distinctive presentation, sometimes showing opposite results. This thesis suggests that although there has been attention and discussion regarding heritage conservation in the authorities and academia, the possibility to see a complete recognition of the conservation of built cultural heritage in Chinese society is slim. In this respect, it is worth investigating how the concept of heritage conservation has engaged in China's practices. In addition, it is important

13 The system to transfer state-owned land use rights for compensation to private sectors was legally recognised with the amendment of the Land Administration Law (Tudi Guanli Fa, 土地管理法) in 1988, and the land leasing policy was not legally defined until 1999 with the implementation of the Regulations on the Implementation of the Land Administration Law (State Council of PRC [1998] No. 256).

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to understand how evolving stakeholders understand the concept of heritage conservation and carried out contextual-congruent heritage discourse in the movement of urban transformation of historic neighbourhoods. In the context of this thesis, stakeholders do not only refer to the involvers who practically invest money. Multiple participants, who could influence and be affected by the conservation and transformation results of a historic city, either directly or indirectly, are all defined as stakeholders. They are both creators and receivers. Stakeholders' categories vary depending on the type of heritage that is recognised for protection.

With regard to the objective of this research and its practical or inescapable issues, the diversity of interpretations in heritage discourse is the clue that indicates the complexity of the main question, and a thread that ties together the structure of the whole text. The key research question is landed on to assess the three specific cases. In this respect, from the aspects of the differences and possible relevance of the transformation in the urban historic neighbourhood, and considering how to assess and analyse the diversities under the same concept of conservation for a more sustainable future of urban historic neighbourhoods, the main research question and sub-questions are presented as below.

Research Question

Why and how have evolving actors interpreted, adapted, implemented, appropriated and justified the concept of heritage conservation in transforming historic neighbourhoods (with case studies of the Shanghai *lilong* housing neighbourhoods)?

Sub-question 1:

How did leading Chinese practitioners introduce the Eurocentric concept of heritage conservation in China and place it in the context of urban practice?

Sub-question 2:

How did the highly flexible interpretation mechanism of urban heritage conservation emerge and evolve in China during the localisation of an imported and Eurocentric concept?

Sub-question 3:

By taking the historical *lilong* neighbourhoods of Shanghai as a study case, how have the evolving actors interpreted, adapted, implemented, and appropriated conservation principles in different ways, and how have they justified various urban transformation measures and approaches as urban conservation?

1.5 Methodology and Methods

1.5.1 Research scope and relevance

This thesis aims to investigate the proposed question and analyse why and how different actors have interpreted the concept of heritage conservation in China for adaptable use. It thus examines the issue from two main perspectives: concept localisation (via historical studies) and discourse analysis (via case studies). The historical studies include two leads. They examine the different ways in which individuals or specific groups of people introduced the concept of conservation into China from 1842 until the 21st century, and the different conservation-related regulations that were developed from the top down to facilitate conservation practice. In addition, this research also studies how, in this top-down process of adapting the conservation concept to Chinese local practice, Chinese authorities and experts gradually formulated the framework with diverse conservation content. In particular, it notes the attention shift from protecting movable objects to immovable sites, by involving disciplines from museology and archaeology to architecture and urban planning. The case studies follow the principle of parallel comparison. By analysing discourses and expressions included in published literature, news articles, and oral interviews, it unfolds different participants' goals and visions that they can or cannot achieve in each project.

1.5.2 Research methods

The overall research method largely adopts a qualitative approach to its analysis. It is made up of three chapters regarding the formation of the Chinese heritage conservation concept following a historical movement, a linked chapter on the genesis and development of Shanghai's post-treaty heritage, and three case study chapters in parallel.

Overall, the analysis of the history of introducing and localising the concept of heritage conservation sets the key time division point as in the 1940s (around 1949), when state leaders of the People's Republic of China engaged in China's heritage conservation movement. It divides the process before 1949 into three phases: a phase of raising awareness of the idea to protect historic things (1842–1912), a phase of emphasis from above by conducting protection-related

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legislative groundwork (1912–1927), and a developmental phase of gradually formulated legislative framework adaptable in a Chinese context (1928–1940s). This thesis suggests that although individuals took the initiative to introduce the idea to protect antiquities, authoritative activities have had the determinative role in shaping the ultimate development presentation of heritage conservation in China. In the new PRC regime, the goal for protecting revolutionary relics and sites contributed to great progress in the conservation of immovable heritage sites. Starting from a conservative sight aiming at protecting ancient objects from being illegally damaged and stolen, authorities going through three regimes have significantly boosted the spread conservation practices in cities. In the PRC period, the evolving process also includes three main phases. They are a period of noting the emerging dilemma in protecting heritage sites in urban practice (1940s–1960s), a phase of developmental stagnation of China's heritage conservation movement (1966–1978), and a phase after 1978 experiencing the revitalisation of the protection of cultural relics. This section uses both first-and-secondary hand materials, including contemporary literature and historical publications, news articles, historical reports, historical photos, and governmental regulations and orders.

In the transition chapter, it focuses on the heritage strategy implemented by the government of Shanghai. It takes as its two threads the development of conservation planning and conservation-related regulations in Shanghai, and the character of post-treaty heritage. Based on a chronological analysis of the character shifting of Shanghai's *lilong* buildings and neighbourhoods (Table 1.1), it proposes the idea of "controversial heritage", which is a proper way to describe the post-colonial legacies built after signing various unequal Sino-foreign treaties. The divisions of historical phases of this analysis ends in 1998, when the first transformation project of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods in the Taipingqiao area, Xintiandi, took place. The discussion of changes to *lilong* neighbourhoods needs to take the dimension of heritage conservation into consideration after the 1998 operation. The three chapters that follow focus on a range of issues related to the interpretation of discourses that arise from the dilemma of urban conservation and urban transformation when lilong buildings and neighbourhoods are given heritage significance.

TABLE 1.1 The ever-shifting changes of the historical lilong buildings and neighbourhoods and relevant influential historical events between 1842 and 1998.

Historical Phase	Influential History and Changes of *Lilong* Architecture
1853–1870	an influx of refugees in Shanghai's foreign concessions and the formation of the prototype of *lilong* housing; functioning as shelters and being commodities invested by foreign merchants
1870–1901	emergence of a real estate market spurred by foreign investors in Shanghai, with the involvement of Chinese investors; undergoing a transition from shelter to family house
1901–1912	gradually matured and established with a standardised housing construction code; gaining recognition from both working class and upper class
1912–1932	a development in architectural typologies for different *lilong* neighbourhoods, diversified with technological and material revolutions
1932–1949	used by a continued influx of refugees and immigrants as refugees, dormitories, and working places; increasingly congested and decaying housing conditions
1949–1958	the primary stage of China's socialist transformation
1958–1966	the Great Leap Forward (1958–1960) and subsequent stage of developing socialist production; mostly shifted from merchantable commodities to publicly-owned assets for being welfare housing and working places
1966–1978	the phase of social-political turmoil and recovery; severely damaged under chaotic management
1978–1988	a transition period in which the national and local governments adjusted housing management policies and refurbished the damaged *lilong* buildings
1988–1998	the primary period in which *lilong* housing was re-commercialised

1.5.2.1 Specific terms and translations

This research includes many conservation-related Chinese and English terms used in pairs with subtle differences in their definitions. For the consistency and coherence of this thesis, this section specifies how these words are to be paired. In the glossary of this thesis, as mentioned above, the terms "conservation" and "protection" stand for the Chinese word *baohu* (保护), and the use of conservation is in line with the universally recognised principles and guidelines approved by UNESCO experts and other international institutions. Another term "preservation", often appears in the description of heritage-related measures and is the English translation of the Chinese word *baocun* (保存). It means the physical protection of heritage and is more related to the protection of ancient monuments (immovable heritage) at the beginning of China's localisation of the conservation discourse in terms of legislation. It is worth noting that before the term *wenwu* (文物), "cultural relic" or "cultural heritage" in English appeared frequently in the use of official documents, the content of heritage in China consisted of what the terms *guwu* (古物)

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and *wuji* (古迹) together encompassed. Where *guwu* refers to ancient objects and antiquities (i.e., movable heritage) and "*guji*" refers to monuments and ancient sites and remains (i.e., immovable heritage). Over the same period, another term, *baoguan* (保管), translated as "custodianship" in this research, is often used in conjunction with "preservation" when conducting administrative actions, particularly to describe the physical protection and management of movable cultural heritage.

In the process of revitalising culture after 1978, more new terms were created. According to the contents of the up-to-date conservation plans in the 21st century, the use of the Chinese word *baoliu* (保留) is frequent. The action and approach to *baoliu* cultural heritage is translated as "retain" in this thesis, and the heritage sites under such action are seen as "retained" sites. There are also many other paired terms appearing in this thesis. For example, *chongxiu* (重修) is translated as reintegration, distinguishing it from *xiushan* (修缮), which is well known as the classic term used to mean "restoration". The term *weihu* (维护) is translated as "maintenance" in this thesis and means both to maintain and safeguard things. In addition, in the local practice in Shanghai, we see an emerging term *fengmao* (风貌), which has the literal meaning of "styles and features" and is also known as "features" in official documents. These various and constantly updated Chinese terms are a reflection of the conceptual movement of heritage conservation in China.

1.5.3 Case studies

Case studies in this research follow the principle of parallel comparability. This thesis neither agrees with the four conservation models categorised by Chang (2017) nor the classification including three progressive approaches—demolition, rehabilitation, and conservation (Zhong and Chen 2017). Though, the opinions reflect academia's review of stakeholders' interpretations and justifications of their contemporary practices. Nonetheless, the listing of post-treaty heritage has played an instrumental role in Shanghai's urban governance since the launch of Xintiandi in the historical Taipingqiao area (Zhu and González Martínez 2022). To figure out what cases are most representative in the framework of this research and what methodology and analytical structure are appropriate to the case study chapters, I conducted a quantitative pilot study in Shanghai in 2018.

This pilot survey contributed to a better understanding of the public's attitudes towards urban heritage conservation. In addition, according to people's different social identities, it also planned to tell the varied interest-oriented perceptions of conservation across different groups and their opinions regarding the protection

of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods as heritage sites. With the focus on the cultural relic identity of many *lilong* buildings and neighbourhoods, the target groups included 160 participants, including people from different groups in the centre of Shanghai (and local residents in the specific case of Bugaoli). In the survey, I proposed sixteen factors (Table 1.2) related to conservation principles in a questionnaire, in addition to collecting background information.[14] The assessment factors refer to international conservation-related charters, standards and guidelines, and concern both physical and intangible aspects.

TABLE 1.2 Identified factors that this thesis proposes need to be protected in the historic lilong neighbourhoods of Shanghai.

Factors	Description	References
F1. The necessity to conserve historic neighbourhoods	Understanding and appreciating the significance and necessity to protect existing historic neighbourhoods in Shanghai	(Fan 2004) (Ruan and Zhang 2015)
F2. Original exterior appearance	To protect the original physical elements from building facades, such as the old colours, materials, proportion, patterns, decorations and etc.	(ICOMOS 1987) (Arkaraprasertkul 2009) (Glendinning 2013)
F3. Original indoor layout and interior	To protect the physical interior elements, such as the old layout, colours, materials, patterns, decorations and etc.	(ICOMOS 1987) (Zhong and Chen 2017)
F4. Original urban landscape in a historic site	To protect the physical urban landscape of a historic site, such as its former urban texture, built environment, building height, infrastructure and etc.	(ICOMOS 1987) (UNESCO 2011)
F5. Protection of historic surroundings	To enhance the relationship between the historic site and its surroundings, regarding conservation as an integrated and systematic process	(ICOMOS 1987)
F6. Application of contemporary values	To appreciate and enhance contemporary physical intervention and social interaction in historic neighbourhoods	(UNESCO 2011) (Feilden and Jokilehto 1998)
F7. Sustainable heritage approaches and strategy	Every heritage strategy and approach should consider both intangible and tangible aspects in a historic community for its sustainable development	(Landorf 2009) (UNESCO 2011) (Poulios 2014)
F8. Historical values	To protect the historical evidence of historic neighbourhoods, providing information for site study and clues for justification	(ICOMOS 1965) (Jokilehto 2006)
F9. Social and cultural values	To protect intangible values of historic sites, enhancing the cultural identity formed throughout history and interacting with the collective memory	(Vecco 2010) (Mydland and Grahn 2012)
F10. Aesthetic values	To protect the beauty of historic neighbourhoods, avoiding rough and radical intervention	(ICOMOS 1965)

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14 The full English and Chinese versions of the questionnaire are attached as Appendixes.

TABLE 1.2 Identified factors that this thesis proposes need to be protected in the historic lilong neighbourhoods of Shanghai.

Factors	Description	References
F11. Traditional economic activities	To protect traditional outdoor activities in the semi-public or public space of a historic site and improve the vitality of the place	(Stubbs 2004) (Jamal and Stronza 2009)
F12. Traditional street and living atmosphere	To enhance the sense of a historic neighbourhood and protect its original structure and details for social cohesion	(Stubbs 2004) (Forrest and Kearns 2001)
F13. Original neighbourhood relationship	Positive interaction between residents and other relevant social organisations in a historic community	(Bramley and Power 2009)
F14. Active population mobility	To enhance regional diversity and inclusiveness and guarantee population density by population mobility, broadening possibilities for social sustainability	(Jacobs 1961)
F15. Public health and safety	To guarantee residents' living security and strengthen the construction of basic infrastructure, such as facilities for fire, gas and structural safety and etc.	(Shanghai Municipal People's Government 2015) (Yan 2015)
F16. Comfortable living environment	To guarantee residents' living quality and create a comfortable environment, such as adequate living facilities, ventilation, lighting systems and etc.	(Jacobs 1961) (Zhong and Chen 2017)

However, after this pilot survey, the plan to make a further quantitative analysis terminated, because the author noticed that important participants such as members of public organisations, investors and developers, and government officials were unlikely to participate in the questionnaire survey. This questionnaire uses a Likert Scale method and requires the participants to assess and rate the necessity and importance of each factor selected by this thesis, related to the conservation of historic urban areas. To better tell the difference, it demonstrates the attitude comparison result of the general participants and residents of the Bugaoli case (Figure 1.3). The diagram shows that the opinions of the local residents of Bugaoli are, on average, more negative than the overall results. It clearly reveals the hypothesis that stakeholders' and all the relevant involvers' understanding of urban conservation are different and vary greatly, given their different goals. The variation is usually reflected in the results of urban transformation practices, presenting observers' different impressions that are under the interpretative scope of heritage conservation.

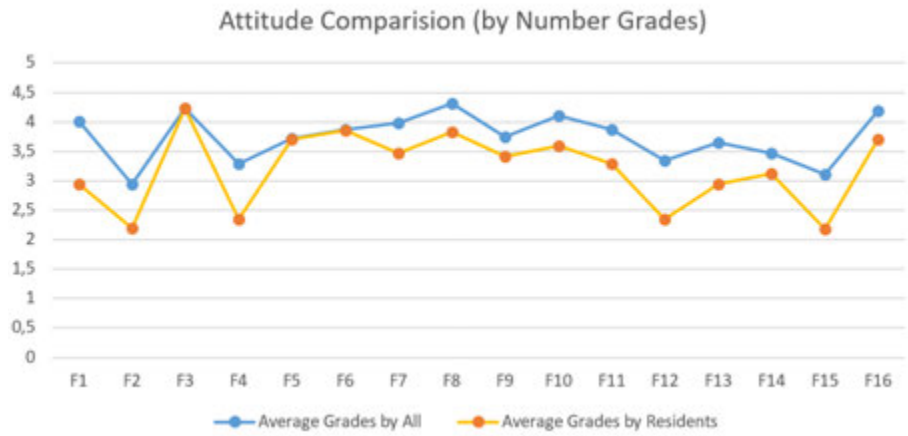


FIG. 1.3 In the diagram, "1" stands for the lowest grade and "5" stands for the highest, according to participants' own opinions on the importance of each factor in urban heritage conservation.

Therefore, what the goals are and what the real opinions are of people from different social groups become the object of this study. Considering the differentiated goals of each project, this thesis suggests a classification of three models (Xintiandi, Tianzifang, and Bugaoli). They are transformed, respectively, for commercial redevelopment, creative industry, and cultural heritage maintenance. Overall, this thesis evaluates each project's relevance to conservation from the four following aspects: basic information including historical and heritage-related conditions, academic discourse, tangible and intangible changes, and stakeholders' discourse. The analysis of relevant academic publications facilitates the author's knowledge of the perspectives from which the cases have been discussed and how the practices that have taken place are described and evaluated by the academic community. Based on the literature review and the results of the pilot survey, the analysis of tangible features includes both architectural and urban changes. The author took site surveys in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021, respectively, to have sufficient pictorial information to enrich the research in addition to academic literature and news articles.[15] This thesis also uses historical maps, satellite images, and aerial photos to compare changes in the urban fabric of the historic neighbourhoods. It also uses face-to-face interviews and online semi-open interviews to obtain the direct stakeholders' opinions and popular views on online social media, such as Instagram and China's Xiaohongshu.[16]

15 The continuous site surveys were interrupted the national COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and frequent transnational flight cancellations.

16 The full version of the online semi-open interview disseminated on Instagram is attached as an Appendix.

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The subjects of the interviews are the relevant involvers, and influential figures in Shanghai's heritage-related urban practice. The well-known "guard" of historic buildings Professor Ruan Yisan, and resident initiator Zhou Xinliang involved in the heritage practice of Tianzifang from the bottom up, and the artist Er Dongqiang, and an official of the Bugaoli community Wang Ping, participated in the survey. Anonymous interviewees who have been affected or can affect the conservation condition of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods, in the fields of conservation planning, urban economy, urban regeneration, architectural history, photography of Shanghai, and retail were also interviewed. According to the interview results, it analyses the discourse of different participators, to investigate stakeholders' diverse goals through their expression, heritage conservation interpretations, and practically transformed architectural and urban presentation. In the case studies, this research establishes a link between past and present practice through a retrospective approach to the pioneers' and participants' interpretations and operations in history. In this respect, the thesis attempts to create a contrast between the preceding and following chapters in the line, and a coherence. The historical events contribute to deducing the internal logic of present-day heritage approaches and conservation measures, and correspondingly, to the mentioned contemporary practices that reflect the impact of history.

1.6 Research Outline

This thesis consists of nine chapters. In addition to the introductory and the concluding chapters, the seven body chapters answer the three sub-questions and include two major parts. It first investigates the localisation process of the concept in China in chronological order and its engagement in Chinese urban practice; then it reflects on the three representative cases of the transformation of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai using the concept of conservation.

Chapter 2 answers the first sub-question: "How did leading Chinese practitioners introduce the Eurocentric concept of heritage conservation in China and place it in the context of urban practice?" To answer this question, it investigates the initiations of different individuals and social groups to introduce heritage conservation according to their respective experiences and understanding of China's treaty port era. It examines the gradual recognition of a new concept in China between 1842 and the 1940s, an early stage of transnational exchanges of modern knowledge under the impacts of colonial powers. The awareness of

the need and feasibility of protecting national treasures among both the top and the bottom began in the 19th century with the introduction of museology and the rampant theft and smuggling of a huge quantity of Chinese antiquities. Taking as a starting point the examination of individual points of view, it analyses the different positions and opinions people held regarding heritage protection for their differentiated backgrounds, family environments and conditions, education attainments, social classes, occupations, and interests. The chapter demonstrates the ongoing infiltration of the new idea among elite and authoritative groups, its increasing influence on the top-down formation of Chinese heritage discourse, and the development of relevant ideas, regulations, and practices.

Chapters 3 and 4 reflect on the sub-question: "How did the highly flexible interpretation mechanism of urban heritage conservation emerge and evolve in China during the localisation of an imported and Eurocentric concept?" To answer this question, it investigates architects' engagement in the Chinese heritage movement and their promotion of the protection of immovable built cultural heritage. By taking the leading generation's conservation experience and Chinese cultural traditions to treat architecture into consideration, it analyses the incompatibility of the Eurocentric conservation theory in the Chinese context. Under the establishment of the Cultural Relics Protection System, it further analyses the changes of this increasingly abstract, ambiguous, and empty conservation concept in China in its application on immovable heritage, from historic structures and sites to entire areas and even a whole city. This chapter reveals challenges and problems resulting from real practices and emerging from the different temporalities of conservation theories, legislation, and practices. It aims to point out the key to different interpretations of conservation and difficulties in practice—the entanglement of interests behind the scenes.

Chapter 5 is a linking section. It focuses on the genesis and rising recognition of the post-treaty legacies in China and Shanghai's initiative in listing them as cultural heritage. This chapter also analyses the controversial character of these post-treaty sites represented by historical *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods in Shanghai, and the reasons for their case selection.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 answer the third sub-question: "By taking the historical *lilong* neighbourhoods of Shanghai as a study case, how have the evolving actors interpreted, adapted, implemented, and appropriated conservation principles in different ways, and how have they justified various urban transformation measures and approaches as urban conservation?" These chapters compare the real tangible and intangible changes in each case and the interpretations of their approaches from the perspectives of different participants. That is, the Site of the

First National Congress of the Communist Party of China in Xintiandi, the hybrid historic community including residences of diverse architectural typologies and industrial factories in Tianzifang, and the listed "Cultural Relic Protection Unit" status of Bugaoli in an integrated form, are the anchor points for the stakeholders' justification and eloquence.

Chapter 9 reflects on the research question: "Why and how have evolving actors interpreted, adapted, implemented, appropriated and justified the concept of heritage conservation in transforming historic neighbourhoods?" It interrelationship between making the legislation related to an imported concept and stakeholders, and categorises the three main types of interpretations that stakeholders usually use to justify their conservation measures in contemporary practice, as well as their diverse goals behind. It addresses the significance of the study of post-treaty heritage, represented by Shanghai's *lilong* neighbourhoods, to global heritage narratives. It especially points out the challenges and opportunities that urban heritage conservation is and will face in the new trend of urban regeneration.

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2 Introducing Heritage Conservation in an Environment of Transnational Exchanges

2.1 Introduction

Heritage conservation is an imported idea in China. The concept and relevant practices originated on the European continent and began to gain social attention in China in the 19th century. After the opening of China's treaty ports after the First Opium War (1839–1842), individuals encountered this new idea through different pathways and introduced it to China. This thesis notes that although in the same temporal and spatial dimension, these pioneers had distinct positions from which they understood and applied heritage conservation. Similarly, authorities also developed strategies to protect China's national legacies from the perspective of the state, even as there were several regime changes. When the new idea first landed in China, coming from a different conceptual environment, it entered into multiple operational systems in diverse forms. To sort out the question "who contributed to the emerging heritage conservation movement and affected its application" in the Chinese context, this chapter investigates the initiation of different parties to

heritage conservation and their respective understanding of the new idea. This thesis argues that while national governments usually focus more on the establishment of a legal code, individuals focus on heritage conservation for their own concerns and interests.

The various perspectives have created multiple layers in absorbing heritage conservation in China. Although heritage conservation was initially introduced into China through the interests of individuals, when authorities became engaged in the process, ideological competition and issues of nationalism emerged. Nevertheless, the development of heritage conservation in China is largely about each group's specific recognition, interpretation, and application of the idea according to their diverse and disparate experiences. By asking "What did heritage conservation mean for those involved early on with different backgrounds?" and "How did different individuals transfer their respective understandings of conservation to China?" this thesis chronologically investigates various perspectives regarding the protection of historic objects and sites before the launch of an official administrative order.

In general, it is difficult to identify any uniform approach in the ever-changing transnational interpretation of the idea. The fact is that we need to look at the diversity of people's interpretation and application of heritage conservation as it happened. This chapter takes the treaty port opening as the starting point to explain the reasons for and characteristics of the introduction of the concept of conservation to China. It summarises three layers of importation of the concept between the 1840s and the 1940s in terms of confrontation of national forces. The three layers are "defensive learning", "cumulative borrowing", and "synthetic innovation". The beginnings of the Chinese understanding of conservation in various perspectives are crucial to the way the concept absorption of later generations. Localisation of the concept has been in line with the early diverse forms of recognition, as the sociocultural core of China persists. The chapter aims to reveal a highly flexible interpretation mechanism and nationalistic tendencies for urban heritage conservation that arose from the introduction and localisation of the new concept in China.

2.2 Involvement of Individuals: Entanglement of Ideas

Individuals' activities related to heritage conservation are dynamic and occur in a random manner. Before authorities undertook to make national heritage strategies, individuals had more possibilities for, and more flexibility in accessing new ideas. Through their interaction, the pioneers bring to light the questions of "what is cultural heritage" and "what is the protection of heritage" from their own perspectives, and as they contributed to civil society discussions. Before the creation of a top-down management system to protect China's cultural relics, many individuals accumulated knowledge and experiences through a proactive process, raising awareness of people's collective treasures through their exchanges and leading to cultural penetration of ideas. This section takes the personal experiences and imported information of Lin Zhen (林鍼), Bin Chun (斌椿), and Zhang Deyi (张德彝) as examples, and explicitly notes personal differences in understanding. It also reveals the social factors in the formation of people's perspectives and individuals' exploration of a wide range of heritage that emerged with the expansion of Sino-foreign exchanges.

Before the emergence of heritage studies in China, early imported knowledge related to heritage, widely recognised, was found in the idea of the **museum** and the **exhibition of collections** introduced by Lin Zhen (also known as Lin King Chew) in his *Reminiscences of Western Travels* (*Xi Hai Ji You Cao*). Lin came from a background of curiosity and cultural exchange in China. Before 1842 in the 19th century, foreign merchants travelled to China seeking fortune, and settled in the Thirteen Hongs of Canton (*Canton* is the old name of *Guangzhou*). In addition, influenced by the Second Great Awakening (a religious movement), many European and American missionaries had come to China and launched preaching activities since 1807 (Downs 2014, 135). We can imagine the situation that in the trade circles of the southeast coastal area of China, at least, a certain portion of native residents including Lin Zhen had learned about foreign cultures or been influenced in their daily interaction with global immigrants. The opening of the five treaty ports in 1842 opened further the environment for knowledge sharing. Invited there by his Yankee employer, Lin took a positive and inclusive approach to documenting what he saw and learned in the United States, including issues about heritage protection. Lin Zhen had been attracted to the completely unfamiliar world and knowledge that he was exposed to in the United States. Lin Zhen indeed had no knowledge of heritage conservation as such, when writing his reminiscences and introducing American

museums to his readers. He unintentionally brought the very first idea of museums to China, making the first step toward museums and heritage protection. Lin was not the first Chinese person to land on the American continent, his employer's invitation made him the first with opportunity to travel for pleasure as an individual.[17] As an old Chinese saying goes "a watched flower never blooms, but an untended willow grows". This is what Lin inaugurated.

One individual could successfully set a precedent, and the means to enhance cross-border communication that followed thus became smoother and logical. After Lin Zhen's two years in the United States, he returned to his hometown Amoy in 1849. There, he wrote very initial travelling notes in *Reminiscences of Western Travels* about what he had seen and experienced in America (Figure 2.1). In particular, Lin used the term "*boguyuan*" to refer to museums he saw in the United States. This term can mean: "an enclosed space with abundant things from the ancient time". He described the museum as a place to have a collection of the world's treasures for visitors to enjoy and appreciate; he also documented pieces of machinery exhibited in museums (Figure 2.2). The museums in Lin's detailed record were recognised as a direct expression of the concept of protecting and maintaining treasures. They introduced the idea of a specific place for display in conjunction with conservation. Lin Zhen's experience marked the individual's rising unconsciousness of caring about old objects and contribution to cultural import. By the 1860s, the social environment had shifted, and the Chinese had loosened their attitudes towards foreign countries. A tentative interest in the unknown, and even larger and more frequent exchanges with different cultures, was inevitable. Many Chinese individuals found the opportunity to fit in with a shifting cultural environment. There had been a long period of a policy of national self-seclusion which had almost closed the gates of the country.[18] With many individuals' achievements in cross-border exchanges and their esteem for foreign civilisations becoming visible, it was not until 1866 that the

17 In the chapter "The rescue of the lured Chaozhou people (**救回被诱潮人记**)" of Lin Zhen's travelling note, he indicated that the Chinese crew (many of them were locals from Chaozhou) were trapped by their employer, a British merchant, and were left in the United States for punishment of flogging and imprisonment before being rescued and sent back to China. Although Lin also got in trouble in the process of rescuing his compatriots, he had much more freedom and reputation for being regarded as an educated man and a devoted Christian among the Americans, and enjoyed his staying in this foreign land.

18 The very famous Ming treasure voyages (also known as Zheng He Xia Xi Yang among Chinese) took place between 1405 and 1433 in Ming Dynasty. The seven voyages were recognized a magnificent feat by reaching various Asian countries, Aden, Arabia, or East Africa, with diplomatic, militaristic, and commercial achievement at the time. Zheng He and his fleet left the world's earliest surviving navigational chart. In this respect, this thesis argue that the flexible transnational exchanges stared at an early age, and although such cross-border communication were interrupted for many years, obviously, Qing Court's decision to travel abroad was not the first action in China's history from the authority.

Qing court made a national decision to send diplomatic corps abroad for exchanges. It is worth noting that the conservation of ancient cultural relics was still a matter of personal discovery and activity at this time, although the decision to "despatch a diplomatic visit" was an imperial court decision.

Furthermore, individuals who engaged in foreign affairs with the support of the Qing court had more contact with foreign cultures and customs than general travellers had. They brought back richer material concerning heritage conservation as a consequence. Diplomat Bin Chun and young student translator Zhang Deyi were two representatives reaped such benefits.[19] Individuals engaged in the early cross-border exchanges in the late 19th century only recorded the measure to collect significant "things" for exhibition-style protection regarding the idea of heritage conservation. Although, their attitudes vary in term of content selection and presentation.

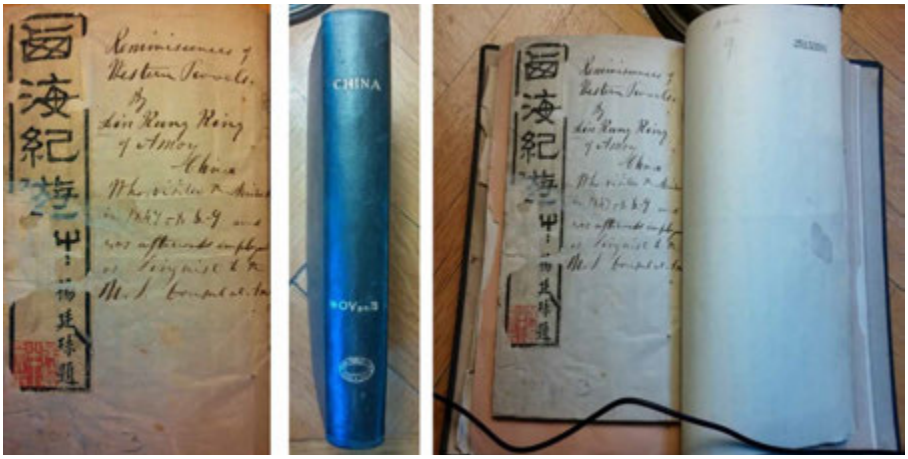


FIG. 2.1 [Left] Cover of the original publication of Lin Zhen's travelling notes. On it is written "Reminiscences of Western Travels, by Lin Kung King of Amoy China, Who visited the United States in 1847—1849 and was afterwards employed as Linguist to the U.S. Consulate at Amoy". [Right] The images are from the archive of the New York Public Library that has a copy of Lin Zhen's book Reminiscences of Western Travels. Source: The Project Gutenberg EBook of First Chinese Traveller to the United States, by Lin Shao Xiang, and various. Released on March 26, 2017. First Chinese Traveller to the United States: Lin King Chew, Reminiscences of Western Travels & Relevant American Press Reports, 1847–1850, available at https://www.gutenberg.org/files/54433/54433-h/54433-h.htm#am1, accessed on 13 January 2021.

19 Zhang Deyi was the student of Beijing Tong Wen Guan (School of Combined Learning), which was a specialised school for teaching foreign languages.



FIG. 2.2 On the left page of the book, Lin Zhen wrote "there is a (institution called) museum ("yuan" in the excerpt, with this term, Lin refers to bowuyuan) to collect the world's treasures, open for all to visit (**有院集天下珍奇, 任人游玩**)". Source: available at https://www.gutenberg.org/files/54433/54433-h/54433-h.htm#am1, accessed on 13 January 2021.

Bin Chun was appointed leading ambassador of a mission to visit continental Europe in 1866, at the age of 62 (Figure 2.3–2.4). His appointment was through the core political power of the Qing court, represented by Yi Xin (Prince Gong, **奕欣**).[20] Departing from Beijing, after passing through the maritime routes around Thailand and India in Asia and Egypt in North Africa, the mission arrived in Europe by landing in Marseilles, France, in May, and visited eleven countries in total within four months. Being officially dispatched, Bin Chun recorded his adventures, and wrote his *Jottings from a Raft* (*Cheng Cha Bi Ji*, **乘槎笔记** in Chinese) after the journey.[21] Bin Chun's "jottings" were the first written description of travel in Europe from the perspective of an official in the late Qing Dynasty. They introduced to Chinese readers the technological progress in various parts of Europe following its industrialisation (Day 2018).

20 Yi Xin played an active role in the revolutionary Self-Strengthening Movement.

21 The English title *Jottings from a Raft* for Bin Chun's travelling notes *Cheng Cha Biji* follows the translation used in Jenny Huangfu Day's publication *Qing Travelers to the Far West: Diplomacy and the Information Order in Late Imperial China* (2018).

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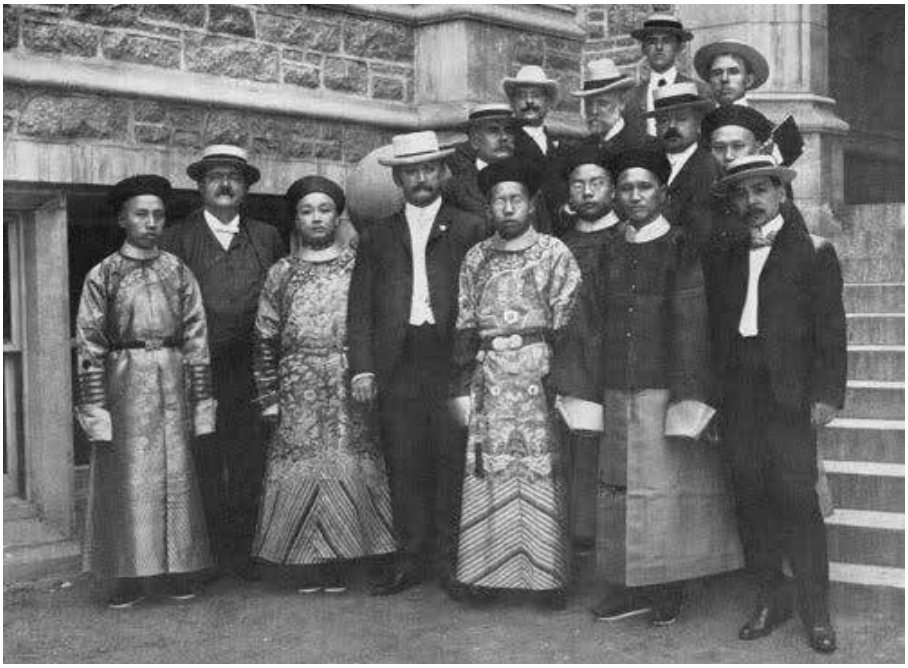


FIG. 2.3 A group photo of Bin Chun's mission before their departure to another continent. Source: Yang, Zhiyou, 2015. Bin Chun: Dong Tu Xi Lai Di Yi Ren [Bin Chun: The First Man from the East to the West, available at http://history.sina.com.cn/his/zl/2015-02-11/1030116513.shtml, accessed on 20 January 2021.



FIG. 2.4 This photograph shows the visit of Bin Chun's mission to the Art and Industrial Art Exhibition in Stockholm, Sweden, in July 1866. Source: Image courtesy of Tita and Gerry Hayward, University of Bristol Library (www.hpcbristol.net).

Bin Chun also described heritage conservation, as he recorded his experiences, and in doing so broadened awareness of the range of old objects that could be exhibited. Zhang Deyi, one of the student interpreters involved in Bin Chun's mission, also wrote his own account *Hang Hai Shu Qi* (航海述奇, which can be translated as *Narrative of a Voyage*) (Figure 2.5). In both of the narratives, Bin and Zhang described art and natural museums by using terms such as *wanzhongyuan* (a garden of ten thousand species), *jibaolou* (a house of treasure collections), *junqilou* (a house of military weapons), or *jiguguan* (a pavilion of animal skeletons), to refer the varied exhibits in a vivid and imaginative way (Liu 2014). Through writing down their own experiences in museums, they addressed the diverse collection and exhibition values of "things" as they fell into different spheres.



FIG. 2.5 On page 25 (left) and 26 (right) of Hang Hai Shu Qi, Zhang Deyi describes his observations in junqilou of a British museum, where weaponry of the time was displayed. Source: University of Michigan. Source: https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015027447328, accessed on 20 January 2021.

However, none of the perspectives of Lin Zhen, Bin Chun or Zhang Deyi were professionally related to the specific and new subject of heritage conservation (referring mainly to antiquities, ancient sites, and monuments at that time). But through their introduction of museums in the United States and European countries, a new discipline and a new attitude about how to deal with the past took root and sprouted in China. Applying new physical methods to the storage and display of old objects, people in China initially learned to understand, study, analyse, and obtain

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information from material history and culture. The idea that civilisation and cultural tradition are naturally embedded in and transmitted through historical fragments and legacies has gradually gained ground.

With the opening of more international exchanges at multiple levels over the years, more overseas monuments and approaches to heritage have come to the forefront of the public's attention in China. The Qing court established diplomatic relations with various countries one after another in the 1860s, immediately following Bin Chun's mission. Outbound exchanges were a next step. Foreign missionaries, wanting to facilitate deeper communication and effective interactions, liked to sponsor young Chinese students for education in missionary schools abroad. There the students would explore the outside world in addition to sowing the seeds of Western culture back on the land of China. Influenced by the Self-Strengthening Movement (1861–1890s), the leading major ministers were also proactively in building ways to facilitate cross-border exchanges.[22] Supported by the Movement and advocated by Yung Wing (容闳), Li Hongzhong (李鸿章) and Zeng Guofan (曾国藩) of the Qing court officially promoted the Chinese Educational Mission project in 1872 (Thogersen 2016).[23] At this point, educational transnationalism was launched in China, and has had continuing influence. We see the introduction of a broader range of heritage objects and ideas to the Chinese public through texts, as more individuals take up the opportunities of increasingly frequent cross-border communication.

As exposure to new ideas expanded, recognition grew that attention to old objects is not limited to exhibits in museums. The importance of attending to ancient monuments and historic sites caught people's attention through mass media. For example, Chen Lanbin (陈兰彬), the first Chinese Minister to the United States and supervisor of the young students dispatched there, mentioned in his notes the restoration and conservation of Mount Vernon, the home of the United States' first president. Chen presented heritage approaches to this historic building through an informal voice, from the perspective of a non-professional individual. With the advent of various published notes of travel, the mass media in China began to play

22 Self-Strengthening Movement, which is also known as *Yang Wu Yun Dong*, with the meaning of "foreign affairs movement", was one of the most important institutional reforms in the late Qing Dynasty.

23 Yung Ying graduated from Yale University in 1854 and became the first Chinese to gain a university diploma in the United States. He was originally born in the county of Xiangshan (香山县), Canton. Yung first went to Macao for education when he was seven in the Morrison (Memorial) School. After the colonisation of Hong Kong by the United Kingdom, he studied in Hong Kong where the school relocated. He stopped school education in 1839 because of his father's death. Yung was one of three students sponsored by Rev. Samuel Robbins Brown since 1841, and he moved to the United States together with Brown.

a role in conveying information related to heritage conservation as well. In 1873, an article about pyramids in Egypt was published in the newspaper *Shen Bao* (申报, also known as *Shun Pao* or *Shanghai News*), describing the marvellous and monumental funerary site for the extraordinary civilisation and artificial landscape it represented (Liu 2014). Chinese newspapers in the late 19th century started to include various articles introducing historic buildings in different countries, such as the ancient monuments located in Rome, and historic structures on the banks of the River Thames. Especially significant, in 1898, the publication *Xiang Bao* (湘报) reported the restoration work on Peter the Great's house, in which he lived during the Great Northern War. This article gave a preliminary explanation of heritage conservation approaches from a technical perspective. It also provided a more professional view than previous travellers' notes by switching from an introductory description of the object as a form of heritage to a specific account of conservation issues and techniques (Liu 2014). The germination of academic discussion within the discipline of heritage conservation showed its first sign in a Chinese context.

As civil society bore fruit in China, the scope of old objects that need to be protected has gradually been extended from collectible fragmented art pieces to immovable objects with larger scales, including historical buildings, monuments, and ancient sites. Nevertheless, on the active transnational path of exchange of ideas, the necessity to study or conserve movable or immovable ancient legacies was visible but yet not prominent. In the 1900s, witnessing the historical severance effected by the theft and smuggling of movable legacies, removing them from the purpose for which and place in where they were created, the Qing court at the end of its existence took measures and issued administrative actions. This action launched the course of legalising heritage conservation.

2.3 National Actions: Transnational Exchanges and the Emerging New Discipline

By comparison with the diverse individual representations of the new epistemology of cultural old objects and sites, the central court of Qing China's first step was to create executive orders and regulations to protect the innumerable historical-cultural relics in China. Early official conservation of cultural heritage in China began with broad legislation on the protection of antiquities and monuments. This legislation did not include specific approaches. The Qing court's urgency in protecting China's heritage originated in noticing the increasing number of Chinese national treasures overseas lost through illegal theft, smuggling, or plunder. Political actions have a hysteresis quality, and reflect the opinions of a select group of elites or the common sentiments of the public. The former were largely behind the first heritage-related legislation by the Qing court.

In a reactive process, the gradually increasing attention paid to old objects and antiquities followed a feedback loop. Before the introduction of the concept of "heritage", the terms "*guwu*" and "*guji*" were mostly used to describe the old things from China's dynastic periods.[24] There was no such a concept as "conservation" to protect or maintain objects. Before the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, the ruling class may have had some concern with the conservation of a portion of the antiquities and monuments that were either of precious metals with economic value, or of ritual objects with symbolic significance for the maintenance of imperial supremacy (Li 2015). In the Qing Dynasty, the traditional way to treat treasures and valuable historical pieces was "*baoguan* (custodianship)". This meant collecting and storing objects in a certain place with a guardian under the imperial power, without special attention to the importance of maintaining, or repairing the broken pieces of those precious legacies. From the perspective of the changing political regimes, in the late 19th and early 20th century the aim changed to the necessity of establishing an absolute ownership and control over treasure properties within the national territory. The legislative approach has been a direct reflection of the result of an exchange

24 Historically, until the Republic of China, the terminology *guwu* and *guji* were in use to describe things with historical and cultural significance. In English translation, *gu* means "ancient", and *wu* means "object" or "thing", and in a holistic sense, *guwu* has a meaning of movable objects from the old days with a certain history (as opposed to "today"). *Guji*, comparatively, more often refers to immovable historical sites and monuments, as *ji* means "remain", "mark", or "ruin".

between China and European and American countries, which were the first to begin industrialisation and modernisation processes. In this section, we see the gradual establishment of a political identity based on the concept of territory and on the sovereignty of Chinese cultural relics which had not gained much attention in the preceding two thousand years of the country's history.

2.3.1 Protection of antiques: the necessity and a raising awareness (1842–1912)

Heritage studies and practices did not develop in China until the earlier 20th century. In the middle of the 19th century of the Qing Dynasty, the opening of the treaty ports marked a turning point in the Chinese history, including an emerging exposure to knowledge about heritage and conservation. Defeated in the First Opium War in 1840, the Qing court signed its first unequal treaty between China and foreign powers in 1842 in return for a short peace (Feige and Miron 2008). The Treaty of Nanking helped to open a trade route between the Inner Asian continent and the others in the world, and offered the United Kingdom an opportunity to seize more gold and silver, to compensate for the huge loss of profits caused by the trade deficit with China. The opening of the treaty ports blazed a trail for foreign imperialist powers to force feudal China to step into, and even embrace, modern narratives, but without preparation. Signing the first treaty marked a starting point for colonialism and settler-colonialism to impact various affairs in China, until the treaty's termination in 1943.[25] Between 1842 and 1943, there was a marked increase in the awareness of protecting objects in China, though such awareness did not naturally evolve from the country's own cultural traditions, epistemologies, and philosophy. Since the mid-19th century, more frequent communication about and unscrupulous excavation of antiquities on the Silk Road have raised the country's interest in the protection of antiquities. The most direct reason for formulating legislation was the realisation of the massive loss of cultural objects, especially the frequent thefts at Dunhuang. Theft in the name of archaeological excavation and expedition have had far-reaching consequences with nationalist sentiments for the development, tone, and aim of heritage conservation in China, generating nationalist sentiments among the public.

25 In 1943, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France all abrogated the unequal treaties they had signed with the Qing Dynasty, and relinquished their extraterritoriality and all concessions in China. This step thus brought to an end the public concessions in Shanghai, which had existed in law for approximate a century.

2.3.1.1 A reactive process: awareness from the loss

Chinese recognition of the importance of antiquities and monuments, from the perspective of politics and legislation, began with their loss. The Onshore and Maritime Silk Road provided convenience for explorers, excavators, and archaeologists. With the Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD), on the basis of increasingly powerful national strength, the Emperor Wu of Han (汉武帝), the leader with supreme power in China at the time, realised the significance of communicating with other continents and started to send envoys abroad.[26] The Silk Road was supposed to promote transnational exchanges, including circulation of goods, currencies, labour, living habits and knowledge, for cultural fusion and integration between China and other countries. Over two thousand years, the Silk Road has been a path, a bond and an instrument, making influential contributions to the formation and transformation of a global economy, culture, and politics. Largely depending on climatic conditions, geographical context, natural environment and local histories and socio-cultural conditions, transnationalism and globalisation did not substantially emerge until the advent of the industrial age. Global exchanges became dominant in regional development as a result of the increasingly powerful technologies and techniques of that age. After the treaties of the 19th century, free access to China for foreigners put Chinese ancient treasures in extreme jeopardy. They were continuously stolen under systematic and sneaky plans.

The Richthofen Silk Road map gave foreign explorers clear guidance to the route, and was the cathartic spark of subsequent iniquitous deals and accelerated the loss of ancient Chinese cultural relics and treasures. Between 1860 and 1877, Ferdinand von Richthofen accepted a diplomatic mission from the German government wanting to extend its national powers to Chinese treaty ports. After seven expeditions, he discovered and marked the Silk Road (1877) on a map, passing through Chang'an (the city of Xi'an today) as the starting pointing, Turkestan (Xinjiang), the Taklamakan desert and Chinese Tartary (Wu 2014). The map provided a visual guide to foreign travellers and explorers (Figure 2.6), giving them access to the cultural relics hidden in deserts. These relics would then flow into the European and American antiquity collection markets. Archaeologists from England, France, Germany, Sweden and Japan planned their expeditions in Western China and other countries in Central Asia (Chin 2013). Among them, the representative figures were Sven Hedin, Albert von Le Coq, Paul Pelliot, Langdon Warner, Kozui Otani, and Aurel Stein. Stein became illustrious for his prolific discoveries as a treasure hunter

26 Emperor Wu of Han, also known as Hanwu Emperor Liu Che, is the seventh emperor of West Han Dynasty.

in China (Hopkirk 2006).[27] These celebrities sought diversities and marvellous art pieces in East and Central Asia, from India to Tarim Basin of China, to discover Asian civilisations. Explorations along the Silk Road and art trade in treaty ports were thriving by the late 19th century (Balachandran 2007, 5).

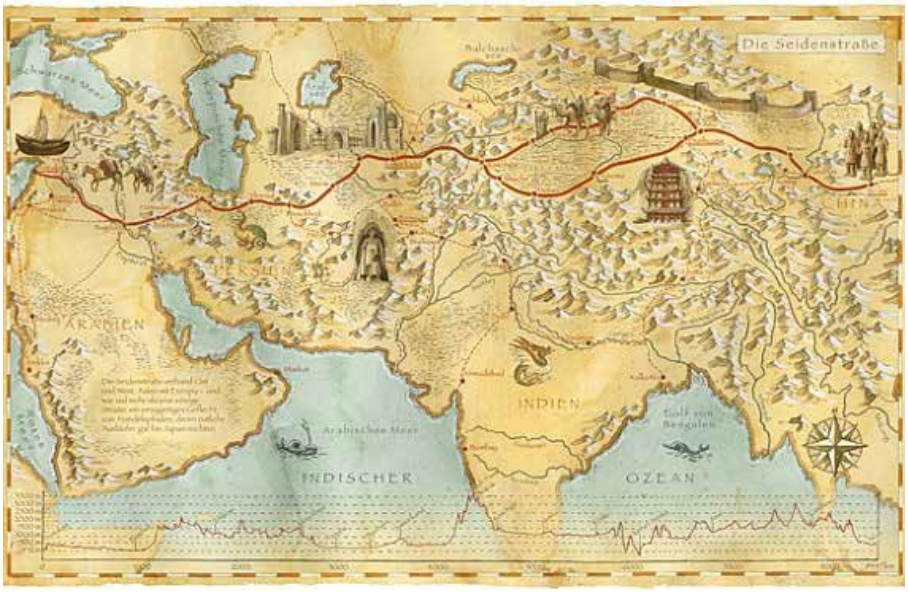


FIG. 2.6 In 1877 the term "Seidenstraße" (Die Seidenstrassen, literally "Silk Road") was coined by the German geographer, cartographer and explorer Ferdinand von Richthofen. Source: http://www.silkroutes.net/orient/mapssilkroutestrade.html, accessed on 19 September 2017.

Within a few decades after the opening of the treaty ports, China had lost countless cultural relics, including fragmented murals from grottoes, pieces from ruins and graves, written records of customs and languages. According to incomplete data statistics, there had were 151 explorations between 1850 and 1940. The number of the expeditions reached a peak in the 1900s, with 45 of them (Table 2.1). Looted items went to private collection or museum exhibitions. Museologists, archaeologists, American and European explorers, collectors and art dealers, in their knowledge of heritage restoration and preservation, justified themselves in the name of

27 The British archaeologist Aurel Stein made his first expedition in China between 1900 and 1901. In this expedition, he brought to light the hidden treasures of a considerable civilisation, which has been lost to the world.

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conservation. As foreigners were granted privileges in taking unreasonable, illegal and immoral actions without receiving punishment from the Chinese administrative bodies, there was much unscrupulous activity in terms of heritage practice. Furthermore, as there was no public exhibitions to display most of the stolen treasures, it is also impossible for the Chinese to know who sponsored those multiple thefts between the 19th and early 20th century. They cannot draw on that knowledge to redeem artefacts for cultural research (Hopkirk 2006). In this respect, the loss of cultural relics, which could not be traced and have not been found up to today, starkly reveals a humiliating and irremediable historical episode. Making matters worse, the reprehensible art trade smuggling Chinese artefacts and cultural relics reached its peak in the late 19th century, in the epilogue of China's last feudal dynasty. For example, eunuchs took curios from the Qing palace to the art market, responding to the needs and interests of foreign purchasers (Balachandran 2007). In addition, resulting from the political chaos leading to the final destruction of the Qing Dynasty, many nobles had to sell their collections to survive. Despite the turbulence of those days, when Aurel Stein found a large quantity of significant antiquities unearthed in the Taklamakan desert oasis of Dandan Oilik (Figure 2.7), the Qing court took measures responding to the enormous loss of national treasures of incalculable value. It first set up a new administrative department, the Civil Affairs Ministry (Min Zheng Bu, 民政部), and integrated survey and management of *guwu* into the scope of its administrative functions and responsibilities. This measure announced the beginning of the top-down management of China's cultural relics and cultural heritage.

TABLE 2.1 Records of archaeological expeditions carried out by foreigners in Northwest China between 1850 and 1940. There had been 151 exploring events between 1850 and 1940. The number of the expeditions achieved a peak with 45 incidents in the 1900s. This table is adapted from the one included in the paper Background Analysis of the Birth of Legalization of Antiques Preservation (1911-1930) written by Hsiang-yu Huang (2012).

Period (Year)	Germany	Russia	United Kingdom	Hungary	Japan	France	United States	Sweden	Unknown	Total
1850–1860	3	2								5
1861–1870		7	5							12
1871–1880		18	10							28
1881–1890		14	5			2			1	22
1891–1900	2	8	1			4		7		22
1901–1910	13	3	4	1	9	2	3	10		45
1911–1920	2	1	4		4			5		16
1921–1930			1							1
1931–1940										0
Total	20	53	30	1	12	8	3	22	1	151



FIG. 2.7 The Silk Princess (**东国公主传蚕种图**) painting on a wooden panel excavated by Aurel Stein from Dandan Oilik, showing a Chinese princess who brought mulberry seeds and eggs of the silk moth to Khotan. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:British_Museum_silk_princess_painting.jpg, accessed on 21 September 2017.

In the early stage of the opening of China's treaty ports, the aim of foreign countries was to expand imperialist power into China. The aim of the Qing court in promulgating the first heritage-related legislation in China was to prevent illegal and unethical acquisition and destruction of its cultural heritage, declaring the inviolability of the sovereign integrity of Chinese legacies within its national territory. Legislatively, the Qing court begun to include heritage protection in national administrative orders and regulations. In 1908, the court promulgated the Regulation of Self-government in Cities, Towns and Villages (Cheng Zhen Xiang Difang Zizhi Zhangcheng, **城镇乡地方自治章程**), in which it listed "preservation of monuments (*baocun guji*, **保存古迹**)" as a part of the mandatory charity and welfare service, as important as poverty alleviation and infrastructure (Zhang 2008). It was the first legal document mentioning the issue of heritage conservation in China, although it was merely a superficial and brief statement. The scope of *guji* — monuments, or "ancient sites" in a literal interpretation — was not yet clearly defined in this first legislative text. In 1909, the Civil Affairs Ministry drafted the Promotion Measures for the Preservation of Monuments (Baocun Guji Tuiguang Banfa, **保存古迹推广办法**), attempting to prevent the constant loss of antiquities by mobilising the wider community in Chinese society. The specialised 1909 *Promotion Measures* includes six aspects of investigation and survey of cultural relics, and five aspects of preservation, covering the purpose of preservation, the scope and approaches of protection, and the use of monuments and antiquities (Li 2018). Although the Qing court had not successfully implemented the 1909 Promotion Measures for the Preservation of Monuments because of the fall of the dynasty, the drafting of an official document was indeed the Chinese authorities' first tentative action. In the name of heritage conservation, the Qing court issued the regulation to prevent the loss of cultural legacies and treasures, to either maintain the remaining dignity of the dynasty in the form of protecting property sovereignty or to seize the opportunity at the crossroads of a brand-new era filled with culture shock.

2.3.2 Legislative groundwork: emphasis from above (1912–1927)

The national apparatus has took dominant control over heritage studies and the promotion of conservation measures in the early 20th century. The Beiyang (also known as Peiyang) Government of the Republic of China (ROC) took over the country in 1912, and persisted in Beijing until 1927. The Internal Affairs Ministry (Nei Wu Bu, 内务部) of the new regime replaced the old Civil Affairs Ministry of the Qing court, and subsequently took responsibility for heritage-related affairs. In 1912, after a period of absorbing outside cultures and as the decision-making class recognised the significance of protecting national legacies, the central government paved the way for heritage studies in China at a legislative level. As consciousness of national sovereignty was on the rise, the ROC government was especially concerned with the political meaning of the country's cultural heritage from the standpoint of a modern regime. The ROC government was the first "modern" regime in Chinese history. Although the regime experienced chaos and confusion, its significant legislative legacies related to heritage studies go beyond China's culture, and extend beyond the ROC period.



FIG. 2.8 Zhu Qiqian, on the left side in this image, was a senior official of the Beiyang Government. In his career, with a passion for ancient objects and sites, he presided over the establishment of the Antiquities Exhibition Institute. Source: https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Zhang_Baixi_Yuan_Shikai_Zhu_Qiqian.jpg, accessed on 12 December 2020.

In the ROC period, management of Chinese cultural heritage unfolded conservatively, mainly by means of archiving. It was influenced by the introduction of museology in the Qing Dynasty. Observing the continuous sporadic thefts of antiquity since the 1850s, the new government realised it would be unable to track Chinese legacy without accurate and reliable records of antiquities and monuments across the nation. The Beiyang Government established prototypes for managing heritage-related content in administrative orders, concerning museology, and the art trade. It issued several official documents to standardise and regulate the management of antiquities and monuments. A chronological account starts on December 24, 1913, when Yuan Shikai's government promulgated the **Statute of the Antiquities Exhibition Institute** (Guwu Chenlie Suo Zhangcheng, 古物陈列所章程), and appointed the Internal Affairs Ministry to be in charge of matters around antiquities custodianship. Led by Zhu Qiqian (朱启钤), and supported by Zhang Jian (张謇) and John Calvin Ferguson, the government used a portion of the Boxer Indemnity (known in China as the Gengzi Indemnity) as the initial funding, and established the Antiquities Exhibition Institute (Guwu Chenlie Suo, 古物陈列所) in the Forbidden City in 1914 as the first national museum in China (Figure 2.8).[28] In June 1914, the government issued the **Ordinance of the President's Prohibition against Antiquities Export** (Dazongtong Fabu Xianzhi Guwu Chukou Ling, 大总统发布限制古物出口令).[29] This Ordinance further tightened restrictions on the import and export trade in China's historic objects. It was also a further step in the promotion of national awareness among the populace to safeguard ancient objects, following the 1909 Promotion Measures.

In this heritage movement, the government used new terminology to define the objects that needed protection, and paved the way to further identify an expanded range of protections. In March 1916, the Beiyang Government issued the **Ordinance to the Provincial Governors of Civil Affairs for the Effective Preservation of Cultural Relics and Monuments of Previous Generations** (Wei Qie Shi Baocun Qiandai Wenwu

28 The Boxer Indemnity (known as Gengzi Indemnity in China) was named after the Boxer Protocol (also known as Final Protocol for the Settlement of the Disturbances of 1900 or Xinchou Treaty in China), which was signed between the Qing court and the Eight-Nation Alliance after China's military defeat in in suppressing the Boxer Rebellion in September 1901. In this treaty, which is usually regarded unequal, Qing China was required to pay 450 million taels of fine silver to eleven countries, including Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United States, Belgium, Spain, and the Netherlands. In addition, this amount of silver was required to be paid over 39 years at an annual interest rate of 4%, for a total over 900 million taels of principal and interest. This final sum of money is known as the "Boxer Indemnity".

29 Central Government of ROC. Dazongtong Fabu Xianzhi Guwu Chukou Ling [Ordinance of the President's Prohibition against Antiquities Export]. In Compilation of Archives on the History of the Republic of China, Third Series–Culture, edited by the Second Historical Archives of China, 185. Nanjing: Jiangsu Chinese Classics Publishing House, 1991.

Guji Zhi Ge Sheng Min Zheng Zhang Xun Ling, 为切实保存前代文物古迹致各省民政长训令), to emphasise both the government's determination to protect antiquities and monuments and the necessity of local support.[30] The term "*wenwu*" first appeared in a governmental document, becoming a central concept in Chinese conservation system that remains valid to this day. The concept of *wenwu*, also known as "cultural relics" or "cultural heritage" in official translation, also has a literal meaning of "cultural objects", which is one word away from the term *guwu*, "ancient objects". The new terminology thus conveys a clear message that the cultural dimension of an ancient object weights more heavily than a historical value embedded in a length of time. With this single broad rubric for heritage, and the categorisation and the standards and criteria it laid out, Chinese heritage discourse was formulated on conservative and object-oriented principles.

With these principles, in the chaotic period of regime change and struggles for power, the mission of the Internal Affairs Ministry was to track Chinese cultural relics, with a focus on their physical form and cultural significance. Heritage survey focused not only on surveying portable antiquities, which are easily stolen and smuggled, but also immovable monuments. In October 1916, in the form of an administrative order, Nei Wu Bu of the government issued the Interim Measures for the Preservation of Antiquities (Baocun Guwu Zanxing Banfa, 保存古物暂行办法).[31] As an extension of work on the conservation of heritage from the Qing Dynasty, the 1916 Interim Measures was the first regulation in China to require the protection of both **ancient objects** (*guwu*) and **ancient sites** (*guji*), with five provisions in place (Li 2011 ; Huang 2012a). With the advent of the authoritative Interim Measures, immovable heritage such as ancient walled cities, fortresses, barriers, towers, temples, shrines, pavilions, pagodas, bridges, wells and springs, lakes and ponds, dikes, and weirs were included under the scope of consideration. Although the regulation used the term *guwu* in the title, the increased content of built structures and landscapes actually covered a range of both *guwu* and *guji* for protection. Following the Interim Measures, each province implemented investigation of local heritage, and the corresponding survey manual became the basic reference for China's heritage census. This administrative order offered a general but overall view of the scope and categorisation of Chinese cultural heritage. Progress had been generated

30 Nei Wu Bu. Nei Wu Bu Ni Ding Baocun Guwu Zanxing Banfa Zhi Ge Sheng Zhang Du Tong Chi Shu Zun Xing Zi [Interim Measures for the Preservation of Antiquities and Ordinance to the Provincial Governors of Civil Affairs Drawn by the Internal Affairs Ministry]. In Compilation of Archives on the History of the Republic of China, Third Series – Culture, edited by the Second Historical Archives of China, 197–199. Nanjing: Jiangsu Chinese Classics Publishing House, 1991.

31 Ibid.

by social changes and the building of awareness, which included both a holistic reassessment of the autochthonous Chinese understanding of "ancient and old things" and the new notion of heritage conservation brought by foreigners through cross-border exchanges (Xu 2010). For the first time, the central authority of China officially confirmed the necessity of protecting antiquities and monuments for their character as cultural heritage, opening the gate to the study of conserving Chinese heritage. With an immature but specific and concrete scope, the ROC government took a further step towards Chinese society's acknowledgment of heritage and its conservation, going beyond the knowledge spread through paper media in the Qing Dynasty. According to Japanese architectural historian Tadashi Sekino, there were no complete heritage census results during this time (Xu 2010). Nevertheless, work around heritage moved forward in a calm and orderly manner during the fifteen-year transition period between 1912 and 1927, even though concern was limited to the survey of the condition of heritage and the collection of basic information about each historic object and site, without taking up practical approaches of conservation.

2.4 The Gradual Formation of a Legislative System (1928–1940s)

Since the 1920s, with the newly approved scope for national concern for heritage, there has been a demand for professionals in heritage conservation. The Promotion Measures for the Preservation of Monuments and the Interim Measures for the Preservation of Antiquities determined an increasing richness and diversity of heritage that could be qualified in heritage census registration. Multidisciplinary talents and experts were thus necessary for the expanded scope of heritage, to apply the perspectives of modern disciplines. By 1927, when the Nanjing National Government of ROC replaced the Beiyang Government, Chinese society had embraced a decade-long period of growth in Chinese heritage studies and conservation. During a period of transnational exchanges, a group of intellectuals who were educated abroad returned to China and actively participated in governmental organisations at the decision-making level. The National Government of ROC adopted various ideas from foreign countries, in order to demonstrate the advantages and superiority of the new government as an internationally aligned regime with a modern character. In this respect, the National Government's goals to protect Chinese cultural heritage had shifted. The project of the Qing court and

the Beiyang Government purely to defend property sovereignty was diluted in the National Government period. The Nanjing National Government dedicated itself to proving its capability to apply, promote, and develop the utility of a new discipline in the Chinese context, even though heritage conservation was Eurocentric in origin. The National Government therefore conducted exploratory experiments in management mechanisms and in the structure and hierarchies setting in the government. This benefitted the formulation of a legislative framework and a system of heritage conservation in China.

A group of pioneers educated overseas pushed China's heritage studies and conservation into international narratives. For over half a century, the concept of heritage conservation had permeated the minds of people who experienced international exchange in a bottom-up manner, as individuals. Their social influence and recognition in the Chinese context then expanded in a top-down way. The government has gradually taken charge of heritage conservation in a hierarchical manner since the early 20th century. In the respect, this thesis argues that although individuals' fortuitous introduction of conservation ideas has continued, their civil power has been marginalised. Earlier, individuals like Zhang Jian could establish museums on their own, protecting ancient objects in the form of exhibition.[32] Later, for wider heritage surveys, practical conservation, and restoration work on cultural relics in larger volumes and scales, the government authorities have ignored the unfold possibilities of individual forces and efforts in their design of a heritage conservation management system. In this section, we see progress in defining the scope of heritage and establishing a management system in term of legislation, but also how it became a government and not individual project.

2.4.1 Expanding scope of heritage registration

Since 1927, the Internal Affairs Ministry has promoted the Chinese heritage conservation system and developed it into a field of multi-disciplinary characters. Between 1927 and 1930, the national authority issued several regulations and established different governmental departments with specialised functions related to heritage studies and conservation. Under the ministry, there were two departments within the Department of Rites and Customs (Li Su Si, 礼俗司) concerning the

32 Zhang Jian established the first public museum, Nantong Museum (Jiangsu Province), in 1905, late Qing Dynasty. The first exhibited cultural relics and specimens in the museum were donated or sold by people from various parts of society and monasteries. In this, this thesis indeed notices the great energy of the populace.

management of historical objects and sites. One of these two was particularly in charge of the traditional antiquities and monuments of China related to religion. It issued an order in 1928 stipulating decennial registration for a census of historic buildings and instruments used in Buddhist or Taoist rites in temples. This stipulation continued the previous cultural heritage census established by the Beiyang government. However, the specified on-site survey of listing religious sites, buildings, and objects, reflected the superior status of religious parts of Chinese culture and their higher recognition over other heritage categories at that time. The other department was given responsibility for the management of antiquities and monuments in a broad sense. Under it, the Internal Affairs Ministry of the central government in 1928 issued the Regulations on the Preservation of Attractions, Monuments and Antiquities (Mingsheng Guji Guwu Baocun Tiaoli, 名胜古迹古物保存条例) as guidelines, expanding the content of the 1916 Interim Measures (Xue 2013, Meng 2019).

The 1928 Regulations first distinguished the content and meaning of *guji* and *guwu* in a regulatory sense, replacing the interchangeable mixed use of the two different terms. Within the scope of *guji* (ancient sites, or monuments), "architecture" became a new category rather than the respective objects themselves. The scope of *guji* was also defined to include two other categories: lakes and mountains, and ruins. Within the scope of *guwu* (ancient objects, or antiquities), historic weapons, clothing, ceramics, carvings, and miscellaneous items emerged as new formal categories. Additionally, attending to heritage that could be moved, the concept of "immovable" and "movable" were officially adopted in the legislative content to describe, respectively, the nature of *guji* and *guwu* in turn.

The new regulation revealed a wide range of vision and lofty aspirations of decision-makers working for the Nanjing National Government. They were now looking at Chinese heritage from perspectives of nature and culture, immobility and movability. On the basis of the amended categories for Chinese heritage in the 1928 *Regulations*, relevant departments in different provinces, cities, and counties carried out the largest and the longest-lasting national cultural heritage census since September 1928.[33] It is worth noting that "architecture" emerged in the official documents as an independent category rather than simply an ancient object eligible under a broad heritage registration categorisation. Under the architecture classification, ancient cities, fortresses, Buddhist and Taoist temples,

33 There was an attached appendix entitled Survey Form and Format of Attractions, Monuments and Antiquities (Mingsheng Guji Guwu Diaocha Biaoshi,名胜古迹古物调查表式), which was published together with the 1928 Regulations on the Preservation of Attractions, Monuments and Antiquities.

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towers, pavilions, pagodas, bridges, altars, gardens and orchards, dikes and weirs, and the other ancient structures all came out belong to the sort of "architecture" as *guji*, monuments and ancient sites with outstanding significance. In this respect, the Department of Rites and Customs had created an assemblage of culture-specific objects, sites, and landscapes, for an integrated system of heritage measurement and management.

2.4.2 Development and enactment of legislation

From the Qing Dynasty to the National Government period, the interests of intellectuals in the vanguard of transnational knowledge exchange had always affected government decision-making. Coinciding with the nationwide heritage census, Academy Yuan (Daxue Yuan, 大学院), the highest administrative body of the National Government in charge of academic and educational affairs, took on responsibility for multidisciplinary research on issues of Chinese heritage conservation. In 1928, the Academy established the Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities (Gugu Baoguan Weiyuanhui, 古物保管委员) in Shanghai, marking the rise of an officially mandated systematic study of heritage conservation.[34] The Commission lasted from 1928 to 1934, and specialised in research, excavation, and protection of antiquities and monuments nationwide. It included a number of foreign-educated professionals and experts in different relevant fields. With the increasing number of intellectuals in heritage studies returning to China, the Commission brought together a core group of twenty professionals for decision-making (Table 2.2). Many of the commission members were trained in the fields of history, linguistics, archaeology, geology, and philosophy with multidisciplinary backgrounds (Figure 2.9). Meanwhile, professionals who were specialised in architecture and restoration or conservation techniques were missing from this core. In this respect, ideas influenced by archaeology, geology or history became the main perspectives and significantly influenced actions and decisions made by the Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities.

34 The Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities should be distinguished from the Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities which was established later in 1934, to replace this first committee. After research in the historical archives, Huang Hsiang-yu (2012) in his paper "The R.O.C.'s Antiquities Conservation Law and Its Implementation Difficulties (1930–1949)" has criticised most published papers and news, noting the authors often confuse the 1928 Commission of the Academy and the later Central Commission, and their respective responsibilities, causing chronological confusion in the historical narrative of heritage studies in the ROC.

TABLE 2.2 This table shows the first generation of members of the Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities of the Academy. In this table, the commissioners' educating countries and disciplines indicate that these people brought modern concept of antiquities protection to China from Western countries in the 1920s and 1930s. It also shows that the commissioners' major fields of study are largely located in the fields of archaeology, history, psychology, geology and linguistics rather than architecture which became a focus of investigation of guji in the national heritage census. Source: Xu 2010; Huang 2012a.

Name	Life span	Country of education	Major fields of study	Career
Cai Yuanpei	1868–1940	Germany	philosophy, literature, civil history, ethnology	revolutionary, educator, politician, ethnologist
Chen Yinque	1890–1969	Japan, Germany, Switzerland, France, USA	history, linguistics	Chinese culture and Buddhist master
Fu Sinian	1896–1950	UK, Germany	experimental psychology, comparative linguistics	professor of humanities and social science, director of the Institute of History and Philology (IHP) of Academia Sinica
Gao Lu	1877–1947	Belgium	astronomy	astronomer
Gu Jiegang	1893–1980	No overseas experience	ancient history, historical geography, folklore	Chinese historian, philosopher
Hu Shi	1891–1962	USA	psychology (pragmatism), agricultural science	literati, philosophers, historians, textual researcher, ethicist
Li Ji	1896–1979	USA	psychology, sociology, anthropology, ethnology	archaeologist
Li Shizeng	1881–1973	France	Philosophy of biological evolution, agriculture	educator, anarchist
Li Siguang	1889–1971	Japan, UK	geomechanics	vice president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, minister of geology
Li Zongdong	1895–1974	France	history	secretary general of the Palace Museum, professor of history
Liu Fu	1891–1934	UK, France	linguistics	linguist, poet
Ma Heng	1881–1955	No overseas experience	epigraphy, archaeology	epigraphy expert, seal engraver, dean of the Palace Museum
Shen Jianshi	1887–1947	Japan	linguistics, archival science	linguistician, archivist
Weng Wenhao	1889–1971	Belgium	geology	geologist, educator, politician, father of the modern Chinese oil industry

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TABLE 2.2 This table shows the first generation of members of the Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities of the Academy. In this table, the commissioners' educating countries and disciplines indicate that these people brought modern concept of antiquities protection to China from Western countries in the 1920s and 1930s. It also shows that the commissioners' major fields of study are largely located in the fields of archaeology, history, psychology, geology and linguistics rather than architecture which became a focus of investigation of guji in the national heritage census. Source: Xu 2010; Huang 2012a.

Name	Life span	Country of education	Major fields of study	Career
Xu Binchang	1888–1976	France	archaeology, history	archaeologist, historian, president of Beijing Normal University
Yi Peiji	1880–1937	Japan	archaeology	politician, scholar, educator
Yuan Fuli	1893–1987	USA	geology	professor of geography and meteorology
Zhang Ji	1882–1947	Japan, France, Switzerland, UK	economics	Revolutionary, anarchist, director of the National History Institute
Zhang Renjie	1877–1950	France	finance	trader, anarchist, revolutionary
Zhu Jiahua	1893–1963	Germany, Switzerland	metallurgy, geology, philosophy	politician, geologist, educator

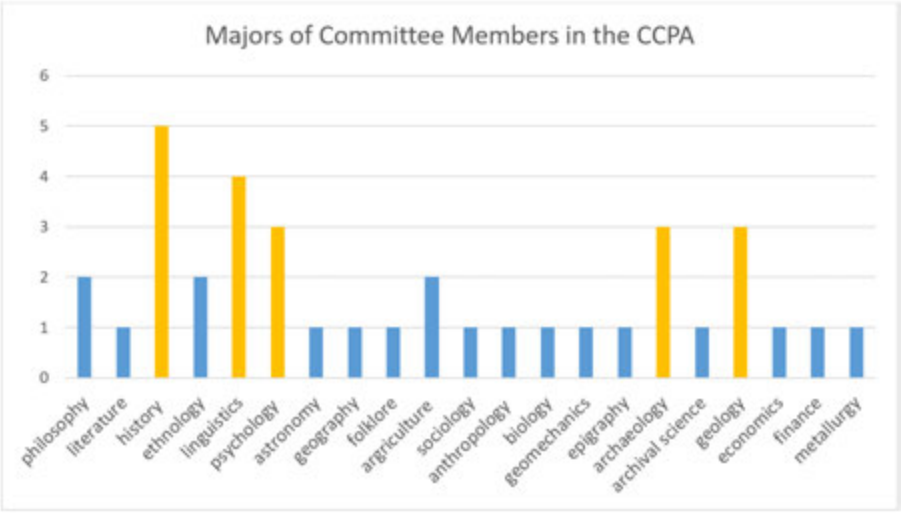


FIG. 2.9 The educational backgrounds of the members of the Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities of the Academy were diverse, and overall, training in the fields of history, linguistics, psychology, archaeology, and geology was the most common.

In the name of conservation, the Nanjing National Government attracted and absorbed a large number of well-educated young aspiring individuals for top-down popularisation of knowledge dominated by ideas from Europe and America. Fields such as museology, heritage restoration, archaeology, history, geology, and linguistics were used to mobilise national awareness of and attention to ancient objects, sites, and landscapes. The government also used the group of young experts methodologically, using them to introduce effective regulations in a short period of time related to foreign heritage conservation. They also were to produce articles supporting the conceptual and institutional revolution and reforms in China. Both the Department of Rites and Customs and the Commission worked to develop Chinese heritage conservation affairs. Examining the content of the 1928 Regulations, this thesis points out that the heritage registered in the new classifications in the new classifications in the heritage census was not the same heritage for which the National Government had prepared legal preservation measures. This thesis understands this to be the difference between "salvage measures" and "extensive protection". In the ROC National Government period, preventing vandalism of Chinese heritage by foreigners was obviously more urgent than educating Chinese people about their domestic heritage. Different national strategies overall, and differences in governmental functions, organisational structures, and composition of staff had led to legislation with inconsistent objectives for heritage survey and heritage conservation measures respectively.

After more than half a century of embracing a more global narrative, heritage conservation in China boomed in the 1930s. The large-scale and ongoing census of cultural relics helped the governing bodies get a basic picture of Chinese heritage. However, if a system for determining the degree of deterioration and the value of each item of cultural heritage is missing, conservation practices, like military tactics only on paper, produce no practical actions. In this respect, in spite of regulations and administrative orders like the Ordinance of the President's Prohibition against Antiquities Export to restrict illegal excavation and export of antiquities, man-made damage and destruction of historical objects, sites, and landscapes still occurred from time to time. And so, through the integrated academic backgrounds of the commission members, the central government drafted the first truly modern national law in 1930—the Antiquities Preservation Law (Guwu Baocun Fa, 古物保存法)—as a response to the continuing theft of antiquities and the still weak awareness of heritage and its ownership within the territory of China. The central government treated the expert knowledge within of Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities as a trustworthy source, promoting the creation of legislation. The government promulgated the Antiquities Preservation Law on June 2, 1930. With 14 acts, it came into effect on June 15, 1931. The 1930 Law regulated three issues in general: the scope of *guwu*, ownership of and authority over heritage, and mechanisms for managing *guwu* (Xu 2010; Li 2011; Huang 2012b).

First of all, through the Law the central government affirmed the supremacy of academic research in heritage conservation, and further established the Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities (Zhongyang Gugu Baoguan Weiyuanhui, 中央古物保管委员会). In comparison with the previous Commission, the state government granted the new Central Commission broad administrative powers in addition to its expertise of research. Considering the specialities of the experts, the Antiquities Preservation Law directly manifested the limits of the cultural heritage that had been included in the nationwide census via the 1928 Regulations on the Preservation of Attractions, Monuments and Antiquities (Chen 2014). Heritage objects and sites related to archaeology, history, paleontology also became protected, and the *Law* grated the Central Commission absolute power to determine the specific forms of these three types of heritage (Xu 2010). Second, the *Law* asserted the public nature of most heritage, and the right of state authorities to be informed of and to manage heritage in private hands. In particular, it clarified the full ownership by the state of underground antiquities in China, and the processes for full regulatory surveillance of heritage excavation and export. Third, in order to facilitate the implementation of the *Law*, the Executive Institute (Xing Zheng Yuan, 行政院) issued the Enforcement Rules for the Antiquities Preservation Law (Guwu Baocun Fa Shishi Xize, 古物保存法实施细则) in July 3, 1931.[35] The 19 Articles of the Enforcement Rules repeatedly emphasised the necessity to protect heritage; it was more about establishing rules about management, such as how to register heritage, how to conduct excavations, how to manage heritage practitioners, and how to reward and punish those involved (Huang 2012b). Between 1929 and 1934, the central government sponsored a series of discussions and made a series of attempts to reorganise the committee of specialists on heritage management. It promulgated the Regulations on the Organisation of the Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities (Zhongyang Guwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui Zuzhi Tiaoli, 中央古物保管委员会组织条例) in 1932, to supplement the implementation of both the 1930 Law and the 1931 Enforcement Rules (Xu 2010; Huang 2012b). The national government made structural and hierarchical adjustments to the relevant organisations and institutions for more effective heritage management. It is worth noting that the national government retained the right of expropriating heritage sites for other use in accordance with national needs. Furthermore, according to Article 7 of the Enforcement Rules, the discovery of and approaches to Chinese heritage were to be approved by the Central Commission and submitted to the Executive Institute for its records. Indeed, the many principles promulgated in these rules and regulations indicate that the national authorities had the most decisive power to interpret the

35 Xing Zheng Yuan. 1931. Guwu Baocun Fa Shishi Xize [Enforcement Rules for the Antiquities Preservation Law]. Taipei, Academia Historia Office.

way in which cultural heritage could be handled. The Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities had this overarching guiding ideology on heritage measures in the National Government period.

2.4.3 Research for management

In order to demonstrate its unprecedented sophistication, the ROC central government promoted the Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities to further launch modern ideas in China. In the 1930s, under the Central Commission of the Executive Institute, three initiatives were pursued in tandem. One was the study of technologies and techniques of protecting heritage; a second, the comparison of regulations of different foreign countries; and the third, the ongoing investigation of existing traditional Chinese antiquities and monuments. By 1937, the Central Commission had published several documents and handbooks based on research on different foreign countries. For example, scholars translated regulations of foreign countries and published the *Compilation of Legislation on the Custodianship of Antiquities in Various Countries* (Ge Guo Guwu Baoguan Fagui Huibian, 各国古物保管法规汇编) in April of 1935.[36] The translated contents focused on three aspects: (1) legislation regarding the conservation of historic buildings in Italy, France, Belgium, and the United Kingdom; (2) laws and acts on the custodianship of antiquities in France, Switzerland, Egypt, Japan, and the Soviet Union; and (3) regulations on the export of antiquities, using a Philippine ordinance as a reference.[37] In the meantime, the Central Commission also published the Regulations of the Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities (Zhongyang Guwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui Fagui Tiaoli, 中央古物保管委员会法规条例).[38] In the process of all this, the Executive Institute in 1935 redefined the scope and varieties of objects, in 12 categories, that needed to be conserved, issuing the Outline of the Tentative Scope and Categories of Antiquities (Zanding Guwu de Fanwei ji Zhonglei Dagang, 暂定古物的范围及种类大纲) (Xu 2010). *Guwu*, in the form of movable objects, now covered almost every old object that was relevant to the concept of heritage in the Chinese context. The major category of *guji*, immovable heritage, was not included in this administrative document.

36 Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities. 1935. Ge Guo Guwu Baoguan Fagui Huibian [Compilation of Legislation on the Custodianship of Antiquities in Various Countries]. Shanghai, Shanghai Library.

37 Ibid.

38 Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities. 1935. Zhongyang Guwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui Fagui Tiaoli [Regulations of the Central Commission for the Custodianship of Antiquities]. Shanghai, Shanghai Library.

The expertise of the Commission's members was an important factor in devising legislation. At the same time, the way in which they, as public officials, devised a national strategy for heritage conservation was also important. Following the Antiquities Preservation Law of 1930, the work and research focus of the Central Commission focused on the management and study of movable antiquities rather than immovable monuments (Huang 2012b; Wang and Wu 2018). The research and administrative work of the Central Commission was suspended in 1937 when the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (Lugou Bridge Incident between Chinese and Japanese armies) took place and escalated. It was not until 1943 that archaeologist Li Ji and other prior senior experts proposed to reactivate the Central Commission's working statutes, rules, and methods, involving thirteen experts predominantly trained in archaeology (Huang 2012b). Since the promulgation of the Law in 1930, conservation and investigation of antiquities and monuments in China in terms of legislation and a management system had been largely influenced by the discipline of archaeology in the ROC period. The significant involvement of archaeologists and philosophers in formulating the ideas of conservation determined the approach of maintaining material remains rather than proactive additional heritage practices.

2.5 Entanglement: Emerging Wenwu and a Shaped Exchange

2.5.1 Use of the term wenwu: an increasingly blurred concept

A distinct terminological and paraphrastic division between *guwu* and *guji* created by the National Government reveals two national strategies regarding Chinese heritage: to safeguard movable heritage from illegal transport and to produce a comprehensive overview of immovable heritage. In the 1930s, the government put more emphasis on the cultural relevance and significance of heritage in the legislation being reshaped for of heritage conservation (Xu 2010). In 1934, the Executive Institute established the Old Capital Cultural Relics Arrangement Commission (Jiudu Wenwu Zhengli Weiyuanhui, 旧都文物整理委员会) and published the Organisational Regulations of the Old Capital Cultural Relics Management Commission (Jiudu Wenwu Zhengli Weiyuanhui Zuzhi Guicheng, 旧都文物整理委员

会组织规程) to regulate the Central Commission's heritage conservation work in Beijing (then known as "Beiping" or "Peking"). The 1916 Ordinance to the Provincial Governors of Civil Affairs for the Effective Preservation of Cultural Relics and Monuments of Previous Generations issued by the previous Beiyang Government introduce the term *wenwu* to the public and into legislative heritage discourse. After about twenty years of development, the term *wenwu* re-appeared in China's regulatory system and consistently maintained its legislative significance for heritage and the mechanisms around it.

However, the renewed emphasis on the term *wenwu* disrupted the order and clarity that had been established by the Central Commission. The definition and scope of heritage under the term *wenwu* became blurred. The term *wenwu* has a literal meaning of "cultural objects": the commission attempted to use this concept to describe heritage broadly, but then with a focus on historic buildings. In this respect, under the official management of the department, professionals in Beijing put their efforts into the repair and restoration of historic buildings with cultural significance, such as altars, temples, or palaces. Ancient painting styles and materials were also within the scope of work of the newly established *Wenwu* Arrangement Commission. The term w*enwu* is integrative in scope and includes the content of both *guwu* and *guji*.

This thesis suggests that in the translated legislation from European countries regarding architectural conservation that was compiled by the Central Commission, some experts noticed a tight interaction between the conservation of historic buildings and a dynamic international heritage movement. The reemphasis on cultural relics in the capital city, and the creation of new ones, was an experimental attempt to take a different approach to architectural structures and sites that differed from antiquities found through excavations. By comparison with the importance of movable heritage in a discourse dominated by archaeologists in the central government, heritage conservation of historic buildings and sites, as immovable heritage, was not a major concern in official implementation.

The English idea of "cultural relic", meaning "an object, custom, or belief of cultural significance and historical or sentimental interest surviving from an earlier time" thus became a unique and fresh term to describe a wide array of ancient things. Cultural relic has reference to all the heritage-related elements encapsulated in the previous regulations and laws. From the perspective of terminological movements in the field of heritage conservation, the establishment of the Old Capital Cultural Relics Arrangement Commission in 1935 marked the beginning of China's heritage conservation in under a culture-dominated environment, including issues of heritage documentation and management, conservation practices, and academic research.

Nevertheless, the term has created ambiguity in interpretation of heritage, with the existence of terms *guwu* and *guji*. In the 1930s, the formation, evolution, and completion of heritage conservation in its early stages basically paved the way for developing a heritage conservation system. It laid the foundation for the ensuing regime of the People's Republic of China to continue to use the notion of *wenwu* in its legislative formulations.

2.5.2 A shaped transformation of an imported concept

Individuals continued to accumulate ideas related to heritage conservation and these influenced the organisation and development of cultural endeavours in China. From individuals to government, from mass media to legal formulations, from *guwu* to *wenwu*, stakeholders have interacted with and applied the concepts of heritage conservation for changing purposes in an environment of transnational exchanges. Stephen Ward (2000, 55–56) has suggested six "diffusional episodes" of "importing" and "exporting" notions in urban planning: "authoritarian imposition," "contested imposition," "negotiated imposition," "undiluted borrowing," "selective borrowing," and "synthetic innovation". This classification is situated in the power competition between countries, at the level of national governments which recognise and understand ideas in her own way and "import" and "export" ideas through cross-border exchanges. Following Ward's argument, this thesis suggests that there are also layers in absorbing heritage conservation in China. Taking Stephen Ward's (2000) ideas of knowledge "importing" and knowledge "exporting" as a point of departure, this thesis suggests that there are three layers in absorbing heritage conservation between the 1840s and the 1940s. The three layers are respectively "defensive learning", "cumulative borrowing", and "synthetic innovation".

2.5.2.1 Defensive learning

When there is a disparity in national strength, transnationalism may become the justification for colonialism. In the process it can promote contacts between nations, acculturation, and enculturation. Over 100 years in China, increasing cross-border exchanges through either the Silk Road or the signed treaty ports have brought Chinese society both advantages and disadvantages. In the cultural communication that took place, Chinese people were "forced" to embrace the idea of protecting antiquities, without any absolute force. Such "force" existed, either implicitly or explicitly, once other countries began to extend their state powers into China and

to pursue possibilities of cultural input. In this respect, any explicit "force" usually establishes a certain political, sociocultural, and economic environment. Under such configurations, spontaneous behaviours of individuals are influenced by the external conditions and environment, which becomes a relatively implicit force but still a direct factor. After the opening of the treaty ports, Chinese people with various motives travelled abroad or welcomed foreign immigrants, leading to varying attitudes towards the new concepts and knowledge they encountered. Nevertheless, this thesis argues that there has been a soft resistance against foreign forces, following the humiliation caused by the Opium Wars and aspiring to regain national dignity.

Many leading figures saw learning about foreign cultures, their knowledge and technology, as a way to gain the ability for soft resistance. Having been defeated in the Opium Wars by technical gaps in artillery and its manufacture, feudal Qing China recognised advanced ideas and techniques, and sought to develop experienced experts who were both scarce and required (Downs 2014, 108). From Lin Zhen to Bin Chun and Zhang Deyi, and then to Yung Wing, each had his own opinions, and therefore the country developed varied perspectives. Coming from different starting points, Lin Zhen described at length the hardships suffered by his Chinese compatriots when they first entered the unfamiliar environment of the United States, while Bin Chun marvelled at the Industrial Revolution (Day 2018). By comparison, Prince Gong promoted the Self-Strengthening Movement and as a member of the power core advocated strongly learning from the industrialised. A well-known slogan of "seeking to defend and strengthen the country by learning the advanced technology of the West (shi yi chang ji yi zhi yi, 师夷长技以制夷)," included in literature such as *Haiguo Tuzhi* (海国图志), has been prominent since the late Qing Dynasty, and has had far-reaching influence in China. In this respect, this thesis refers to importation of culture through transnational exchanges with the ultimate aim of defending the country against foreign invasion and colonial powers as defensive learning.

Nevertheless, defensive learning is not all about confrontation with colonialism: the intellectuals' interest in foreign culture goes beyond resistance. Particularly starting from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the country saw increasingly rising enthusiasm by Chinese people for travel and learning abroad. In the ensuing entanglements, there were certainly voices against transnational exchanges for multiple reasons, such as retaining the so-called national ethos, a plain hatred of the colonialists, or worries and fears about travelling across the ocean. However, once people start going abroad to see the world, the impact can be subtle. Fascination with unfamiliar culture often occurs naturally. For example, when Ernst Boerschmann and Osvald Sirén came to China in the early 20th century, they developed great interest in traditional Chinese temples and palaces, and residences and gardens, and

became early experts in these areas of research. In the process of promoting and localising heritage conservation in China, the trend towards learning from Europe had become irreversible in the 20th century.

The import or export of certain but diverse heritage discourses was shaped not only by individuals of different social positions and backgrounds, but also by variable Sino-foreign relations. In Europe, Chinese foreign relations took subtly different forms depending on the country engages. In his book titled *The History of the Relations between the Low Countries and China in the Qing Era* (1644-1911), Willy Vande Walle and Noel Golvers (2003) claim that the small European lowland countries, such as Belgium and the Netherlands, had less voice internationally than countries with stronger armaments and more colonial power during China's treaty era. For this very reason, aware of the disparity of power, Chinese youth and intellectuals preferred to learn from powerful nations such as Great Britain, the United States, and France. Between the late 19th and the early 20th century, countries such as the United States, France, Germany, Britain, and Japan, a neighbouring country that took the lead in modernisation in Asia and accessed the dividends of capitalism, were considered powerful by Chinese authorities and educated youth, and became many people's preferred destinations for seeking advanced or novel ideas.

As a consequence of colonialism, globalisation, industrialisation, and various social consciousness awakening movements, then, what Chinese intellectuals have communicated to their home community is the attitude of learning from foreign powers and sharing that knowledge with others. In the process, the philosophy of learning from whichever country is perceived to be the greatest threat is also present. The young generation who embraced the idea of learning from the powerful subsequently promoted a modern science movement in China. Evident indicates that Chinese elites attached high importance to foreign knowledge between the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. This way of thinking reached its peak in the 1930s, and was connected with a series of momentous heritage-related actions and initiatives in legislation, academic research, and practices. Learning for defence proved its practical superiority in a society in transition, and deeply permeated the decision-making environment and systems. However, the attitude of chasing an advanced Eurocentric civilisation brought radical inquisitiveness along with the need to manage disorder in the following decades, although the full set of drawbacks were not fully exposed in the ROC period confronting the turmoil of wars.

2.5.2.2 Cumulative borrowing

The heritage movement in China has always been led by the ideas and decisions made by persons who have the capacity to control the making of discourse. Directed by nationalism and the awareness of the cultural significance of protecting ancient objects, heritage has had the attention of the state government, since 1909, when Chinese authorities first included heritage-related content in its regulations. China has subsequently promoted heritage conservation affairs in legislation. Transnational exchanges in various forms and employment of overseas-educated experts by national and municipal government have indeed brought more modern advanced ideas and technologies. Instead of simply preventing the loss of cultural heritage, China has not only imported the new concept of heritage conservation, but also created adaptive regulations, principles, new definitions, practical guidelines, and overall conservation strategies to suit the actual situation in China. However, in the early stages of developing concepts and practices, the lack of human and material resources resulted in a variety of disciplines and their attendant interests distributed among the governmental stakeholders who led heritage conservation. From the introduction of museology in the mid-19th century to the practice of archaeology in the 1930s, the concept of heritage conservation in China has been shaped by an abundance of substance. However, the abundance has in the meanwhile caused confusion about heritage recognition and raised barriers to consolidating conservation goals.

Both the organisational structure and the making of legislation for heritage conservation in the 1930s reflected a quest for breadth and inclusiveness of disciplines under a single concept. Obviously, there should be differentiation apparent between the protections of prehistoric items and historic buildings, or between Chinese calligraphies and paintings and unearthed ruins. However, with the involvement of experts from various subjects, the central government brought together all the relevant categories in the *Antiquities Preservation Law*, and used the same paradigm of inclusiveness in requiring practical implementation by the subordinate executive agencies. Therefore, although this thesis appreciates the “studious spirit” of the central government and its advanced consciousness in recognising the essence of multi-disciplinary development in the field of conservation, it is not arguing for a single theme for that development. In this respect, it argues that the Chinese approach to heritage conservation is neither the “undiluted borrowing” nor the “selective borrowing” indicated in Stephen Ward’s work. The importation of selected new ideas, progressive in the foreign countries they came from, shaped the cumulative knowledge assembled and the legislation crafted.

The cumulative borrowing and integration of knowledge of European origins in China has suffered certain amount of "indigestion" in understanding during the localising process. In European countries, as a kind of artistic philosophy, practitioners have constantly presented their viewpoints on "conservation" through practical approaches to the restoration of historic buildings, and have consequently stimulated discussions and debates. This thesis sees the time-consuming polishing of a theoretical concept as an important process as it unfolds in the context of the study through the examination of each case of conservation. The concept of "conservation" matured in different European countries through adaptions there, was consistent with its historical context, and could then be projected onto the protection of other categories of things. By comparison, the concept entered a traditional Chinese context and helped the Chinese people to see the connection between cultural heritage and cultural identity of a country in a mind-blowing gesture.[39] However, this thesis argues that Chinese society was not ready to engage with the concept of "conservation", which was almost "naive" in China in the 1930s. Furthermore, despite absorbing educated youth from different fields related to heritage protection, study of heritage and conservation did not become adequate simply by studying foreign regulations and making heritage census. Because of the lack of depth of the conservation concept as studied by Chinese research organisations at the time, there was no capacity to reasonably place subjects, such as biology, geology and archaeology, within a "borrowed" heritage conservation framework, which had evolved in Europe in the service of saving damaged built structures.

2.5.2.3 Synthetic innovation

Official adoption of the term "*wenwu*" and the ideas it carried marked an important stage of synthesis and innovation in the Chinese application of heritage conservation. The creative use of the term on the one hand reflected the central government's desire for the distinctiveness of the protection system, being based on the European models but reframed for Chinese needs. On the other hand, bringing in the term was the last resort for dealing with the sheer volume of things needing protection. However, this thesis is skeptical of this innovation, especially in its application in

39 Li Shiqiao (2010, 43 - 44) quotes Liang Qichao's travel notes that "Westerners often say that art is the reflection of the characters of nations. I did not understand this in the past, but here in Europe I am beginning to realize this connection everywhere", and this quotation is included in *Impressions of Travels in Europe* (Ouyou Xinying Lu, 欧游心影录) in Liang Qichao Quanji. Liang Qichao's narrative reflected from the side the lack of awareness of art and culture people in the Chinese community at that time.

Chinese heritage practices. In the name of conservation, the central government of ROC endeavoured to justify itself as a distinctly modern regime and attempted to present to the public an image of a knowledgeable and intelligent government and governing system. Legislation, a performance platform through which the government can be seen by the public, was well utilised by the central government. Indeed, once the central governmental started to gravitate toward and accept new ideologies and bodies of knowledge from outside China, a new world of ethics and politics appeared. However, it was not really possible to convince Chinese citizens, who had grown up in a traditional Confucian culture, to believe in such "newness" in a top-down manner. In this respect, although the conservation perspective was recognised and elaborated by authorities and the governing bodies, people actually participating in heritage conservation could still make their own interpretations of conservation according to their own understanding. The integration of disciplines under "*wenwu*" could not compel people from different backgrounds to unify their ideas. And so under this unified term, this thesis argues, there are natural differences coming from people's positions, backgrounds, and upbringing. This even though their ultimate purpose was similar, to contribute to the preservation or dissemination of Chinese cultural relics. As outside observers, we see how differences in interpretation and understanding were "reasonable" given individuals' self-understanding and knowledge. The individuals themselves might not perceive their differences. The diversity of individuals shaped the development of heritage conservation in China. In this respect, this thesis proposes that there are problems with the synthetic innovation. Under the framework, protecting *wenwu* becomes the first priority. Boundaries in heritage practices of different types of legacies have been vanishing, creating negligence in the approach to a large amount of heritage.

2.6 Conclusion

Over the centuries, heritage conservation has always been a dynamic complex concept. Beginning with each individual's unconscious contributions and its cultural import, the process of its induction in China has also witnessed in turn society' and the authorities' tentative engagement with the unfamiliar, a consequent rising awareness among the masses, official interventions, and the participation of educated intellectuals. The extensive contribution of stakeholders coming from multiple perspectives shaped the basic definition and regulations in the 1930s, with a number of prominent experts leading the development of China's heritage

studies. In addition to unself-conscious introduction of conservation-related ideas by individuals, the aims of the successive central authorities in the name of conservation changed and went through three main stages before 1949. In those, there were different approaches to localising imported foreign ideas.

First, the successive regimes, in the name of conservation, protected the sovereignty of cultural property within its territory and protecting the dignity of the last dynasty. China proposed a vision of "learning from the West" and integrated into a social trend. Second, the national governments in the name of conservation, promoted and extended the influence of knowledge related to heritage coming from Europe and America. It worked from the top down, introducing the idea and conveying the advantages of "borrowing" knowledge to both decision-makers and the general public. Third, the authorities were not content to simply learn from foreign countries through cross-border exchanges. Thus, in the name of conservation, the central government of the ROC strove to prove itself an independent and advanced governing body by proposing a new definition and scope for cultural heritage. From knowledge "learning" to "borrowing" and "innovating", the central authority of each regime, the main stakeholder who undertook to responsibly absorb the foreign concept of heritage conservation, utilised the imported idea to achieve nationalistic goals for national rejuvenation.

However, in the process, with a lack of research and experience in the practices of the imported concept, the idea to protect Chinese cultural relics differentiates itself from Eurocentric heritage conservation. In particular, the necessity to conserve monuments and historic buildings, have been largely marginalised for long at a government level. A group of overseas-trained young architects noticed the phenomenon and made initiative efforts to protect Chinese historic architecture in terms of research and practice. Their concentrated research dissociated the content from the heritage discourse and system formulated by authorities. In the next chapter, from a perspective of a group of early architects, this thesis reveal their exploration of conservation of Chinese architecture as an independent academic body. In this respect, we see the discourse from another leading group who has actively engaged in the localisation of a new concept of heritage conservation, and its interaction with the government.

3 Raising Concern for Historical Architecture

The Study of the Conservation of Immovable Built Cultural Heritage

3.1 Introduction

The involvement of experts trained in the subject of architecture renewed an emphasis on the conservation of built heritage. Chinese heritage practice has always been guided and constrained by authorities and the legislation they created. The establishment of the Old Capital Cultural Relics Arrangement Commission in 1934 not only revived the Chinese term of "*wenwu*" within the scope of heritage conservation, but also promoted restoration work on immovable built heritage over collection of movable treasures. Although the term "cultural relic" or "cultural heritage" in China has always covered a broad scope of heritage, Jiang Jieshi's (also known as Chiang Kai-shek, 蒋介石) decision to show cultural strength through immovable heritage offered opportunities for the protection of historic buildings. Chinese architectural researchers formed the first research association focusing on Chinese built heritage in a modern sense. In it, they adapted a conservation theory suitable for the Chinese cultural context under the overall national discourse of cultural relics that emerged in the 1930s. The developing independent research community composed of architects and architectural historians interacted with the central authorities who made the heritage regulations and established strategy at the time. Through site survey and heritage practices, they worked hard to propose conservation principles and

measures with a Chinese perspective. Nevertheless, those practitioners who have participated in the movement to conserve of built heritage still see obstacles and deficiencies in the localisation of the imported concept.

This chapter asks "What is heritage conservation for architectural experts?" and "How did experts promote and apply heritage conservation to protect historic buildings?" It takes the mode of cooperation between the government and the Society for the Study of Chinese Architecture (SSCA, *Zhongguo Yingzao Xueshe*, 中国营造学社) as a starting point for discussion.[40] It then investigates the qualifications and methods of the SSCA in providing academic guidance and advice on the conservation of cultural relics, and looks at its contributions in establishing a Chinese-adapted heritage discourse for the conservation of immovable built cultural heritage. This thesis argues that these pioneers laid a foundation on which heritage conservation has developed in a cycle moving from mass field surveys and pilot practices, to the formulation of theory. From a national concern for movable heritage to wider care for a larger scope of legacy, heritage conservation in China had wider recognition and a gradual wider acceptance in society after approximately one century of progress in the mid-20th century. Yet the difficulties of localisation are still implicated in both the process of cross-cultural exchange and the evolution of the concept itself, producing a dilemma that impacts on contemporary heritage practices.

3.2 Conservation Practice: Interaction between the Government and Architects

Experts attained the opportunity to explore and conduct practical methods of conservation in China by 1935, although there was an interruption. In 1934, Jiang Jieshi, then president of the Republic of China, urged local authorities to take responsibility for heritage management after seeing extensive defacement of altars and temples in Beijing.

40 The name *Zhongguo Yingzao Xueshe* contains six Chinese characters and three parts. In it, *Zhongguo* means China and *Xueshe* means society; in addition, there are various translations of *Yingzao*, which is most understood as architectural construction. In this respect, the name could be literally translated as Chinese Society of Architectural Construction, and it is well known as the Society for the Study of Chinese Architecture in English literature (Fairbank 1994).

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He noted, “The altars and temples in Pingjing (Beijing) are all of marvellous architecture with a long history, and are able to represent the culture of the Orient” (Zhou 2007, 120). Following Jiang’s directive, the Old Capital Cultural Relics Arrangement Commission selected more than twenty important ancient buildings for restoration in 1935. They also appointed experts from the Society for the Study of Chinese Architecture as consultants, and employed engineers and renowned ancient building craftsmen to undertake design and construction for the selected projects of conservation and restoration. Opinion leaders among the architects, such as Liang Sicheng (also known as Liang Ssu-ch`eng, 梁思成) and Liu Dunzhen (刘敦桢), thus cannot be ignored as stakeholders in heritage conservation practices. Much as in the development trajectory of early heritage practices in Europe, architects and related practitioners were the consultants or constructors who oversaw restoration of altars and temples. For example, in the restoration and repair work of Qinian Dian of Tiantan, architect Yang Tingbao (杨廷宝) from the design institute Kwan, Chu and Yang Architects was the general project manager.[41] In the process, architects frequently visited the site to take photographs and make surveying maps, and closely cooperated with experienced crafts people, learning from their practical knowledge (Cui 2006). In the early effort, Yang Tingbao, as the general project director, worked with the craftspeople who throughout their lives had done maintenance work on the ancient buildings. Through their collaboration, they replaced the flaking paintwork and developed harmonious colour palettes. At this point, we can see the emergence of architectural conservation and art restoration.

Architects could draw upon their architectural practices for lessons. Unfortunately, however, the first attempts to restore significant ancient buildings lasted less than two years. In effect, they did not have sufficient experience and evidence yet to build a discourse on the conservation of immovable built cultural heritage, nor to support refining a local heritage narrative. Nevertheless, with the SSCA officially accredited to establish professionalism, and with the first generation of architects to return to China with overseas education experience, the work of the SSCA continued during the Sino-Japanese War. The flexibility of an academic institute and the endorsement of the central government together guaranteed that the first generation of architects carried out orderly continuous study of conservation practices and mapping of historic buildings. These advantages facilitated the development of a series of principles of architectural conservation, leaving points that can be referenced, considered in retrospect, and discussed today.

41 The full name of Tiantan is the Temple of Heaven: an Imperial Sacrificial Altar in Beijing. Qinian Dian is in the northern part of Tiantan and is the earliest building in this place.

3.3 Academic Movement: The Conservation of Immovable Historic Buildings

The core idea of launching the study of traditional architecture in China was inseparable from the trend of "learning foreign advanced knowledge" in the ROC period. In the 1930s, an early group of young architects who were trained in architectural history and design in America and European countries became involved in China's heritage movement. They drew on the skills and knowledge gained in their overseas subject training to study Chinese built heritage and methods for conservation. The call to pursue ideological change by learning from the West influenced not only members of the Central Commission who served the government, but also significantly guided the founders of the Society for the Study of Chinese Architecture, the first architecture-related research organisation in a modern sense. With the support of the then national government led by Jiang Jieshi and founded by persons with political and social influence, the SSCA developed smoothly through the 1930s, overcoming the constraints of the times.

3.3.1 Establishment and development of the academic institution

The establishment of an influential academic organisation that would be trusted by the central government requires some advantageous conditions. Recognition of members as distinguished personages and their networks in Chinese society were important elements behind the establishment and the continuing contributions of the SSCA. The political influence of the founder Zhu Qiqian, the distinguished family backgrounds of organising researchers, a wave of returning architects educated overseas, and adequate start-up capital all contributed to the success of the SSCA. Zhu Qiqian, who established the Society for the Study of Chinese Architecture in January 1930, had previously been a senior official in the Beiyang Government. Utilising his acquired contacts and accumulated funds, Zhu invited Liang Sicheng to organise a gathering of academic forces. Named after China's first specialised book regarding architecture and craftsmanship, *Yingzao Fashi* (*Treatise on Architectural Methods* or *State Building Standards,* 营造法式), the Society, *Yingzao Xueshe*, was

dedicated to surveying the sites and mapping traditional Chinese architecture.[42] The SSCA actively functioned as an academic organisation from the 1930s to the 1940s, and rapidly rose to prominence for its expertise in the research of Chinese architectural heritage. In its more than ten years of activity, the members of SSCA made profound research progress and produced significant results for later generations outcomes regarding Chinese historic buildings and sites (Zhu 2009).[43]

3.3.1.1 The opportunity to establish the SSCA

Having connections in society and recognition by important people helped establish the SSCA and support its mission. Liang Qichao, father of Liang Sicheng and friend of Zhu Qiqian, profoundly influenced and transmitted ideas, in a subtle way, for the reformation of a modern China to those around him.[44] Liang Qichao was a vital link between the political and financial resources brought by Zhu Qiqian and the academic world represented by his son Liang Sicheng. Coming from different perspectives, they shared a consensus on the importance and urgency of studying traditional Chinese architecture. The SSCA thus became the vehicle to consolidate professionals interested in sustaining the continued existence of traditional Chinese architecture. It reached out as well, circulating to others the importance of conserving Chinese historic buildings.

Inspired by Liang Qichao, the opportunity to establish the SSCA and the goal of making use of history to promote an innovative Chinese culture were inseparable. Zhu Qiqian, upon leaving government office, drew on his interest in Chinese historical buildings in his retirement to envision and establish the research organisation. As Zhu had strong political influence from having been a senior officer in both the Qing court and the Beiyang Government, his access to resources was relatively

42 The term *Yingzao* means architectural construction or building something, and *Fashi* means the craftsmanship and methods in architectural construction or building standards. The translation of *Yingzao Fashi* is not certain, and Guo (1998, 1) made the translation as *State Building Standards* in a much simple way.

43 Zhu, Qiqian. *Yi Zao Lun–Ji Zhu Qiqian Ji Nian Wen Xuan [Theory of Construction–and Selected Essays in Memory of Zhu Qi Inscription]*. Tianjin: Tianjin University Press, 2009.

44 Liang Qichao (1873–1929) was one of the most influential opinion leaders in the late Qing Dynasty. He was a politician and reformist who organized the political event known as *Wuxu* Reform (Hundred Days of Reform) with Kang Youwei (康有为), and brought debates on democracy to China. Liang believed that "self-strengthening" was not sufficient for the corrupt administration and rule of the tumbledown Qing court, and asserted that the absence of China in the broader international arena in the late 19th century was a cause for Qing's failure. This was an essential historical period for China's urgent cultural-social renewal (Li 2002).

easy. While engaging in his personal hobby of Chinese traditional architecture, Zhu found an old copy of *Yingzao Fashi* in 1919. He made copy of it for Liang Qichao, who delivered it to Liang Sicheng who was studying architecture at the University of Pennsylvania in America in 1925. Zhu's hobby-inspired initiative was representative of Chinese literati-bureaucrats of the time, who had a certain social status and voice in Chinese society.

Influential people like Zhu Qiqian and Liang Qichao were often able to draw together human resources and attract those with varied capabilities through their social networks, in order to establish any field of endeavour or set off a sweeping movement. Whether their interaction was purposive or coincidental, the contact between Zhu and the father-and-son Liangs undoubtedly led to the subsequent collaboration between Zhu Qiqian and Liang the younger. Liang Sicheng's writings on the history of Chinese architecture owed much to his influential father's intellectual undertakings to create a Chinese national history within the international historiographical context. This was a key component of the tremendous undertaking to reinterpret Chinese culture for innovative ends (Li 2002). Zhu and Liang's promotion of the new discipline has been praised far and wide. Their mutual respect and acknowledgement, owing partly to the traditions of a society prizing acquaintances, and the sentiments of trust they developed between each other, provided the security they felt in cooperating and making things happen. Their activities and those of the SSCA reveal how those in power endorsed the discourse of the SSCA, while the new young, educated generation tried to reinterpret Chinese culture as expressed through architecture.

3.3.1.2 Organisation and development of the SSCA

The first priority of the academic institute was professional research and professional practices, and their development was remarkable. In the SSCA, Liang Sicheng acted as director of research on the construction techniques of Chinese traditional architecture in Department of Methods and Standards (Fashi Bu, 法式部), and the shape and characters of architectural components, while Liu Dunzhen guided the literature collection, collation, and research in Department of Documentation (Wenxian Bu, 文献部). Existing from 1930 to 1946, the Society managed to publish a series of professional journals entitled *Transactions of the Society for the Study of Chinese Architecture* (Zhongguo Yingzao Xueshe Huikan, 中国营造学社汇刊), presenting to readers historical architecture and structures located

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in more than 220 counties in 15 provinces across China.[45] The *Transactions* examined the vast number of ancient texts and provided a sober understanding of the historical development of Chinese architecture over about 1700 years, laying a solid foundation for the in-depth study and development of a historiography of Chinese architecture.

Under the charismatic leadership of Liang Sicheng, many scholars and young students in relevant research fields joined the subsequent activities of the Society. Liang's closest career partners included his wife Lin Huiyin (Lin Whei-yin, 林徽因) who had embraced edification by foreign ideas since travelling to England when she was sixteen with her father, Lin Changmin. She was trained at the University of Pennsylvania, and also supported the research of SSCA.[46] Both heads of the SSCA, Liang and Liu later were acknowledged for their high reputations as masters of Chinese architecture. Many other members of the SSCA, such as Shan Shiyuan (单士元), Mo Zongjiang (莫宗江), Chen Mingda (陈明达), and Liu Zhiping (刘致平), have also been recognised as pioneers in the field of architecture studies their analysis of the typical exterior and interior timber structure and exquisite ornament of Chinese historic buildings (Lai 2012). In this respect, Liang was ultimately responsible for matters relating to academic research. Meanwhile, Zhu Qiqian's mission for the association was largely fulfilled upon establishing it in 1930, with his contributions of funding and networking. When the research funds came into short supply, the only remaining four members, Liang Sicheng, Mo Zongjiang, Liu Zhiping, and Luo Zhewen (罗哲文), had to suspend their research affiliated to the SSCA and joined Tsinghua (also known as Qinghua according to Chinese Pinyin) University, where they established the architecture department and continued their work.

45 After the dissolution of the SSCA in 1946, the Society's research materials were distributed to the Department of Architecture at Tsinghua University and governmental departments of Cultural Relics. For the small print run and the important research value of the materials, in 2006, the Intellectual Property Publishing House re-published the entire series of the *Transactions of the Society for the Study of Chinese Architecture*, including 23 volumes in total.

46 Lin Changmin (1876–1925) the chief justice of Duan Qirui (段祺瑞) government in the Warlord period (1916–1928), was a cultural and political celebrity.

3.3.2 Exploration of Chinese architecture in the context of transnationalism

Over the less than twenty years that the SSCA was in operation, Liang and his team of collaborators held a certain global perspective in their studies. Influences from European countries and America can be seen in legislation, and in the structure and decision-making of the government-led organization. Through frequent transnational exchanges in the fields of heritage and architecture, the SSCA made cross-border exchanges more dynamic. The Society flourished in the years before the Second Sino-Japanese War, between 1930 and 1937. As practitioners in heritage studies and heritage practices worldwide came together to promote an extensive movement, after generations of effort in their separate countries, the SSCA with its own studies became involved in a unified global heritage movement (Whitbourn 2007). The most striking moment of this unification was the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments in 1931, which approved a manifesto of seven principles regarding architectural conservation, and created the Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments (the Athens Charter).[47] An international platform and context for open communication thereby thus emerged for practitioners from different countries who engaged in heritage conservation, and in conservation of built heritage in particular.

Major achievements of the SSCA then were learning how to make engineering drawings and how to record architectural information with accuracy, and how to delineate the historical development of traditional architecture into periods. The historical contingencies aligned well with the goals of expanding the impact of transnationalism of the SSCA. Drawing on the global trends and the progressive academic environment worldwide, at the founding of the SSCA, Liang and Liu organised several academic events through their international academic connections and invited scholars from different countries to China to facilitate transnational exchanges. The leading scholars at that time relevant to the study of Chinese architecture included Japanese architectural historians Itō Chūta (伊東忠太) and Sekino Tadashi (関野貞); German architect Ernst Boerschmann (1873–1949) who travelled in China between 1906 and 1909 to investigate and record Chinese imperial and religious buildings, vernacular residences, and tombs in twelve

47 In 1931, before the establishment of ICOMOS, the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments adopted a manifesto including seven points on the restoration of historic buildings and monuments. This Athens Charter needs to be distinguished from the 1933 Athens Charter which was drafted by architect Le Corbusier at the fourth Assembly of the International Congresses on Modern Architecture. Nonetheless, both of the Athens Charters made a great influence to draw global attention to international heritage.

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provincial areas; and Finnish-born Swedish art historian Osvald Sirén (1879–1966) who had strong interest in Chinese culture and studied Beijing (Peking) palaces, Chinese art paintings, and gardens in the 1920s. All came to China and participated in the Society's early events (Liu 2014).

In addition to the oral communication that took place in China, the published materials of these foreign scholars sustained the research of the SSCA. Liang Sicheng first realised the gap between Chinese scholars and their foreign peers in the study of architectural history when reviewing exhibited drawings made by the Prix de Rome contestants, before the establishment of the SSCA. He was outspoken about the need to see this deficiency as a stage to be built up through exploring better drawing techniques, and the exhibition helped Liang Sicheng to figure out how to represent and deliver knowledge of Chinese and foreign architecture (Fairbank 1994). This shaped his future career. During his work at the SSCA, when formulating his research on the architecture of the Tang Dynasty, Liang Sicheng found that the two principal handbooks, *Yingzao Fashi* of the Song Dynasty and *Qing Gongcheng Gongbu Zuofa* (*Qing Engineering Manual for the Board of Works by the Ministry of Public Works*, 清工部工程作法) of the Qing Dynasty, did not give him adequate guidance to fully depict the details and compositions of Tang architecture (Fairbank 1994; Kalman 2018).[48] The materials they had acquired during the operation of the SSCA became extremely important for further research, as the Mukden Incident (also known as Manchurian Incident) of 18 September 1931 dealt a serious blow to cross-border communication. For example, the twelve volumes (1939–1941) by Japanese scholars Tokiwa Daijo (常盤大定) and Sekino Tadashi on Chinese historical buildings and sites contributed significantly to a more extensive recognition by Society experts of Chinese monuments and historic buildings in different provinces (Figure 3.1).[49] That early research provided a basis for future understanding of Chinese culture through the study of Chinese built heritage, and provided material for comparative studies. As their research progressed in the mid-1930s, Liang and his team pointed out various deficiencies and shortcomings in the earlier research by both foreign and domestic scholars. Liang argued that Boerschmann, Sirén, and Itō Chūta had largely developed their respective typologies of Chinese historical architecture from second-hand literary sources. Such a method,

48 The two handbooks are about the drawing of architectural standards and grammar in construction of traditional Chinese architecture.

49 Tokiwa Daijo (1870–1945) was a Japanese scholar of Chinese Buddhist history, and a Japanese Buddhist monk belonging to the Daigoku school of Jodo Shinshu; Sekino Tadashi (1868–1935) was an architectural historian and archaeologist of Japan, and is well known in China for his dedicated work in the protection of historical antiquities and monuments.

he pointed out, could not adequately identify and explain the grammar of Chinese architecture (Fairbank 1994; Li 2002; Liu 2014). Liang also criticised Le (Yue) Jiazao (乐嘉藻) for confusing subjective speculations with accurate facts in the *History of Chinese* Architecture.[50] Global exchanges have thus gradually become not simply a method for early Chinese intellectuals to learn, but also evidence through which they could propose critical thinking.

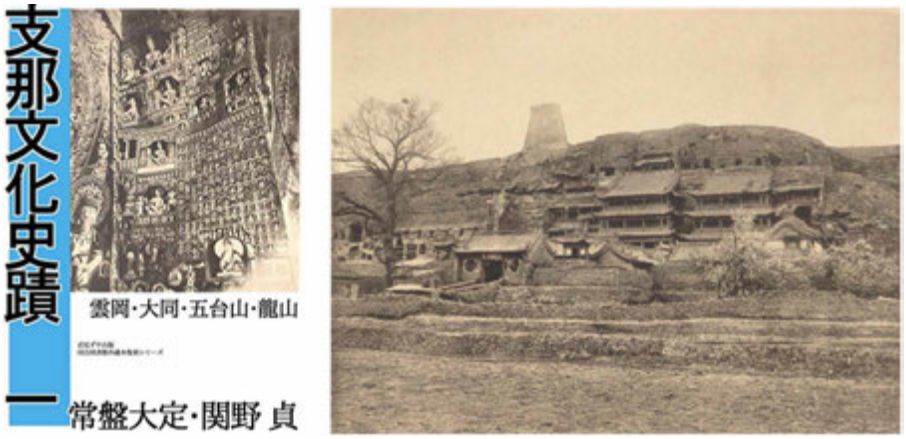


FIG. 3.1 [Left] A Japanese edition of Tokiwa Daijo and Sekino Tadashi's first volume of the twelve-volume series Chinese Cultural Heritage. Each of the twelve volumes introduces cultural heritage located in a certain area of China, and the first volume is about heritage in Shanxi Province. [Right] A view of Yungang Grottoes, Datong, Shanxi. Source: available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cultural_Monuments_of_China._vol_01._001.jpg, accessed on 14 August 2019.

The study and conservation of Chinese architecture was caught up in an environment inundated with an explosion of international discourse and trends towards globalisation. In addition to pure research influenced by European thinking and an international accepted Eurocentric heritage discourse, conservation of historic buildings in China, especially of monuments and cultural built heritage also evolved with a strong nationalist streak. The educated youth of the SSCA laid

50 Le Jiazao's *History of Chinese Architecture* is the first publication about traditional Chinese architecture written by a native Chinese author. In March 1934, Liang Sicheng's article *Reading Le Jiazao's 'History of Chinese Architecture' to dispel the falsehoods* (读乐嘉藻〈中国建筑史〉辟谬) was published in Tianjin *Ta Kung Pao* (大公报) and circulated to the world. Although Le attempted to defend himself, his article was ignored by the public (Li and Pang 2018). This is not the focus of this thesis, but it is still necessary to recognise this clue to re-emphasise Chinese society's concern about and preference for those who hold the power of speech.

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out comprehensive historical facts, in order to have verifiable documentation and evidence for the goal of maintaining and enhancing Chinese traditional culture. Liang Sicheng, and others with him, also addressed the greater importance of situating Chinese culture in a global context with reference to both geographical and historical dimensions. There was a considerable emotional element that went well beyond the range of the previous campaign of "self-strengthening". In Europe, the French Revolution (1789) was a watershed in the development of the concepts and practices of heritage conservation.[51] After the period of the French Revolution, with the serious plundering of antiquities and historic remains during Napoleon's era, two important concerns emerged: recognition of cultural objects as the common patrimony of humanity, and an emphasis on nationalism (Glendinning 2013). By comparison, this thesis argues that the simultaneous emphasis on the common heritage of human beings and the development of nationalism presents a set of paradoxes in China.

During the period when modern conservation emerged in the 19th and 20th centuries, there was an increasing movement toward the pursuit of national identity and a tapping into cultural forces. These movements provided space for the rationalisation of furious and extreme exchanges in debates between rival nations (Glendinning 2013, 117). As they assessed the values of the architectural heritage work that emerged in the 19th century, they gradually abandoned the romantic-and-nihilistic nostalgia about monuments and the symbolic order of ancient regimes. Since the 1930s, international institutions in a Eurocentric system moved towards scientific methods in studying art and history. The pursuit of national cultural identity in each country ceased further. In this context, in China, concerns with the conservation of immovable built heritage were linked to the protection of national dignity and the promotion of a national ethos. These aims were consistent with the earlier national orientation to protect the national treasures being lost after the opening of the treaty ports in the 19th century.

The move towards nationalism and secularisation in heritage conservation happened almost simultaneously in China. In line with interventions by the central government and Jiang Jieshi's advocacy of the restoration of ancient buildings, patriotism and nationalism were highlighted. China's heritage study has been always tightly tied to the understanding of different individuals. It is worth identifying and distinguishing the various original intentions of the leading individuals, and their complementary or conflicting positions that actuated the course of Chinese

51 In general, people tend to date the Revolution itself to 1789. The revolutionary governments, though extends to 1799.

heritage conservation in a globalising context. Following on this, this thesis argues that two perspectives, according to the aspirations and work of the founders, were important in the establishment of the SSCA and contributed to the development of heritage conservation study. From the perspective of technological studies, architects from the SSCA, in the name of conservation, promoted and applied modern engineering drawings of traditional Chinese architecture and made careful records of architectural details, bequeathing reference material to conservation practitioners. Heretofore, the objects of research and practice by the SSCA had been religious (Buddhist or Taoist) or palatial architecture, and did not included private residential buildings owned by citizens (Liang and Fairbank 1984).[52] From the perspective of cultural revitalisation, in the name of conservation, the SSCA experts and the government cooperated and utilised the study and conservation of historical buildings, as a tool for raising consciousness and as cultural vehicles, through which historical information, such as traditional Chinese customs, culture and artistic expression, could be handed down to the future generations. Nevertheless, it is worth noting the difficulties that the overall context, local and global, posed for the long-term promotion of heritage conservation practices in China. These led to complementary or conflicting positions held by the first cohort of those involved in promoting the Chinese heritage movement in the context of transnational exchanges.

3.3.3 Limitations of the SSCA initiative

Although conservation of built heritage has progressed and was accompanied by a growing wealth of scholarly research into historic buildings and monuments, several problems still arose in the study of historic architecture during the 1930s and 1940s. The problems mainly revealed the limitations of the architects' insufficient architectural restoration experience, the lack of time for developing, and the deficiencies in government support in the early stage.

Frist, before they got involved in conservation practices, the Chinese practitioners, including the most prestigious scholar Liang Sicheng, had not been systematically educated and trained as professionals in the field of conservation of historic buildings. This is probably a common problem for the time—not only in China but also in other countries, where there were architecture, fine arts, or archaeology studies at universities abroad, but not heritage-related disciplines. Therefore, none

52 Edited by Wilma Fairbank, Liang Sicheng's previous work *A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture* which illustrates Chinese traditional architectural elements of different dynasties was published in 1984.

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of those who were appointed consultants to the project to restore cultural relics of Beijing, including Liang, his wife Lin Huiyin, Yang Tingbao, and Liu Dunzhen, had adequate knowledge or confident mastery of conservation approaches (Kalman 2018). Nevertheless, the husband-and-wife pioneers and their collaborators are still acknowledged for their work by people from both academia and the public. They strongly appreciate the couple's contributions to the study of Chinese architectural history and conservation. And indeed, globally, heritage conservation has been more of a practical attempt led by the person's own educational background and empirical knowledge. It is more like a process of crossing the river by feeling the stones, than building a bridge with blueprints.

The materials collected from the surveys and tabulations of historical buildings in China have been an important source of knowledge for scholars in the SSCA working through a Europe-dominated heritage discourse. The goals and work of the SSCA thus followed the path of development established in Europe. Their methodology can be traced back to the beginnings of the conservation of built heritage during the Italian Renaissance. In the 16th century, new fortunes from newly "discovered" America accelerated building construction in Italy, and caused destruction of older architectural monuments through excavations and quarries. In the project of a new St. Peter's Basilica, artist Raffaello Santi (1483–1520, known commonly as Raphael) noticed that people were enthusiastically using materials from older monuments for "malicious" or "ignorant" reasons, and he thus advocated for urgent conservation response to protect classical monuments (Jokilehto 2002, 32). Pope Leo X's brief of 27 August 1515 became the first authoritative document in history to assign an officer to take responsibility for the conservation of classical architectural monuments; he made Raphael the "father" of monument protection in a modern sense (Jokilehto 2002). Accordingly, in the years that followed, Raphael was put in charge of the research and documentation of monuments throughout Italy, and made measured drawings of ancient buildings, providing a basis for the differentiated treatment of the legacies inherited from ancient Rome. Inspired by a well-preserved European landscape composed of historic architecture, the work that Liang Sicheng was responsible for in the 1930s was similar to that of Raphael in the 16th century. Unlike Raphael, however, Liang and architects in his generation in the ROC period were not assigned an official position by the government offices in charge of protecting historic built structures, and had only the authority of their reputation in society. And so the work of Liang and his colleagues on the SSCA served only as an academic supplement to the contemporary legislative program. They did not have the substantive policy-making role that their Italian forebearers had. Direct involvement in the preservation of the "old capital cultural relics" was a scarce opportunity for them.

Second, however, in the turbulent social and political environment, and with few opportunities to practice conservation, there was less than ten years' time to try to adequately develop the new modern subject of heritage conservation. Both the Italian and Chinese pioneers' actions to initiate conservation created a reference point for future practitioners. Between the 16th and 18th century, as a result of flourishing archaeological work on and restoration of ancient Greek and Roman sites, classical architecture became more widely valued by the European public. This set the scene for elites to promote the maintenance and preservation of cultural heritage. It appears that a period of about 300 years was necessary to lay the groundwork there, before experts in European countries such as France, England and Italy could fully develop conservation theories in the context of their respective culture. It was the 19th century when they engaged in robust, vigorous discussions and debates. In this respect, by comparison with the process in Europe, the study of traditional Chinese architecture and the techniques for its protection happened in only a "moment".

This thesis notes that disruptive evolutionary change in the heritage movements in China did not come about under the approaches undertaken by the government, neither before nor after including intellectuals with overseas education experiences in the movement. This is perhaps the result of the striking compression of the time and process of development of an emerging discipline. The social environment of the early 20th century forced heritage research in China into a scrambling mode. This is not to say that the experts took radical approaches to conserve and restore, but that the barren social-cultural soil and the insufficient time for development left heritage conservation more of an imposed concept than a deeply embedded one. Although Chinese architects and practitioners in conservation fields tried since the late 1920s to establish a linkage between theoretical knowledge and practical methods in their respective fields, they made no appreciable gains until the late Republic.

Third, it is worth noting that from the 1930s onwards there was a division between the conservation of built heritage and the conservation of other antiquities. With respect to the negligence of general monuments in the legislative framework, under the 1928 Regulations and the 1930 Antiquities Preservation Law, the conservation of historic architecture gradually developed its own methodology, inner logic, management system, and conceptual discourse. By studying traditional Chinese architecture, the SSCA played an important role in promoting the conservation of historic buildings and a broad valuing of immoveable heritage. However, the absence of decision-making power undoubtedly made it difficult for the experts to turn their ideals into practice. For example, before Jiang Jieshi's acknowledgement of cultural relics, in 1929 Liang Sicheng pleaded against the demolition of the historic Bell and Drum Tower in the centre of Shenyang (Mukden), and started to bring up the relationship between a historic building and its setting. According to the recollections of architect

Tong Jun (**童寯**) in 1981, Liang once argued with local government, "demolition is easy, preservation is difficult. Once they are gone they cannot be restored. Why do you choose to destroy them" (Fairbank 1994, 43)? With the demolition of the Bell and Drum Tower in 1931 under the approval of the provincial government, Liang's first attempt at the preservation of an architectural monument failed. Similar episodes often played out in the long years ahead, and Liang and his working partners repeatedly received rejections to their endeavours to preserve historic urban space and buildings. The 1929 attempt was the first time that the Chinese architectural historians noticed the conflict of interests between them and local governments, which preferred new construction-led development in cities. The progressive pathway to a recognition of the significance of monuments and antiquities, and the establishment of a system for their protection, has been step-by-step. These steps were taken by individuals, the mass media, authoritative interventions, legislative attention, and academic involvement. Nevertheless, practical conservation measures in China have seemingly depended more on the preferences, abilities, and efforts of individuals. The SSCA experts noticed that they were unable to implement their studies, unless decision makers with absolute authority like Jiang Jieshi dedicated their support and made a specific conservation request concerning heritage. The dilemma between urban development and heritage conservation thereby emerged and attracted the attention of practitioners in urban space. Without an authority to drive the process, proposals to conduct heritage conservation have therefore repeatedly received limited support from both the top, in particular in each local government, and the bottom up to today.

3.4 Building Adaptive Principles for Local Practices

This thesis suggests that, in an environment of global exchanges, the union of architects and the publication of the 1931 Athens Charter on heritage had a significant impact on young Chinese architects and planners. As represented by Liang Sicheng, the pioneers who actively participated in international affairs embraced the international movement's ideas on conserving monuments and historic buildings, and integrated them into their work in China (Figure 3.2). In Liang Sicheng's (1963) journal article entitled "Ramblings on the reintegration and maintenance of cultural relic buildings (Xianhua Wenwu Jianzhu de Chongxiu yu Weihu, **闲话文物建筑的重修与维护**)", he took Zhaozhou Bridge (Anjibrug) as an

example, and recalls in retrospect the difficulties of conservation practice in China over the preceding 30 years. In the article, Liang expressed his trepidation as an architectural historian and architect in the 1930s, when he first saw the "imperilled and ageing" state of the bridge. Liang bluntly stated that although his team tried to draw up a reconstruction plan for the bridge, any project at that time was nothing more than a paper exercise and a castle in the air. Seeing the increasing decay of historic buildings and monuments, Chinese architectural historians and architects embarked on a search for ways to preserve these immovable legacies in a modern context, drawing on the gradually building historiographical literature on Chinese historical architecture. Under these circumstances, Liang Sicheng's acumen in architectural research led him to explore topics relating to conservation and restoration techniques, producing various publications in the 1930s.

Concurrently, when working in the SSCA, Liu Dunzhen and Liang Sicheng also learned about traditional construction and restoration techniques from the senior carpenters who had dedicated their lives to maintaining the structural and architectural characteristics of buildings in imperial Palaces and Parks. They had the most solid practical skills and knowledge of the historic buildings (Fairbank 1994). Liu Dunzhen also wrote various articles, such as "A History of the Restoration of the Old Summer Palace in Tongzhi Period (Tongzhi Chongxiu Yuan-Ming-Yuan Shiliao, 同治重修圆明园史料)" and "A Plan for the Repair of the Floors of the Belvedere of Literary Profundity (Wen-Yuan-Ge) in the Forbidden City (Gugong Wenyuange Loumian Xiuli Jihua, 故宫文渊阁楼面修理计划)".[53] Nonetheless, at a time when technical skills, knowledge, and human and financial resources were all scarce, in-depth and continuous opportunities to practice were almost impossible to find for those with high aspirations. Liang Sicheng, as a trailblazer, had prepared himself with insightful architectural conservation theories for the future.[54]

53 A volume published in 2007 titled *The Complete Works of Liu Dunzhen (Volume 1)* contains Liu Dunzhen's articles written between 1928 and 1933, and his cases of the Old Summer Palace and the Belvedere of Literary Profundity are included in this volume. This series contains the papers and writings of Liu Dunzhen published between 1928 and 1940, and in total there are ten volumes. In a paper by Liu Dunzhen's son, Liu Xujie (2008), "In Memory of My Father Liu Dunzhen's Research and Practice of Traditional Chinese Classical Gardens", we notice that earlier in 1926, during Liu Dunzhen's long stay in Suzhou, he became friends with the head of the local craftsmen, Yao Tinyun, and they often went out together to visit ancient buildings, gardens and residences built by Yao's team, and there Liu learned traditional techniques of Chinese architectural monuments through discussion. When Liu moved north and devoted himself to the work of the SSCA, he continued this habit, creating countless excellent written materials for the subsequent compilation of the 2007 series.

54 In their different scopes of work, Liang's and Liu's architectural concerns varied. Liu Dunzhen focused on research and the records of historical accounts, while Liang Sicheng also devoted his energy to architectural design, conservation and other aspects on the basis of the study of Chinese architectural history.



FIG. 3.2 The photo taken in 1947 shows that Liang Sicheng (fourth from left) was the only Chinese representative on the Design Board of the design of United Nations headquarters in New York. Liang, for his active transnational communication and education background, brought China's architectural research into the international arena in the 1940s. Source: Lin Qi, Tsinghua exhibition memorializes architectural legend, Chinadaily, August 11, 2021. Available at https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202108/11/WS61131f10a310efa1bd668037_7.html, accessed on 2 December 2021.

Liang Sicheng continued the work of the SSCA at Qinghua University, and proposed six principles for guiding heritage conservation in his time. In this respect, in Liang Sicheng's 1963 article, "Ramblings" drew on his research and his experiences in practice over the last 30 years. Liang analysed the relationship and interactions between the reintegration (*chongxiu*, 重修) and the maintenance (*weihu*, 维护) of historical structures, and suggested a direction for the local development of conservation theories for safeguarding historic buildings in China. Liang's six conservation principles cover matters including how to deal with heritage in the preparation phase and in practice and the possible common missteps, and the significance of the environment and settings of historic structures, all with an analytical focus on immovable built cultural heritage. The most acknowledged scholar in the field of architectural and urban conservation in China, in the past and today, Liang has inspired many and his position have generated much discussion and debate.

The six principles are Liang's own thoughts, which have together formed a unified school of heritage study. Nevertheless, his suggestions are informative and forward-looking, and straightforwardly identify problems in Chinese conservation practices concerning immovable built heritage. Among them, three principles are about issues of architectural presentation after conservation. First, Liang Sicheng (1963, 5) proposed that there is a tension between "reintegrating the aged as the aged" (*zheng jiu ru jiu*, 整旧如旧) and "sprucing up the aged as new" (*huan ran yi xin*, 焕然一新).[55] In his perspective, the conservation of historic buildings is to "gain vigour with age" (*lao dang yi zhuang*, 老当益壮) rather than to "rejuvenate with age (*fan lao huan tong*, 返老还童)". Second, Liang (1963, 7–8) described historic buildings metaphorically as old people, and emphasised the needed heritage approach as "transfusing blood and injecting" (*shu xue da zhen*, 输血打针) medicines with curative effects by resisting "whitewashing" (*tu zhi mo fen*, 涂脂抹粉), manipulation in the form of painting and plastering architectural exteriors for a flashy appearance for short-term results and profits. In addition, as a conclusive remark, Liang suggested conservation needs to "be existing as if empty, be solid as if vacuous, and be wise as if foolish" (*you ruo wu, shi ruo xu, da zhi ruo yu*, 有若无，实若虚，大智若愚), and offered the same stand point as the idea of "reintegrating the aged as the aged" included in the first principle (Liang 1963, 9–10). Liang put forward the idea that restoration must not overwhelm the original of a piece of built heritage, but should be a background to sustain an authentic atmosphere. He particularly criticised the practice common in the 1950s and the 1960s of adding many flamboyant ornamental elements in the restoration of historic buildings in order to emphasise their grandeur and status.

Regarding the three principles, existing problems accomplice by each conservation measures and possible responses have revealed. Among all the principles, the idea to "reintegrate the aged as the aged", proposed as "zheng jiu ru jiu" in Chinese, has appeared in various re-interpretations and paraphrases. Architects, practical stakeholders, and practitioners involved in architectural conservation have applied other Chinese terms such as "xiu jiu ru jiu" or "xiu jiu ru gu" which mislead the public about Liang Sicheng's idea (Lu 2017). Shan Shiyuan in 1951 critically pointed out that the misinterpreted term "xiu jiu ru jiu" is a tactic of and justification for those who make fake antiques and monuments (Kong 2016). While the terms "xiu jiu ru gu" and "xiu jiu ru jiu" can both also represent the meaning "to restore to the former condition of a historic building and complete it in the same condition as the

55 The translation "reintegrate the aged as the aged" follows author Di Lu's (2017) interpretative translation used in his paper "Liang Ssu-cheng's 'Reintegrate the Aged as the Aged' and Relevant Western Concepts".

original design", the terms bring about various practical problems, such as "what is original", "what happens if the original design is absent", or "how to deal with cultural heritage with many significant historical periods". Article 11 of the Venice Charter 1964 states that "The valid contributions of all periods to the building of a monument must be respected, since unity of style is not the aim of a restoration". In this respect, Liang's (1963) idea to "reintegrate the aged as the aged" suggests that while ensuring that the existing structure can support the building for a long time, it is necessary to retain the patina of the authentic appearance to the fullest extent possible, in order to achieve a condition compatible in form and spirit. "Spirit" here denotes the sum of features and characteristics shaped by history and culture for that item of built heritage. According to the traditional Chinese aesthetic quest for "grandeur" or "magnificence", people prefer to restore old architecture back to a glossy and fresh-like condition. Practitioners did not appreciate either signs of age or traces of wind and frost left on buildings by nature in the same way that they usually appreciate the patina on bronzes (Figure 3.3), or the blots and stains on Tang and Song period paintings and calligraphies.



FIG. 3.3 Bronze ware—the elephant-head square grain receptacle (xiang shou fu fu, **象首紋簠**) used at sacrificial ceremonies between the late Western Zhou (Xizhou) Dynasty (1046BC–771BC) to early Spring and Autumn (Chunqiu) period (770BC–476BC). The patina of this receptacle is clearly visible, enhancing its historical, technological and artistic significance. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fu_in_Capital_Museum_China.jpg, accessed on 22 August, 2019.



FIG. 3.4 Before the 1955 major reintegration, crafts people of the Ming Dynasty has once renewed the decorative and pavement stones on the bridge (below). Comparing the replaced stone slabs of 1955 (above) with the one of Ming Dynasty (1368 - 1644), being collected by China's National Museum, Beijing, we see a significant fall in craftsmanship of stone engraver and graphic aesthetics. Source: [About] Chao Su; [Below] Capital Museum, Beijing.

Taking restoration work on Zhaozhou Bridge as an example, Liang (1963) endorsed the preference to emphasise structural requirements as the primary restoration principle in practice, while he resisted the approach of replacing the old stone slabs. As the stone slabs were still solid, preserving their aged appearance with mottled patina, unevenly layered masonry joints, and the potholes in the pavement was to sustain the character and "personality" identity of the bridge for its historic, aesthetic, technical, and artistic values. Indeed, at a time when financial support was insufficient, the carvings on the new stone slabs put in in 1955 seem to later

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generations be a joke when compared with the old slabs of the Ming Dynasty (Figure 3.4). Carefully considering the realistic financial issues and the sequence of the successive restorations, it would be necessary to have the damaged cultural relics queue up for "diagnosis" and "treatment" according to their conservation prioritisation and extent of damage (Liang 1963, 8). The fact is, no matter how much money and human resources the government can give to heritage conservation, it is incontestably less than needed. As it is difficult to conduct full-scale conservation of historic buildings and structures, experts submit to identifying the elements that have the most urgent need for restoration to guarantee the continued existence of the structure when making decisions.[56] In this respect, the most practical suggestion is to restore the elements that are most in danger, and to restore the most damaged parts first: as the saying goes, "money should be spent on the right thing" (Liang 1963, 7). Nevertheless, it was suggested in the Venice Charter 1964 that, "It is essential to the conservation of monuments that they be maintained on a permanent basis."[57] In this respect, this thesis argues that maintenance for structural stability become the first priority in the conservation of immovable built heritage.

In addition to conservation measures and restoration approaches, Liang in his article proposed three other principles regarding the appropriate usage of built heritage and historic settings, and concerning the manipulability of protection techniques in each. First, Liang (1963, 7) suggested that stakeholders need to distinguish whether to "use the past for the present" (*gu wei jin yong*, 古为今用) or to "protect cultural relics" (*wen wu bao hu*, 文物保护) as what they themselves are. Liang stated that appropriate use of architecture to make the most of its functionality and practicality is also important, apart from conserving heritage for its value as such. For example, considering the scope of heritage in his time, Liang (1963, 7) divided Chinese immovable built heritage into three categories: (1) architecture built for figuration (*zaoxiang*, 造像), such as grottoes, solid pagodas, or stone tablets, which have been for human beings' visual enjoyment and admiration since their creation and cannot be adapted for other uses; (2) architecture without actual functional significance in the present time, such as imperial palaces and altars; and (3) architecture with consistent practical value, such as transportation architecture. This classification

56 Chinese traditional architecture is usually structured by timber materials, and this construction tradition has continued in first half of the 20th century. In the process of building deterioration, consideration of structural repair, including refurbishing old components with new materials, or adding new structural layering should come to the first place.

57 ICOMOS. 1965. International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter 1964). Paris, ICOMOS. https://www.icomos.org/charters/venice_e.pdf

takes into consideration heritage in its various times of use and the duality it thus encompasses. True to Article 5 of the Venice Charter 1964, "The conservation of monuments is always facilitated by making use of them for some socially useful purpose." In this respect, apart from monuments and historic buildings, those built in particular with useful functions need under conservation to function at an optimum condition in a changeable environment. Accompanied by an explosion of heritage discourse after the issue of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Liang's vision is quite forward-looking, with applicable present-day significance. The idea to "use the past for the present" has some similarity to the approach of "adaptive reuse" proposed in the late 20th century as a universally approved conservation measure. It reveals the dynamic attributes of cultural relics, and is extremely applicable to a wider range of built heritage in the 21st century, which is now awash with outstanding but deteriorating modern residences and abandoned industrial heritage.

Second, as the old Chinese proverb says, "green leaves bring out the shine of red flowers" (*hong hua hai yao lv ye tuo*, 红花还要绿叶托): Liang (1963, 8) advocated the importance of protecting the landscapes and historic environment in and around each historical building and site. In the 1960s, two years before the 1963 publication, the national authority agreed to delineate conservation areas for listed buildings. This strategy stood in line with the seventh resolution proposed in the Athens Charter 1931, that "attention should be given to the protection of areas surrounding historic sites".[58] It is also consistent with the Venice Charter 1964 recommendation, that, "The conservation of a monument implies preserving a setting which is not out of scale. Wherever the traditional setting exists, it must be kept".[59] Somewhat differently, Liang's ideas take a more picturesque conservation approach, seeking a way people can visit and appreciate a historic site with outstanding cultural significance, providing them with a pleasant view within the designated conservation area, with a suitable perspective for photographs or drawings (Lu and Zhong 2019).

Third, the feasibility and operability of restoration techniques are also matters for consideration of heritage conservation. With respect to these issues, Liang (1963, 6) believes that "every step needs to be pre-tested and pre-inspected"

58 The First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments. 1931. The Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments (The Athens Charter 1931). Paris, ICOMOS. https://www.icomos.org/en/167-the-athens-charter-for-the-restoration-of-historic-monuments

59 ICOMOS. 1965. International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter 1964). Paris, ICOMOS. https://www.icomos.org/charters/venice_e.pdf

(*yi qie jing guo shi yan*, 一切经过试验) before undertaking heritage actions. In an increasingly modernised and industrialised society, many traditional construction techniques have gradually been lost. In the process of restoration, particularly when reinforcing, repairing, and replacing original structural components, inappropriate restoration methods can disequilibrate the original structure and accelerate the collapse of historical architecture. For example, a smattering of knowledge of ancient craftsmanship by the heritage practitioner can hit upon a trigger point for the failure of timber structure restoration. Chinese experts' and specialists' fears and worries about restoring the Sakyamuni Pagoda of Fogong Temple (also known as *Yingxian Muta*, 应县木塔) in Ying County in Shanxi province exactly confirms this viewpoint.[60] Even for modern heritage structures of the 20th century, made of industrial materials and techniques, if the structure (made of timber, steel, or iron) has been eroding because of rust or pests or rot, testing heritage approaches ahead of time should not be ignored. After all, the wrong or inappropriate approach is the most direct means to accelerating the destruction of cultural heritage.

The adoption of the Athens Charter 1931 promoted a global movement for heritage by creating principles and guidelines with universal applicability for local conservation practices. Although between 1931 and 1964, there was sever exclusion of heritage discourse from continents other than Europe, Chinese experts were not deterred from absorbing Eurocentric ideas. Initiatives taken by such pioneers as Liang Sicheng and his disciples aimed to create a locally appropriate heritage discourse and practical method by taking into account the local cultural and technical characteristics of China, under the guidance of some global paradigms and rules for heritage conservation. Indeed, many of the suggestions and recommendations made by Liang include then advanced conservation theories and ideas. However, influenced by Chinese reality, there has always been a gap between proposing principles that refer to significant international heritage discourses and implementing them into local conservation practice. Even on a theoretical level, to some extent a traditional Chinese understanding of cultural relics has interrupted a full adoption of Eurocentric concepts by Chinese practitioners.

60 The Sakyamuni Pagoda of Fogong Temple is well known to the Chinese by another name, *Yingxian Muta*. This pagoda was constructed in 1056 (Khitan-led Liao Dynasty) and is the only surviving pagoda of purely timber construction in China, at 67.31 metres high and 30.27 metres in diameter at the base in an octagonal shape. For the extreme complexity of its construction, despite the central government having made the decision to restore the wooden pagoda in the early 1990s, the restoration programme has been slow to emerge till today.

3.5 Differences Caused by Chinese Cultural Traditions

The different cultural traditions and forms of recognition of the past in China have created difficulties for the implementation of progressively formulated conservation legislation and theoretical principles. Adoption of foreign ideas about heritage conservation has led since the late 19th century to localisation of concepts in terms similar to internationally accepted manifestos. It is worth noting that it is challenging to integrate a concept that has developed over a few hundred years into a discernibly different culture that has developed and flourished for over thousands of years. In particular, among collectors or connoisseurs, traditions of "figuration" and the custom of leaving "inscriptions" on art pieces are long established and influential rites in the transmission of cultural objects. In the conservation of built cultural heritage, this literati habit has shaped attitudes towards conservation methods and practical heritage approaches of antiquities and monuments in China, with influence continuing until today. These different ways of thinking about how to treat legacies have generated some distinctive approaches to immovable cultural relics. In general, this thesis categorises the practices coming from Chinese tradition as preferences to appreciate the significance of figuration of built structures and to make inscriptions on private collections.

First, discourses related to both "heritage" and "conservation" are not part of China's social context nor its linguistic logic and code. Whether in the feudal dynastic periods or the republic ones, figuration of buildings contains much stronger significance than the material (tangible) and spiritual (intangible) significances appreciated by European society. The customs surrounding architectural design and construction have left numerous buildings and structures built for authorities with "grand" and "magnificent" configurations. The pursuit of these configurations is also a concern clearly recognised by Liang Sicheng in his principles to standardise conservation approaches. According to the records from different dynasties and the documents collected by the SSCA, crafts people and their clients usually utilised a variety of hierarchical features of architectural *xingzhi* (form and style, 形制), such as the scale of roofs and the number of animal-shaped ornaments, to reflect the social status of their clients, the users. Although, as in Europe, the earliest heritage conservation attempts in China began with so-called "religious buildings" (altars and temples), the difference is that European restoration centered the religious nature of the buildings, whereas Chinese restoration focused on the preservation of the integrated image of a building — the figuration (Figure 3.5). In this respect,

looking back into their histories, this epistemological and ideological difference between European countries and China, and more broadly, between the Western world and East Asian countries, is a cultural difference, creating varied means and understandings in heritage practice (Li, 2014).



FIG. 3.5 The hip roof with double eaves is the highest form of roofing style in China's ancient architecture. This roof style is applied to Hall of Supreme Harmony (Taihe Dian, 太和殿), the largest hall in the Forbidden City, to reflect imperial power. Source: author, 2019.

The obsession with figuration of built structures in Chinese culture has literally fuelled the flames for damage to immovable structures. Looking back, at many famous poems and songs, the later generations can clearly see that imperial cities and palaces from every former dynasty faced the possibility major artificial destruction. According to the descriptions in *Tongguan Huaigu* (潼关怀古) and *E`pang Gong Fu* (阿房宫赋), palaces could either be reduced to the ground or burnt to ashes by fire by the mob. With knowledge passed down from generation to generation through poetry and literary works, the concept of "destroying the old for a new era," has been repeatedly reinforced. In this respect, as long as people have had the ability to destroy, there has been no moral or ethical desire in Chinese society to protect history, culture, or civilisation through maintaining monuments from the past. The Chinese Cultural Revolution in the 20th century exactly reprised a similar attitude toward past legacies as had regularly happened in the history. Because of deeply ingrained long-term ideas, reshaping conceptions of history and creating a commonly held respect for historic buildings as immovable built cultural relics has required a major epistemological and social revolution in the 20th century. In the context of the New Culture Movement (started in 1915) and the May Fourth Movement (1919), a group of elites in society started to redefine old

things and endowed architecture with added significance.[61] This marked a turning point, distinguishing the modern society in China from the old world. Although a change had also occurred in Europe as the significance of past glory was attached to historic buildings, a sense of harmony between the universe and human beings led to a laissez-faire strategy towards old things rather than one of encouraging people to deliberate destroy antiquities and monuments upon the dawn of a new era (Jokilehto 2002, 6). In this respect, in a changing society where modern technology and ideas have global circulation, the idea of eradicating "dissenting" figuration by destroying it may persist in contemporary conservation practices.[62]

A second issue concerns the choice of references for restoration. Indeed, the SSCA's work conducting site survey and mapping of ancient Chinese architecture aimed to provide resources for such needs. However, there remains a significant lack of information. For example, in the article "Restoration Project Hangzhou Liuhe Pagoda" (Hangzhou Liuhe Ta Fuyuan Jihua, 杭州六和塔复原计划) published in 1935, Liang Sicheng proposed to restore and refurbish the pagoda to its appearance in the 23rd year of Shaoxing (1153), a project that raises a subsequent question in restoration, namely, "what drawings of what age should practitioners refer to as they proceed?" Considering the absence of a standard reference for restoration, Liang in his article indicated that "it is not difficult to deduce the original form of the Liuhe Pagoda."[63] That is to say, in the situation where the original architectural construction plans are absent, Liang thinks practitioners can deduce architectural details from written records and drawings to develop an accurate restoration construction plan. The scenario of discriminating restoration by inference is similar to that used by Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1897) in the restoration of Notre-Dame de Paris. In that case Viollet-le-Duc proposed rebuilding the medieval spire and bell tower over the transept, evoking an idea of "stylistic restoration". This inference-led method has been adopted as a viable conservation strategy by heritage experts leading a school focused on architectural resemblance rather than form. Article 9 of the Venice Charter 1964 states:

61 The May Fourth Movement was a nationalist mass movement led by Chinese youth. During this movement, they progressed the following New Culture Movement, through which Chinese aspiring and intelligent young people explored the relevance and possible integration between the traditional Chinese Confucianism and the new concepts of science and democracy.

62 "Dissenting" in this context means historic building that may not be in line with people's value judgements in each different historical period.

63 In Chinese, Liang writes "推测六和塔的原形，尚不算是很难的事" (Liang 2001, 357). Liang Sicheng. *Liang Sicheng Quanji (Di Er Juan)* [*The Complete Works of Liang Sicheng (Vol.2)*]. China Building Industry Press, 2001.

"The process of restoration is a highly specialized operation. Its aim is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp."

This thesis sees as a consequence of the inference-led method an uncertainty in the myriad of Chinese operations. Uncertainty concerning restoration methods reaches its peak when heritage practitioners invoke Chinese painting as a reference. The quintessence of Chinese painting, in particular the freehand brushwork, is to capture enjoyable scenery rather than to present realistic ones. In many cases, if Chinese painting is the only reference for a restoration project, the result would only achieve an atmosphere-like resemblance to the form and style in an integrative sense but not the specific details of scale, proportion, construction, colours, or materials. For example, in 1986, Wu Zhaoli (吴肇钊), heading a project, largely referred to the scene of a Chinese wash painting "Bright Moon of Spring Pavilions (chun tai ming yue, 春台明月)" in planning the reconstruction of the old Wangchunlou (望春楼) of the Slender West Lake (Shouxihu, 瘦西湖), Yangzhou (Figure 3.6). In fact, compared with the mainstream painting style of the Qing Dynasty, this painting more closely presents a realistic scene. However, as architectural perspective is missing in Chinese wash painting, the reconstructed Wangchulou pavilion appears incongruous, especially the proportions of the roofs, even though it is correct in terms of expectations in painting. Liang Sicheng supposed that there was little difficulty or risk in pursing conservation measures without detailed blueprints, with his own years of expertise in detailed drawings of ancient Chinese buildings. However, the practices of the late 20th century clearly demonstrate the drawbacks and errors possible in an inference-led approach to heritage conservation, when scenic restoration fails to follow a scientific logic and engineering to reflect the authenticity of architectural techniques. In general, coming out of Chinese particular linguistic system and cultural traditions, from cultural, political and aesthetic perception of a view, figuration is pursued more than other meanings of a piece of immovable built cultural heritage in an evolving history.



FIG. 3.6 The image of Wangchunlou in the Chinese painting "Bright Moon of Spring Paviliions" (left), and Wangchunlou in the reality after restoration (right). Source: [Left] The Palace Museum, https://digicol.dpm.org.cn/cultural/details?id=86745, accessed on 3 September, 2019; [Right] author, 2021.

Third, in the process of inheriting and passing on a legacy to the next generation, especially in the case of calligraphy, rubbing, and Chinese wash painting, the usual way of expressing one's appreciation of an art piece was to add an inscription (*tiba*, 題跋).[64] In this respect, even when they do not badly damage antiquities, Chinese ancestors, from emperors and generals to literati and celebrities, have shown appreciation of their collections by adding personal remarks on specific objects. These served to make them stand out from the crowd as connoisseurs, a form of self-expression and self-presentation. The Qianlong Emperor is one of the most remarkable examples. This habit of identifying and demonstrating one's connoisseurship might be undesirable in the modern field of heritage conservation. Although many collectors want to express their recognition and praise for other artists' work, the Chinese customs surrounding the passing on and receiving of antiquities clearly diverged, in terms of heritage practice, from the traditional European heritage regime (Smith 2006, 2; Willems 2014). When we turn our attention from movable art pieces to immovable built structures, their character as a "private collection" changes completely. Nonetheless, the cultural tradition of "inscription" persists. Chinese people's habit of adding an inscription has not vanished in recent social revolutions but has become a public issue. The act of inscribing has devolved to various local government or nongovernmental project financial funders rather than

64 The inscription (*tiba*, 題跋) is written in books, on stone rubbings, calligraphies and work of painting, and usually contains stories of taste and appreciation, testimonials, and tracing the origins of the piece. There are three types of inscriptions: those by the author of the work, those by a person of the author's generation, and those by a person of later generations.

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individual collectors, with respect to the conservation of built heritage. The custom of leaving an “inscription” has thus become the justification for inserting one’s “unique” mark and remains part of the practice of the contest of discourse power.

3.6 Conclusion

In the ongoing evolution of China’s heritage movement, young Chinese architects dominated the creation of a distinguished heritage discourse and conservation methods based on their perspectives and experiences in the 1930s. The early architects represented especially by Liang Sicheng gradually figured out a series of localised ideas for promoting the cause of heritage conservation, as the central government designated the protection of cultural relics a national strategy to highlight Chinese cultural assemblages. In this respect, in addition to the central government, this thesis regards the architects of the SSCA and their workmates as another important group participating as decisive stakeholders in conservation practice. The role of Liang Sicheng, Lin Huiyin, and Liu Dunzhen as consultants in work conducted by the Old Capital Cultural Relics Arrangement Commission straightforwardly confirms this claim. One of two decisive stakeholders in a conceptual movement, in the name of conservation, architects first of all promoted recording graphics, grammars, patterns, or techniques of Chinese historic buildings. In this, they followed the methodology of European and American architectural science, regarding reference as the basis for their practical objects. Second, in the name of conservation, seeking for a path to reinterpret Chinese traditional culture, the group of architects rallying around Liang Sicheng used Chinese historic buildings as a cognitive tool and cultural vehicle to address how cultural expression is part of immovable structures. They largely inherited the vision proposed by Liang Qichao, and are in his debt in the field of historic architecture. Third, in the name of conservation, architectural scholars took the opportunity to formulate a distinctive and respected set of principles coalescing traditional Chinese ideas of collecting and passing on cultural heritage with the more universally adopted Eurocentric concepts.

Antiquities, monuments, historic buildings, or archaeological ruins each differ in their scale and function when subject to conservation. In the process, each for their respective benefits, conservation stakeholders may trigger different problems in practical projects, especially when the impact of the abovementioned cultural dimensions are magnified or deliberately applied. For example, this thesis suggests

that Chinese stakeholders naturally pay more attention to the figuration of built heritage rather than other dimensions, as *xingzhi* of Chinese traditional buildings can usually not only express the identity and status of the users, but also other kind of intangible significance. In this respect, although Liang Sicheng and subsequent scholars proposed various principles, the habits of figuration-obsessed conservation have successively created approaches that diverge from existing Eurocentric heritage conservation discourse. Running counter to the basic Eurocentric concept, Chinese contemporary practice largely focuses on protecting the expression of architectural appearance to the exclusion of other aspects included in how heritage is assessed internationally. Certainly, the lack or inaccessibility of architectural blueprints and informative archives has also leveraged conservation uncertainty. Since there is no solid reference, conjuring up an ultimate image of the piece of built cultural heritage to be protected and conserved becomes a "reliable" method, at least for the stakeholders who make and take responsibility for the decision.

As the concept of conservation has become more widespread, increasingly stakeholders have sought to dominate heritage discourse in practice in a struggle for power. The tradition of making inscriptions on collections as preface and postscript to cultural legacies has continued its cultural influence. And so many stakeholders seek to mark, or inscribe, their discernment on built heritage that is being conserved. Immovable built cultural heritage under conservation is typically of a much larger scale than movable antiquities or historic objects, and making "inscriptions" on historic buildings is a more public enactment, and can influence styles of living, producing, and thinking. This thesis thus argues that the traditional custom of literati making an additional imprint on legacy items will be inevitable in the conservation of immovable heritage in China.

In an increasingly secularising process of heritage discussions after the 1980s, it seems that anyone with the power to make operational decisions can express their views on "what heritage is" and "how conservation should proceed" and put their preferences into practice. In the next chapter, this thesis investigates, reports, and reflects on the innumerable opposing voices and measures regarding heritage conservation principles under the Cultural Relics Protection System. Accompanied by rapid and radical urbanisation in China, a substantial number of participants have engaged in and affected the shifting directions of China's heritage conservation. The next chapter attempts to unfold how persistent attitudes shaped in the past few thousand years of Chinese history have endorsed some stakeholders' anti-conservation behaviours that are nonetheless crowned with the name of conservation, even if a regulations concerning methods or an administrative order exists for overseeing and directing various heritage approaches and measures.

4 Managing Built Heritage in Urban Space

From Cultural Relic Protection Unit (CRPU) Lists to Historic City Designations

4.1 Introduction

Urban space includes existing city centres and the construction of new buildings, creating challenges and opportunities for the implementation of heritage conservation there. Since the middle of the 19th century through the end of the ROC period, heritage conservation in China has been widely recognised as a top-down process. The central government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has issued the Cultural Relics Protection System (CRPS, 文物保护制度) in 1961 and continued its previous work of regulating the management of cultural relics, now in a new era. In preceding chapters, this thesis has analysed the various aims for heritage conservation from the perspective of the central government and architectural historians as they promoted and worked with the new Eurocentric concept. Observing the difficulties and potential cultural conflicts in protecting immovable built cultural heritage in China, this thesis turns to investigate the conservation of built heritage in urban space under two newly formulated protection systems. The Cultural Relics Protection System to protect remarkable cultural relics was built on knowledge and experience accumulated through transnational exchanges and local

practice over the last hundred years. The other system emerged in the 1980s and extended the scope of heritage under protection from single built structure or small-scale groups of buildings to larger ones. This system is complementary to the CRPS and interacts with the formulation of urban planning and management, in line with the conservation requirements to protect nationally designated historic cities.

In the process of pursuing conservation, two major difficulties appeared and significantly influenced recognition of the shared legacies. Both the limited resources for heritage-related actions, and practical problems introduced by local governments have markedly affected heritage conservation in urban areas. First, a national emphasis on modernisation under the regime of the PRC has unintentionally eroded the historic urban fabric through new construction. Because of large-scale urbanisation nationwide, there has been a consolidation of farmland and, at the same time, the development of infrastructure. Under such circumstances in the early years of the PRC, advocates in academia for the protection of Chinese cultural, historic, or aesthetic features of historical buildings and sites seemed to have been overwhelmed by the goals of development. In the conditions of human and physical scarcity of that period, heritage conservation remained almost impossible to promote. It was not until the 1980s that the situation improved significantly. Second, even with legislative and political support, the implementation of conservation of historic buildings and sites in urban areas remains difficult to achieve. Complications increasingly arise, while the price of land in historic neighbourhoods and of the commercial worth of buildings keeps increasing.

This chapter analyses the ever-expanding scale of heritage to be protected as the international discourse on heritage ballooned. From immovable built heritage structures and sites to historic urban areas to even a whole city, as the scope expands, the content of "conservation" becomes increasingly abstract and ambiguous, even empty. In the new China of the PRC, as the listing of heritage has progressed, more stakeholders have become engaged. As the central government has decentralised the tasks, supervision, and power over conservation, and invited more local input, local governments at all levels have become the most vocal and take on more decision-making in practical projects. Under these circumstances, it is essential to examine what heritage conservation means for local authorities as they gain actual decision-making powers over heritage. The central government and professional scholars in heritage-related fields have issued legislation and guidance to regulate approaches to heritage even during the stagnant period of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). Nonetheless, there is no is no practice-based paradigm to direct multiple stakeholders in the "correct" way of conservation. In this respect, this chapter investigates two main issues: (1) the uniqueness and evolution of the Cultural Relics Protection System as it was adapted to the Chinese context, and its

significance in the protection of historic cities, and (2) challenges and problems resulting in the real practices and emerging from the different temporalities of conservation theories, legislation, and practices, and the entanglement of interests behind the scenes.

4.2 The Cultural Relics Protection System (CRPS) and Highlighted Built Heritage

The Cultural Relics Protection System as created in the PRC period was an ensemble of heritage-related knowledge and experience drawn from previous periods. It aimed to include everything concerning cultural heritage that the new national government and leading experts could think of. Conservation principles and approaches in every country or region vary widely, within the constraints of international charters and conventions, and according to temporal and spatial differentiation. There can be no single correct standard or implementation in the field of heritage conservation. This section focuses on the development of a protection mechanism regarding built heritage under CRPS. Looking at it chronologically, it presents the overarching background and context of heritage conservation as seen in legislation. By the promulgation of the Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China (the Law) in 1982, which aimed to ensure that conservation takes place through a secure state apparatus, cultural heritage has become a tool for the state, or rather politicians, to influence and guide the making of culture and movements. In general, there are three main periods in the heritage movement in the after Sino-Japanese War period. Recognising the importance of the numerous historic buildings that had collapsed or been destroyed by Japanese armed forces, the Chinese central government engaged in comprehensive patriotic education in the name of conservation in the years before the Cultural Revolution. During the Cultural Revolution, in the context of its political struggles, experts described cultural heritage as the product of the wisdom and efforts of a vast number of working people. Although this was a necessary statement in line with the political circumstances of the time, the rhetoric used in response to the situation clearly enriched the meaning of cultural heritage. After the Cultural Revolution, the national government made efforts to rejuvenate the country's cultural endeavours, and established heritage conservation objectives that included but were not limited to objects from past elements. Regardless of the goals of other stakeholders in

conservation, the central government in the name of conservation attempted to raise the estimation of Chinese culture in international circles in the post-1980 period, and thereby promote Sino-foreign exchanges in multiple spheres.

4.2.1 Cultural relics protection and emerging dilemma in urban practice (1940s–1960s)

The Sino-Japanese War inflicted great damage to Chinese historic buildings. The Japanese army captured more than 930 cities and counties, and destroyed at least 10,000 historic Chinese buildings and countless cultural artefacts during the war (Xue 2013, Dai 2000).[65] The scenario of devastation in the 1940s reminded the national government and people from various social sectors of the plundering of innumerable treasures in the 19th century. For the first time in China, there was a connection made between the loss of immovable heritage (instead of movable objects) and national dignity. Zhou Enlai (周恩来) instructed that the *National Catalog of Ancient Architectural Cultural Relics*, complied by Liang Sicheng, be the guidebook for avoiding more destruction of historic buildings between 1945 and 1949, before the overall liberation of mainland of China (Xie and Yao 2018).[66] The principle task of practitioners in the 1940s was to inventory the lost artefacts abroad, and to record the ones that still existed. In the meanwhile, revolutionary sites of special significance in the war against Japanese aggressors were classified as a new category of China's heritage. Revolutionary relics subsequently became the most important part of China's built heritage. These are sites that saw "red" activities and are associated with the revolutionary spirit of the 28-year historical period from the founding of the Communist Party of China (1921) to the eve of liberation (1949).

Post-war, heritage survey and conservation work continued and set the stage for heritage conservation in the PRC period. On 1 November 1949, the central government established the State Cultural Relics Bureau (Wenwu Ju, 文物局) within

65 The number 10,000 is an extremely conservative estimate. In his article, Dai Xiong (2000) roughly estimated that the Japanese army destroyed about five ancient buildings in each of more than 2,000 historic county-level towns, and the estimated numbers of loss for the country was at least 10,000. In fact, according to statistics for the eight-year Sino-Japanese War, in Zhejiang, Hunan, Hubei, Guangxi, Sichuan, Jiangsu and liberated areas alone, the number of destroyed ancient buildings had already amounted to more than 10,000.

66 In the oral history of Xie Chensheng (2018, 53), he mentioned Zhou enlai's instruction through which People's Liberation Army units got the access to Liang Sicheng's *Quanguo Gu Jianzhu Wenwu Jianmu* (全国古建筑文物简目, translated as *National Catalog of Ancient Architectural Cultural Relic* in English in this thesis).

the Ministry of Culture (Wenhua Bu, 文化部). The bureau, led by Zheng Zhenduo (郑振铎) and Wang Zhiqiu (王治秋), was the supreme authority for the management of cultural heritage in the PRC. The term *wenwu* officially replaced *guwu* in institutional organisations, heritage management, and compilation of regulations and policies. Realising the scarcity of specialists in protecting cultural relics, Zheng Zhenduo as head of the bureau persuaded several experts with achievements in various heritage-relevant fields to join the organisation. Early recruited experts included Liang Sicheng's architectural students Chen Mingda and Luo Zhewen, archaeologist Pei Wenzhong (裴文中), and Zhang Heng (张珩), an expert in appraising painting and calligraphy. Zheng encouraged young people in the bureau to develop research interests on protected cultural relics and put forward the slogan "no conservation, no research" (Xie and Yao 2018, 20). With this, conservation of cultural relics was officially launched in the PRC.

However, the urgency to build up the battered land from scratch affected the implementation of built heritage conservation right from the start of the new regime. After the period of war in the 1930s and the 1940s, the significance of immovable built cultural heritage grew, represented by vulnerable ancient monuments and revolutionary legacy. In this respect, the conflict between protecting historic buildings and construction of new infrastructure posed a dilemma. The conflict was (and is) especially pronounced in urban areas. China was influenced by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' model of development and its 156 aid programs. Although one Soviet expert was involved as a consultant in the State Cultural Relics Bureau for a short period, she did not contribute to improving the situation of China's heritage protection. Economic reconstruction was the main object of Soviet assistance in the 1950s rather than cultural promotion, and the collectivisation of agriculture (also called the "socialist transformation of ownership of the means of production") for the transformation of a small-scale peasant economy was in full swing. This involved the massive construction of roads, railways, factories, and water facilities (Xie and Yao 2018, 58). The socialist transformation inadvertently badly damaged numerous cultural relics. Realising the threat to cultural heritage, with the approval of Xi Zhongxun (习仲勋), the State Council issued the Notice on the Protection of Cultural Relics in Agricultural Production and Construction (Guanyu Zai Nongye Shengchan Jianshe Zhong Baohu Wenwu de Tongzhi, 关于在农业生产建设中保护文物的通知) in 1956, and ordered the first heritage census of cultural relics under the PRC.[67] The Cultural Relic Protection Unit (CRPU, 文物保护单位) was first stipulated in the 1956 Notice, with specific reference to buildings and sites. The CRPU has

67 State Council. 1956. Guanyu Zai Nongye Shengchan Jianshe Zhong Baohu Wenwu de Tongzhi [Notice on the Protection of Cultural Relics in Agricultural Production and Construction]. Beijing, State Council of PRC.

subsequently become the most authoritative designating category of immovable cultural heritage, under the management of the CRPS. The listing framework was written into the Interim Regulations on the Administration of Protection of Cultural Relics (Wenwu Baohu Guanli Zanxing Tiaoli, 文物保护管理暂行条例) published in 1961, and has had lasting legal validity until today.[68]

This thesis argues that the emphasis on immovable heritage in the PRC regime reveals anxiety over foreign forces, which had rampaged through Chinese territory and damaged its cultural heritage. The idea was almost ingrained, that cultural relics are fragile and vulnerable. Therefore, we can see that the intentions of the PRC authorities to promote the census and grading of cultural relics and those of the ROC to address "*guwu*" or "ancient objects" were virtually identical. What is more, the PRC's inclusion of experts educated in the field of architecture in the Cultural Relics Bureau follows the same logic of involving scholars with specialities in archaeology or history in the Central Commission of the ROC. Recognising that architecture embodies culture, and choosing the term "*wenwu*" (cultural relics), over the term "*guwu*," they now looked beyond the dimension of time. The length of time past was no longer the only measure of value: the inclusion of revolutionary relics by the new CRPS attests to this.[69] Under the new heritage conservation system, Chinese CRPUs are divided into three levels: key national CRPUs, provincial CRPUs, and municipal or county-level CRPUs. According to listing status of cultural relics, the State Council of the PRC, provincial governments, and municipal or county governments need to put together public announcements and descriptions of CRPUs and set up specialised agencies and staff, as well as establish archives and hierarchical priorities for conservation.

However, implementing legislation pertaining to heritage conservation has its own temporalities and rhythm, and is not always in line with short-time economic development goals (Zhu and Hein 2020). The questions of what immovable items should be listed as a CRPU, and how to treat in practice cultural heritage designated at different conservation levels, remained unresolved within the CRPS (Cultural Relics Protection System). Because of the large diversity of immovable built cultural heritage objects and the vast territory of China, there was – and is – an unavoidable lag in registering cultural relics. Although relevant official departments at each

68 The Wenwu Baohu Guanli Zanxing Tiaoli was approved by the 105th Meeting of the Plenary of the State Council of PRC and was promulgated on 4 March 1961 by the State Council.

69 In expanded definition, revolutionary heritage includes all the important revolutionary activity sites related to Chinese Central Revolutionary Base Areas, the Red Army's Long March, the Anti-Japanese War, or the Liberation War.

province, city, and county level went to work, extreme efforts would have been required to explore, examine, identify, register and manage cultural relics over such an immense spatial and temporal span. Compared with the burgeoning economy-oriented development at the beginning of the new PRC regime, the State Bureau of Cultural Relics (SBCR) had limited time and human resources to locate and register the countless valuable items of built heritage under the CRPS, impeding in practical terms the trajectory to improve China's heritage conservation.

For example, the historic city walls of Beijing remained unlisted, and the municipal government unanimously agreed to tear down the old city centre to facilitate traffic in and out of the city. This provoked widely known and highly contentious debates in 1956 on whether to preserve or demolish the historic city watch-towers and walls of Chaoyangmen in Beijing. With the problems laid bare, debate continued through subsequent decades. Led by Zheng Zhenduo, and with a brief affirmation of verbal support he secured from Chairman Mao in 1957, the "city-wall preservationists" strenuously opposed construction plans for a new Beijing at the cost of demolishing the old city. But it was the claims of the "pro-demolitionists" that prevailed. The "city-wall preservationists" were represented by members of the SBCR and architect Liang Sicheng; the "pro-demolitionists" Peng Zhen (彭真), Wu Han (吴晗), and Xue Zizheng (薛子正), who played leading roles in various administrative departments of Beijing. In 1959, Wu Han publicly criticised Liang Sicheng in the newspaper *People's Daily* as a "theoretician" with no practical experience, and satirised Liang Sicheng's devotion to Chinese ancient architecture as merely a trick for enhancing his prestigious status as an expert.[70] As a result of the protracted tug-of-war debate over conservation of urban historical elements and character that started in 1956, the issue of safeguarding urban heritage drew widespread attention for the first time from policy makers, scholars, and the public.[71]

70 Wu Han wrote the article *Two Friends* to criticise both Zheng Zhenduo and Liang Sicheng for their tough and obstinate attitude towards the preservation of Beijing's old city, and this article was printed on page 12 of *People's Daily* on 26 September 1959 (Xie and Yao 2018, 67).

71 In 1958, seeing what happened in Beijing, the local government of Xi`an also proposed to tear down the city's historical watch-towers and walls. Fully aware of the domino effect of this action after the preservation efforts' failure in Beijing, Xi Zhongxun urgently communicated with Qian Junrui (钱俊瑞), and requested an official intervention to stem further escalation of the situation in Xi`an. With efforts made by Xie Chensheng, Luo Zhewen, and Chen Mingda from the SBCR, the State Council issued an order that the present ancient city walls of Xi`an must be completely preserved, and this urban heritage was then included in the first batch of the national CRPUs in 1961 (Xie and Yao 2018, 88–89).

Stakeholders who enjoy a higher hierarchical level in decision-making power have in practice more control over the fate of cultural heritage (Xie and Yao 2018).[72] But it is worth noting that the stakeholders who have the power to speak and decide in the practice of conservation need to be distinguished from those who have been allocated decision-making power for legislating and enacting regulations in each national, provincial and local authoritative system. With the gradual entrenchment of the new regime and further consolidation of power, experts, practitioners, and amateurs who have accumulated specialised knowledge and figured out techniques and skills to restore and conserve heritage conservation through the movement to promote heritage in China, often face shackles imposed by powerful decision-making stakeholders.

The popular Marxist slogan in China "the economic base determines the superstructure (jingji jichu jueding shangceng jianzhu, 经济基础决定上层建筑)" is always a core idea underlying programs of the new regime of China. Between 1958 and 1960, the period of the Great Leap Forward, many immovable historical buildings suffered rough treatment and damage. Under these circumstances, on 17 November 1960, participants at the 105th plenary meeting of the State Council, approved the Interim Regulations on the Administration of Protection of Cultural Relics 1961. The state continued to take a top-down approach in term of administrative measures. It nominated 180 key units with national significance from the then over 7,000 CRPUs at all grading levels, to oversee a state system of protection, to safeguard the revolutionary ruins, revolutionary monumental buildings, and ancient remains, or monuments (Zhang 2009). In 1961, the State Council successively published three official Notices to strengthen conservation of cultural relics. Two of the working principles (out of four in total) included in the Notice on Further Strengthening of Cultural Relics Conservation and Management (Guanyu Jinyibu Jiaqiang Wenwu Baohu he Guanli Gongzuo de Tongzhi, 关于进一步加强文物保护和管理工作的通知) are worth noting:

72 In his publication of oral history, Xie Chensheng (2018) indicates that Shanxi Province carried out the best cultural relics protection work nationwide in the early days of the PRC, and this result was attributed to Cui Douchen (崔斗辰), the then deputy director of the Department of Education and Culture of Shanxi Province. Cui had extreme enthusiasm for heritage conservation and helped with listing a large number of cultural relics located in Shanxi through his own social network, in which many then provincial cadres in Shanxi are Cui's students.

1 "The conservation of cultural relics is an important task … it plays an important role in promoting scientific research and the development of socialist culture in China, as well as educating the general public on revolutionary traditions and patriotism. … All cultural relics of historical, artistic and scientific value should be properly protected from damage and loss."

2 "The conservation of cultural relics must adhere to the principle of diligence and frugality. For revolutionary monuments and ancient buildings, the main task is to protect their original state to prevent damage, and, except for a few that are about to collapse and need to be stabilised and repaired, the general principle is to avoid major construction work and to maintain the building without collapse or leaking. Protection of cultural relics and monuments is also a work of culture and art; practitioners must take care to maintain the original state of heritage sites as far as possible, and should not demolish or change them and their surrounding environment drastically, which would not only waste human and material resources, but also change the original historical appearance of the cultural relic, or even make it completely unrecognisable, which is actually a destruction of cultural relics and monuments."[73]

With the new articles, heritage conservation was given new modern meanings. The 1961 Interim Regulation and its supplemental instruments were not only a legal corrective to the destruction of cultural relics during the Great Leap Forward, but also became the legal cornerstone for China's CRPS. Patriotic, revolutionary, socio-cultural, and scientific connotations for China's cultural relics became manifest and replaced previous meaning where humiliated bewilderment, worry, vigilance, and the pursuit of an "advanced" Western knowledge dominated. In addition, although the intention to protect the "original" state of historic buildings aimed to fully maintain information attached to a building and avoid risks, there would be an unfortunate side effect. The idea that "the less you do, the less mistakes you could make" is implied between the lines, and could lead to overlooking potentially irreversible hidden problems and even damage for subsequent conservation and restoration of the CRPUs. Conservation of the case Bugaoli, described in a later chapter, captures the possible consequences of this kind of conservative guideline. In the early 1960s, under the improved CRPS, important reforms and debates took place. One reform

73 The State Council of PRC issued the Guanyu Jinyibu Jiaqiang Wenwu Baohu he Guanli Gongzuo de Tongzhi on 4 March 1961, together with the promulgation of the Wenwu Baohu Guanli Zanxing Tiaoli. These two were both included in the *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Guowuyuan Gongbao* (*State Council Gazette of the People's Republic of China*), which was published on 31 March 1961, 234 (4): 76–90. http://www.gov.cn/gongbao/shuju/1961/gwyb196104.pdf

involved commercialising a portion of listed cultural relics; simultaneously there were important debates on whether to take a radical or conservative approach to urban heritage. However, as a harbinger of the coming Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), the Cultural Ministry became subject to various critiques, and the second census of immovable built cultural relics nationwide scheduled for 1964 was delayed. China's heritage conservation would come to a halt for more than a decade.

4.2.2 Stagnation of China's heritage conservation utilities (1966–1978)

Cultural endeavours fell stagnant in the 1960s and the 1970s. Years before the full-scale launching of the Cultural Revolution, in the tense atmosphere at the time, protection of cultural relics had started to face difficulties at different levels in municipalities. Nevertheless, shortly after 1966, noticing a serious loss of cultural treasures, governmental departments including the Ministry of Culture, the Palace Museum, the Chinese History Museum, the Institute of Archaeology, and the Institute of History of Chinese Academy of Sciences, and their thirteen subordinate civil organisations joined together and published the Initiative to Protect Revolutionary and Ancient Cultural Relics (Guanyu Baohu Geming Wenwu he Gudai Wenwu de Changyishu, 关于保护革命文物和古代文物的倡议书) in February of 1967.[74] This was an attempt to prevent the brutal "smashing and looting" by forces acting without regulation on the so-called "Four Olds" that the period targeted (Figure 4.1).[75] Within three months, the Initiative had quickly drawn the attention of and recognition from Chairman Mao and the central government, who quickly issued the Several Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the protection of cultural relics and books during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (Zhonggong Zhongyang Guanyu zai Wuchan Jieji Wenhua Da Geming Zhong Baohu Wenwu Tushu de Jidian Yijian [Zhongfa (67) No. 158], 中共中央关于在无产阶级文化大革命中保护文物图书的几点意见) on 14 May 1967.[76] The No. 158 document distinguishes valuable cultural relics from the "Four Olds". Seven categories of cultural relics are highlighted for protection. In terms of immovable heritage, these included (1) revolutionary relics and memorial architecture of the revolutionary movement, (2) typical ancient buildings, grotto temples, stone

74 According to his oral history, Xie Chensheng (2018) drafted this Initiative.

75 The "Four Old" were old ideas, old culture, old habits, and old customs, yet the definition of the four categories was never entirely clear during the Cultural Revolution.

76 The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the "Several Opinions" on 14 May 1967.

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carvings, sculptures, and murals, and (3) ancient cultural monuments and tombs (Xie and Yao 2018, 128–129). This governmental document made an effort to prevent further large-scale damage to historic objects, buildings, and sites, leaving countless valuable treasures for China' subsequent revitalisation of heritage studies and conservation practices. However, under the Cultural Revolution, the 1961 Interim Regulation could not contain the resistance and antagonism to the CRPS at the time. The series of social events represented in "destroying the Four Olds" has led to a neglect of culture and traditions, at the very least. As a social movement to pursue "breaking down the old to create the new", an old idea newly energised, the ten years of the Cultural Revolution had a had a long-term negative impact on the protection of cultural heritage for years to come (Zhang 2009).



FIG. 4.1 Heads of Buddha on stone statues destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Trip_to_Ningxia_and_Gansu.jpg, accessed on 15 October, 2019.

After the mid-1970s, conservation of and research on cultural relics gradually returned to normal. In 1974, the State Council promulgated its first document regarding the protection of cultural relics since the Cultural Revolution, the Notice on strengthening of cultural relics conservation (Guanyu Jiaqiang Wenwu

Baohu Gongzuo de Tongzhi, 关于加强文物保护工作的通知), to advocate for the implementation of Chairman Mao's heritage policy, to "use the past for the present" (Xie and Yao 2018, 146). Coming two years after Liang Sicheng's death, the document coincided with one of Liang's conservation principles published in 1963. The 1974 Notice states that to conserve cultural relics is to protect the achievements in architecture, engineering, and art of ancient labouring people, which can be sources for educating the public in historical materialism. This statement addresses the connection between the labour of the Chinese working people and Chinese cultural heritage, but does so by overshadowing the cultural significance of the latter. Fortunately, with the contributions and dedicated efforts of experts, many scattered historical buildings and sites survived the social struggles of Cultural Revolution, in particular those linked to previous revolutionary activities. The Site of the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China, which was also historical *lilong* housing in the earlier French Concession of Shanghai, was placed under protective maintenance, and enabled the birth of the Xintiandi project, which will be discussed as a specific case in a later chapter. Still, heritage conservation, which usually requires large expenditures, was largely unworkable during the Cultural Revolution, when the moral and social value of frugality prevailed.

The ten-year period took from China more than one decade of missed opportunities to integrate into the now-booming heritage discourse on the international sense. While Chinese society was assailing traditional culture in the mid-1960s, the Venice Charter 1964 was having a stellar impact outside the country. It was the most important international document for the development of heritage conservation principles in the 20th century, becoming the fundamental unified standard and reference for diverse discourses on and movement in heritage worldwide. In addition, UNESCO adopted the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage at the General Conference in its seventeenth session on 16 November 1972, and opened the document by referring to "changing social and economic conditions which aggravate the situation with even more formidable phenomena of damage or destruction".[77] However, Chinese society at the time was in the midst of this "more formidable phenomena".

77 UNESCO. 1972. Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. (World Heritage Convention). https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext

4.2.3 Revitalisation of cultural relics protection (after 1978)

The 1982 Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China marked a full relaunch of heritage conservation in China.[78] The Law was consistent with the milestones established after the 1920s, and followed the core principles included in the 1961 Interim Regulation. Under the leadership of the reformist Deng Xiaoping (邓小平), the country had entered a new era of economic reform (started in 1978) and undertook the "*Boluan Fanzheng*" program to dismantle the policies that had caused socio-cultural chaos during Cultural Revolution. The 1982 Law re-established the foundations of China's legal protection of cultural relics, upholding the status and significance of the CRPS in a new era. In the course of preparing the articles of the law, experts noticed China's heritage conservation efforts lagged behind overall international heritage movements in scope and definition. The drafters of the new law therefore incorporated many elements of internationally agreed documents and measures that had long been employed in Italy and other leading countries (Xie and Yao 2018, 173). The objectives and principles of the Venice Charter 1964 were also important references for designing the new legal system.

In the 1980s, the state government of China took several actions to regain international and domestic attention to China's work of culture. The State Council issued the Notice on Strengthening of Cultural Relics Work (Guanyu Jin Yi Bu Jiaqiang Wenwu Gongzuo de Tongzhi, 关于进一步加强文物工作的通知) in 1987 to further emphasise and articulate the significance of cultural relics in the country and conservation measures concerning them. The 1987 Notice highlights six main objectives in protecting cultural relics, serving a prominent instructional role for the making and localising of heritage-related policies and their implementation. The Notice refers to three concerns: shaping ideology in both the private and public spheres, developing scientific research, and promoting cultural exchange and tourism. It states, concerning the first, that cultural relics carry revolutionary and patriotic significance for educating the public, and adolescents in particular, in historical materialism. Furthermore, heritage-related institutions and governmental departments need to cultivate people and enrich their spiritual lives through engaging with cultural relics. The Notice also proposes that the plentiful historical cultural sites and ancient monuments across the country are important for the development of tourism, for attracting both domestic and international visitors. It further states that China's national cultural relics are a means of promoting international cultural exchange, enhancing mutual understanding between China's

78 The Law was adopted at the 25th meeting of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on 19 November 1982.

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people and those of other countries. With these guidelines, the Chinese national authorities strategically looked for World Heritage nominations.

In this period of cultural revitalisation, the 1982 Law and the 1987 Notice facilitated the discussion of ambiguous heritage principles, strategies, and practical approaches nationally. Heritage conservation was articulated as a means to promote cultural and ideological progress, shaping personal morality and society's advances in scholarship and in its political environment (Yan 2014). It was then necessary to further develop site investigation, documentation, archiving, and study by both scientific research sections and governmental survey departments. Of course, conducting surveys of cultural relics had begun significantly in the 1930s; since then it had become the occupational domain of heritage-related practitioners. China rebranded its cultural image internationally when on 12 December 1985 it ratified the 1972 Convention. Doing so would show it was working in line with the unified and developing international discourse and help reveal its own long and continuous civilisation. With the nomination of six historic sites as World Heritage Sites (WHSs) in 1987, China thus gradually caught up with the trend of registering a number of listed sites, to export its "soft power" (Yan 2018). Promoting tourism and attracting global exchanges have thus become the objectives of many local governments, and conserving their heritage is integral to that. The advent of the World Heritage concept in the 1980s in China was, in a sense, a political shortcut after a circuitous path of more than ten years.

4.3 From Cultural Relics to Historical Cultural Cities

The promulgation of the 1982 Law had limited effects, however, in curbing persistent large-scale demolition of historical buildings. While China started once again promoting cultural endeavours, economic prosperity continued to be at the centre of national development goals. Under the prospect of a "grand vision" which prioritised economic strength, the building of national infrastructure, social stability, and strategic visions livelihood, the significance of heritage conservation would be effectively neglected. Such disregard was abetted, in Chinese society of the time, when most Chinese people did not connect their national, ethnic, or individual identities with the content of art and culture. The phenomenon of large-scale

demolition has been significantly notable in cities where urbanisation and economic growth became China's first priority after it instituted economic reforms.[79] The Law, includes provisions for administrative and criminal penalties for individual illegal acts such as smuggling, private possession of cultural objects, or theft under supervision (State Council of PRC 1991 [1982], Article 30 and Article 31). Damage and destruction of urban heritage caused by the resolutions made by local governments at different levels in planning urban development and expansion were not, however, subject to legal liability or moral condemnation at that time. In the second census of immovable cultural relics nationwide, undertaken between 1981 and 1989, more than 400,000 sites were listed, including 2,351 national major CRPUs. Nevertheless, uncounted historical buildings and sites were not included, and were not therefore within reach of legal protection. Some listed CRPUs have low protection levels and are still at risk of varying degrees of damage.

Under such circumstances, in the revitalisation process, there has been an urgency to protect urban heritage facing substantial risk of demolition. This has been addressed since the 1980s, but with little success. Leading experts, such as Hou Renzhi (侯仁之), Zheng Xiaoxie (郑孝燮), and Shan Shiyuan proposed idea and relevant issues to address to conserve famous historical and cultural cities in China. In 1982, the State Council of PRC approved and published the Request on the Conservation of China's Famous Historical and Cultural Cities (Guanyu Baohu Wo Guo Lishi Wenhua Mingcheng de Qingshi, 关于保护我国历史文化名城的请示) submitted by the State Capital Construction Committee (Guojia Jiben Jianshe Weiyuanhui, 国家基本建设委员会), the State Administration of Cultural Relics (Guojia Wenwu Shiye Guanli Ju, 国家文物事业管理局), and the State General Administration of Urban Construction (Guojia Chengshi Jianshe Zong Ju, 国家城市建设总局). The concept of urban heritage became part the national agenda for heritage conservation as it accompanied the designation of famous historical and cultural cities as important sites to conserve.

In 1982, twenty-four cities were recognised and listed in the first batch, as a National Famous Historical and Cultural City. In the fourth section of the 1987 Notice on Strengthening of Cultural Relics Work, the necessity was further proposed to integrate conservation management into urban and rural construction master plans,

79 The *Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China* (1982) was the first law specific to the field of protection of cultural relics in China. Since its implementation in 1982, before the major revision of 2002, only Articles 30 and 31 of the Law were amended in 1991.

absorbing the conservation of historic cities into China's heritage discourse.[80] The State Council (1997) also specified that in construction taking place in historical and cultural cities, the urban construction and planning departments should have the responsibility to strengthen heritage management in urban planning, and to rescue and protect historical blocks with traditional features (Zhang 2009, 31). In this new historical period, there were indeed a proliferation of relevant regulations following the 1982 ones. These actions gradually formulated a new system for protecting historical sites at a larger scale with a holistic consideration. This system works in line with the principles of the CRPS and further interacts with governmental planning strategies. It was not until 2008 that the State Council promulgated the Regulation on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns and Villages (Lishi Wenhua Mingcheng Mingzhen Mingcun Baohu Tiaoli, 历史文化名城名镇名村保护条例, Regulation on Famous Cities for short) and extended the scope under protection from historic cities to historic towns and villages. And yet restraints to the damage to immovable cultural relics have been not effective in local practice.

To address the growing conflict between urban construction and urban conservation, the State Council promulgated the Regulation on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns and Villages in 2008, regulating practices on historic buildings and structures at a larger scale. This regulation underscores the responsibilities of local governments for heritage conservation, to formulate stringent conservation measures, and to specify the activities prohibited within conservation areas. In the 21st century, embracing and becoming more involved in a global discourse, Chinese experts and authorities have largely applied international manifestos and principles in the making of regulations, notably with the enactment of the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China issued by ICOMOS China in 2000. In the 2008 Regulation on Famous Cities, shared international principles such as "integrity" and "authenticity" were adopted in Article 3, and specific measures to protect the original height, volume, appearance, or colours of historic buildings within a conservation area elaborated in Article 27 (State Council of PRC 2017 [2008]).[81] An exhaustive and precise definition of the terms "integrity" and "authenticity" were missing, however. In the latest revised version (2015) of the Law, Article 66 lays out different levels of punishment for the unauthorised

80 After 1982, several official documents were published to promote close integration of heritage conservation and urban and rural planning, including the 1983 Notice on Strengthening the Planning of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities (Guan Yu Qianghua Lishi Wenhua Mingcheng Guihua De Tongzhi, 关于强化历史文化名城规划的通知) published by the Ministry of Urban and Rural Construction and Environmental Protection (城乡建设环境保护部).

81 The term "original" generally refers to the status quo before conservation measures, unless there is a solid and significant state of affairs to restore (Xie and Yao 2018, 175).

relocation, demolition, reconstruction, or repair and restoration of immovable CRPUs, in which historical appearance and environment have been destroyed.[82] In general, the name and content of the Law and its fundamental legislative framework have not changed. In 2003, influenced by the shifting discourse in the international heritage movement, the terminology "cultural heritage" replaced "cultural relics" as the translation of "*wenwu*" in political contexts, and the national administrative agency responsible for the management of heritage was renamed the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (Yan 2018).

From listing CRPUs to designating historic cities, the central government made every effort to reinvent the country's cultural features and rebuild national confidence through conserved heritage in the post-Cultural-Revolution period. However, increasing awareness of cultural heritage since the late 20th century has raised new problematics for China's heritage practices as well. For one, the idea of a World Heritage Site and principles proposed in the 1972 Convention have had a homogenising effect on the making of heritage globally (Rico 2008; Landorf 2009; Yan 2018). The trend is particularly striking in non-European countries where practitioners rarely are masters of the heritage discourse. As China has conformed to the core values of various charters, declarations, or manifestos, and has adopted the ever-changing definition and scope of international heritage discourse to gain global reputation through nominations for World Heritage status, the country's heritage has been caught in a spiral of homogenisation. With the gradual penetration of homogenised heritage ideas, the space of discussion has been cramped in China. Lacking is a national group of opinion leaders knowledgeable in specialist areas, such as architectural and urban conservation, proposing multiple discursive viewpoints drawing on the local cultural context. Still, between the conflicting developing goals of national and local governments, and the varied interests of multiple stakeholders, and without specific operational guidelines, action around heritage and heritage conservation has become increasingly complicated. Conservation for purposes related to international politics and the actual day-to-day practice of heritage conservation have thus diverged. The proliferation of laws and regulations, while emphasising the significance of conservation, has not provided an effective deterrent to destruction in the pursuit of development. In some sense, the logic of earlier concern with destruction by invaders and foreign theft of heritage set up a situation in which the vulnerability and loss of cultural heritage would be ignored to a certain extent as long as the destruction was done by the Chinese themselves.

82 The Law was revised in 2002, 2007, 2013, 2015, and 2017.

4.4 Increasing Problems in China's Urban Heritage Practices

Heritage conservation practice is a much more complex operation than the compilation of legislative stipulations. Actual stakeholders' opinions interact in the conservation and protection of historical cities, and contribute to the success of a heritage conservation case, or to numerous difficulties and failure. The resurgence of legal construction has revitalised norms and criteria for investigation, research, and management of China's immovable historic sites at various scales. Looking at different local governments' responses, heritage conservation in each city, town and village seems to concern local conditions alone. Between national regulations and the promulgation of administrative orders appropriate to each local context, and the presence of local government at different levels, people from multiple social sectors engage in coinciding or contradictory practices. There have always been well-known leading professionals. From Luo Zhewen and Xie Chensheng, to Wu Liangyong and Ruan Yisan, as well as the later Chang Qing, these possess a certain authority in heritage discourse, but they do not have the ability to make a decisive impact on Chinese society and turn the tide of vanishing cultural heritage.[83] For example, Professor Ruan is a devotee of ancient cities, and as a practitioner has successfully conserved numerous ancient cities and towns, including the WHSs Ancient City of Pingyao (listed in 1997), and the Old Town of Lijiang, and the ancient water towns Zhouzhuang, Tongli, Luzhi, Wuzhen and Xitang. Despite his massive efforts and contributions, documented in his books *A Chronicle of City Protection* (2001) and *Track Record of City Protection* (2001), Professor Ruan's success can be attributed as much to his contacts in government as to his status as a university professor who has trained many officers with expertise in architectural construction and conservation planning. Well-known professionals like Professor Ruan do indeed have a leading voice to a certain extent in China. Their advantageous positions in the social structure and relations they develop there have been key for promoting and expanding their ideas. However, whether their professional advice is followed, and the extent to which it is referred to, is another matter in practice.

In this respect, this thesis pessimistically argues that even if it were not for the lack of a mature heritage conservation system and systematic theoretical framework adapted specifically to China, diverse stakeholders' interests surrounding heritage

83 These experts are prestigious in academia or Chinese society for their contribution to the protection or analysis of Chinese historic buildings and cities.

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are in reality the main cause of conflict. Responding to the growing national focus on conservation of immovable cultural heritage at the scale of buildings, monoliths, and entire historic areas, stakeholders have turned to a variety of interpretations to justify their operations and approaches. Each local government determines the acceptability of these diverse interpretations in the course of hands-on heritage conservation projects. Facing the duality of opportunities and challenges in meeting multiple stakeholders' interests, in urban heritage conservation, may be what needs most to be explored to guarantee the continuity of urban historic landscapes within the agenda of urban development.

4.4.1 Conflicting interests in urban conservation

The dilemma posed by urban development has compressed the space of urban heritage conservation since the 1978 economic reforms. A choice is laid out: whether to seek financial revenues or have historical culture and collective memory. The conflict between urban conservation and extremely rapid urbanisation, including expansion of urban areas, radical transformation of built space, or extensive demolition, is acute. On the one hand, local government always priorities economic benefits, which higher authorities use to assess the performance of local officials has been an important indicator for superior authority assessing the performance of local officials among the other public affairs. The government is more interested in the economic benefits that urban heritage could bring through the tourism industry or other commerce. And it is indeed the case, one the other hand, as Liang Sicheng mentioned in his 1963 article, that heritage restoration is like a bottomless pit. Government, as the owner of many historical properties, does not have the budget for heritage to support ongoing and often imperceptible and delicate conservation work. And so it must seek to derive benefits from the conservation of historic buildings.

Indeed, China's urban heritage conservation and urban development have been in conflict since the establishment of the PRC. Looking back at the debates regarding Beijing's old city centre in the 1950s, one perceives that urban heritage hinders the city's development of infrastructure and affects so-called modernisation. Urban heritage thus becomes a sacrificial lamb in urban planning, made by administrative decision-makers dominated by "pro-demolitionists". After the opening-up policy following the Cultural Revolution, the fate of cultural buildings has been steadily improving, but there is still a long way to go. Looking top-down, Xie Chensheng (2018) suggests that the primary problem accompanying urban development today is local governments' opportunistic and speculative strategies arrayed against

national requirements for heritage conservation. As the old Chinese saying goes, "there are policies at the top and corresponding countermeasures at the bottom" (上有政策，下有对策). Local governments' tactics to "overtly agree but covertly oppose" result in extensive damage to cultural relics, in particular historic buildings designed for civic use (Xie and Yao 2018, 130). The public, as well, holds negative opinions on heritage conservation in the local political environment, as they are influenced by their traditional attitudes towards historical architecture, ideas about the ownership of property, and a feeling of cultural futility. In local practice, on a city-by-city basis, a lack of top-down cooperation and a lack of bottom-up attention have jointly created difficulties in the conservation of urban heritage. In this respect, Xie Chensheng (2018) argues that large-scale demolition of historic urban buildings brought about by urbanisation since the 1990s has been unprecedented in the history of China, even more devastating than the demolition that happened during the Cultural Revolution.



FIG. 4.2 On January 28, 2012, the former residence of Lin Huiyin and Liang Sicheng was nearly demolished. However, the Beijing Administration of Cultural Heritage had no idea this was taking place, when this case sparked a lively discussion on the internet. According to the response of the Dongcheng District Culture Committee, this demolition was made by a developer without obtaining official approval and was "illegal". Source: Caixin, "Liang Sicheng Lin Huiyi Jiu Guju Bei Chai, Zhuguan Bumen Cheng Jiehou Kaigong Fujian." [Liang Sicheng's and Lin Huiyin's Former Residence was Demolished, the Authority Claimed the Reconstruction after the Holiday.] Available at https://photos.caixin.com/2012-01-29/100351191_5.html, accessed on 6 November 2019.

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Legislation sets the minimum moral requirements for human beings. China's legislative framework at it has evolved for cultural heritage conservation can serve to establish standards and point the trajectory forward, but it cannot prevent problems caused by various stakeholders in the real world. The Regulation on Famous Cities (2008 [2017]) was promulgated to mitigate the disappearance of historic city centres and heritage sites. However, even the mayors and municipal party secretaries demolished large areas of historic blocks, neighbourhoods, and buildings for the sake of regional economic development, utilising various pretexts for justification. Because they are not CRPUs, they are not held accountable in their ongoing political careers for the demolition of historic centres. For example, the ancient centres of Beijing and Nanjing have experienced such disturbing situation. In 2012, the demolition of Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin's former residence, listed as a CRPU and located in Courtyard No. 3, Beizhangbu Hutong, Dongcheng District, marked the failure of an urban heritage conservation campaign for Beijing's old city, which had engaged generations of experts and professionals for over 60 years (Figure 4.2).

Nanjing had a similar or even worse experience, as the leading stakeholders have utilised the concept of "conservation" and distorted the concept beyond recognition. Nanjing's old city took a historical twist in 2009 with the bold chutzpah of the then (2009) mayor, Jiang Hongkun (**蒋宏坤**). He deliberately and even maliciously identified historic architecture as "dilapidated buildings". Under his instructions, stakeholders of the Nanjing government labelled their measures as urban conservation, and utilised the term "demolition-style transformation" and the rhetoric of "dental prosthetics style transformation" to describe creation of a fake historical style of the Old City South (*laochengnan*) in Nanjing (Xie and Yao 2018, 365–384). With the prolific conservation of fake cultural relics for commercial use, indigenous residents were forced to move out as well. The historic urban landscape, including tangible historic morphological patterns, environmental contexts, historic features and styles, and intangible folk lives have been largely destroyed. Nanjing has thus become a designated Famous and Historical and Cultural City with vanishing historical characters, and its history is represented by tombs, palace buildings, and ancient city walls rather than by scenes of street community life. In some cases, before the promulgation of the 2008 Regulation on Famous Cities, the administration of many designated historic cities, led by national and local experts, had issued series of regulations appropriate to local heritage conservation. Since the late 20th century, the provinces Zhejiang, Jiangsu, and Yunnan, and cities Beijing, Suzhou, Xi`an, Guangzhou, and Fuzhou have advanced rapidly in terms of legislation for the conservation of historic cities (Zhang 2009). However, in reality, in the name of conservation, many municipal or district governments have taken the lead in developing adaptive localised discourse and justifications that are in the interests of local economic development.

4.4.2 Ambiguous discourse in a heritagisation era

Heritage conservation is always a dynamic and explainable concept. As the scope of heritage continues to grow, so does the commercial value that stakeholders see in "conserving" heritage. In the global trend of "heritagisation" that emerged in the mid-to-late 20th century, the heritage industry grew rapidly, and has been tightly linked to rebuilding economies (Hewison 1987). Heritagisation, the creation of industrialised heritage, has in a sense developed in line with commercial objectives, as a flourishing sector of the leisure industry (McCrone et al. 1995; Harvey 2001; Macleod 2006). Diverse interest-based heritage initiatives and human behaviours go well beyond what regulations and legislative frameworks can restrain. Under such circumstances, the impact of heritage conservation-related regulations in China have not been strongly apparent. Protecting cultural heritage is subordinated to the development of other economic or transport friendly elements.

Many issues have caused confusion and deviations in China's heritage conservation. From a political perspective, the national objective is certainly to assimilate into international discourse with respect to cultural output. However, local interests in prefectures always diverge from national strategy. Their subliminal approaches are notable in practice. In local practice, according to national goals and the presence of native collective memory, there is little interest in or tolerance for an international conservation discourse. Because of the diversity and variation in regional practices, the universalism and authorised heritage discourse shaped by Eurocentric culture and hegemony has been questioned and challenged by scholarship in this century (Yan 2018). For example, the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was the consequence of a re-evaluation of existing guidelines, aiming to extend and enrich heritage-related terminology and concepts to be more inclusive (Ahmad 2006; Smith and Akagawa 2009). But this movement towards more global concepts, sets up a kind of curious puzzle for heritage conservation practice in China. Being a latecomer to the global heritage narrative, China is often underestimated or ignored. However, when the state government of China and its geo-political BRIC allies seek World Heritage nominations and pursue their cultural influence, there has been little attention to "what are the necessary procedures and approaches to enhance indigenous conservation of heritage?" Chinese pursuit of international political influence through the conservation of cultural heritage is certainly a bid for a more equitable global distribution of power and resources, but it also provides a breeding ground for diverse justifications for heritage by interested stakeholders with ulterior motives. Talking about conservation and thinking about business is probably the most prominent feature of China's contemporary urban heritage practice.

4.5 Conclusion

Influenced by globalisation and the booming heritage discourse worldwide, conservation of immovable heritage in the PRC has extended from the protection of listed cultural relics to the protection of historic cities, towns, and villages. The popularity of "heritagisation" has been a national strategy since the 1980s, and invites struggles over conservation discourse. Although the national strategy has been to create cultural symbols in line with Eurocentric ideas by seeking many WHS nominations, actually making heritage differs undertaking conservation measures. In the name of conservation, the PRC regime aims to revitalise culture through heritage, and seeks to shape ideology through patriotic education and nationalistic rejuvenation. As part of this, the regime seeks to maintain national monuments for research, or for developing cultural heritage tourism. On the flip side, however, shifting the lens from the regime to local administrations, whether seizing tourism resources or eying the economic interests of urban land, practical heritage approaches tend to follow the actual interests of stakeholders. Urbanisation usually takes place at the expense of the historic buildings in the inner city. In this respect, in the transformation of many historic buildings in city centres, the concept of conservation has been utilised and interpreted to their own ends by developers, designers, and professional consultants, or the constant expressions by key opinion leaders on internet social platforms. The entanglement of all these interests has led to diverse and uneven results. Even where heritage-related laws and regulations exist, under local governments, heritage discourse is ambiguous. In the name of conservation, adapting heritage discourse to local terms and offering their own justifications, local administrations aim to bring about favourable conditions for regional development and urbanisation. In China's reform era after 1978, local governments have led other stakeholders to see that conservation is not something content that needs to be strictly adhered to. Since that time, in order to highlight their political achievements or to leave a body of work in their name, stakeholders' affinity for adding "inscriptions" on collections has showed up. At a different scale, this ancient custom is being projected onto the much larger immovable cultural relics in urban space.

However, it is worth noticing that immovable urban cultural heritage, with its public visibility in cities, is not to the same as a private collection. Stakeholders' diverse interpretations typical of "inscription" practice have gradually and irreversibly brought a personal bent to an activity of public nature and perpetuated stakeholders' influence on spatial forms and landscapes of a city. It is now crucial to investigate stakeholders' interpretations of heritage conservation in their practical activities, in order to understand the ultimate direction of urban heritage in contemporary China.

The whitewashing interpretations of Jiang Hongkun and other stakeholders to justify the destruction of the Old City South of Nanjing in 2009 is neither the first nor an isolated case. Historical buildings in inner city areas are facing an unprecedented challenge. This chapter shifts the focus from the national government to local governments, and points out the abuse of executive power and local officials' superficial obedience to conservation under the newly formulated systems to manage and protect cultural heritage.

Furthermore, with the expanding scope of heritage and growing dynamism of heritage practice, the breadth of stakeholders who could have impact should be taken into consideration and included in global authoritative discourse on heritage. Among all the listed national Famous Historical and Cultural Cities in China, this thesis takes the city of Shanghai and the historic *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods within as an example, to investigate further motivations of stakeholders in Shanghai. Historical *lilong* housing in Shanghai that had once nurtured and accompanied urbanisation of the city in its settler-colonial history has faced more complicated problems than most traditional Chinese urban dwellings in the contemporary moment. We as observers can see the transformation of results of the historical *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai's city centre. Perhaps the most vibrant city in China in terms of economic activity and heritage studies, Shanghai has received advice from numerous renowned experts and scholars. They have contributed to formulating a local system and mechanism for the city's approaches to heritage and conservation measures in the context of Shanghai's urbanisation and modernisation. A dazzling array of results and vocal opinions have generated continuous debate about the transformed *lilong* neighbourhoods and reveal how the national and local legislation regarding heritage conservation serves only to demonstrate a commitment to culture by authorities. The city's current regulations for protecting its traditional and modern heritage buildings, sites, and landscapes in the city centre from urban construction do not give precise specifications for conservation actions. Heritagisation, on the other hand, has induced more ambition and speculation in the name of conservation. The next chapter, taking the entanglement between a settler-colonial leaning in its early urban expansion and the city itself as a starting point, analyses Shanghai's initiatives listing its rich settler-colonial legacies and examines the fragmented identity of this type of cultural heritage in a Chinese heritage discourse. The chaos of protecting the unique *lilong* neighbourhoods of Shanghai demonstrates the divergence between heritagisation in terms of legislation and conservation measures in terms of stakeholders' interests. Shanghai is a place where heritage measures in the name of conservation have taken place frequently since the late 1990s, not because there are remarkable conservation projects, but because there is a myriad of heritage that can be used to tell a different story about the protection of culture.

5 Controversial Post-Treaty Heritage

Genesis, Development, and Shanghai's Initiative

5.1 Introduction

Shanghai is one of the few cities in mainland to boast many settler-colonial legacies. The expansion and urbanisation of this city, from a round walled-city to a flourishing metropolis, is closely related to the investment and construction dominated by foreign settlers before the establishment of the PRC (Figure 5.1). Compared with other historical cities, Shanghai is distinctive for its modern urban landscapes that were built after the First Opium War and the treaty port opening. For this, and especially for its star-studded 20th-century historic sites, the central government designated Shanghai in its second set of listings of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities on 8 December 1986.[84] On the one hand, the entire city has been undergoing major social change under the influence of settler-colonialism,

84 There are seven categories of the listed cities in general, including (1) an old capital in history, (2) a city with traditional and classical Chinese landscapes, (3) a city with famous scenery and attractions, (4) a city with unique vernacular and ethnic character, (5) a city with modern and contemporary historic sites, (6) a city with special functional features, and (7) a city with numerous scattered general historic sites.

transnationalism, globalisation and capitalism, successively since the mid-19th century. In a sense, construction outside of the old walled city in Shanghai had its genesis with a recognisable settler-colonial character. On the other hand, although citizens of Shanghai grew up in an urban landscape with the exotic features created in the earlier International Settlement and French Concession, the history of local residents' activities has given provided the settler-colonial architecture a new substance. As heritage discourse has been expanded and promoted both globally and nationally, the local government of Shanghai has found an opportunity to advocate its modernity as distinguished from ancient or traditional Chinese culture and urban configurations. Shanghai has thus led the way in the sub-field of Chinese heritage exploration to realise the significance of modern and contemporary legacies. Within the category of post-treaty legacies built in Shanghai's modern history, this thesis looks at Shanghai's architecture for living purpose as an example of heritage that encompasses not only the public nature of most immovable cultural heritage, but also its characteristic as private property. These qualities drive discussions and debates of heritage conservation into complex dimensions.

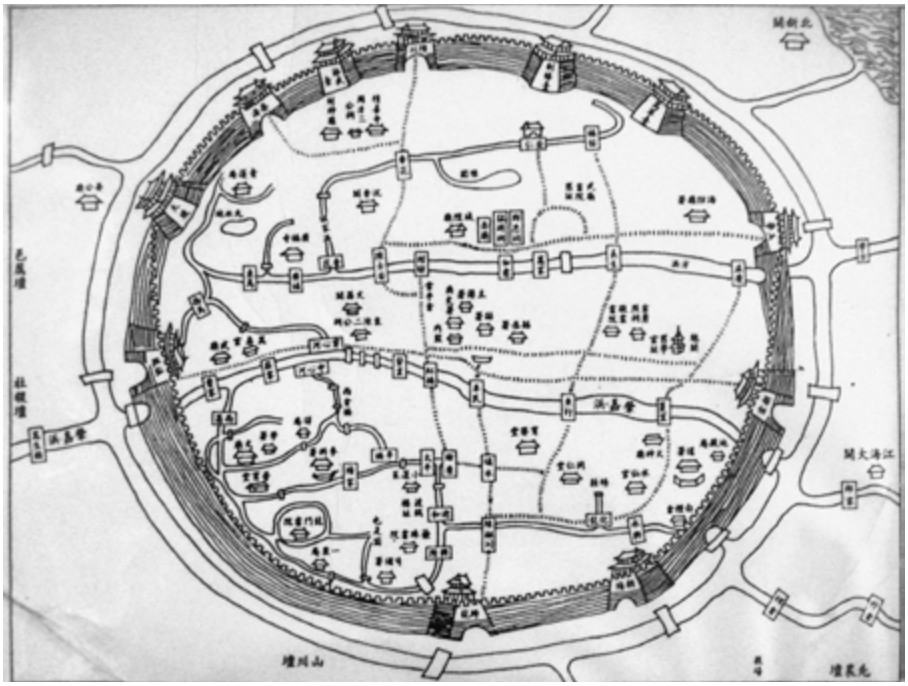


FIG. 5.1 The map of Shanghai in the 17th century shows the old town of Shanghai with gates. Showing the city's layout in a circular shape, this map also illustrates the geographical environment with its dense water network. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_the_Old_City_of_Shanghai.jpg, accessed on 10 October 2017.

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This chapter takes the investigation of the imported concept of heritage conservation in China to a specific case study. Putting them in an overall frame of analysis, it focuses on three aspects. It describes and analyses Shanghai's initiative to list its settler-colonial urban legacies, and local residents' attachment to the unique historic *lilong* housing, and proposes the idea of controversial heritage to describe the emerging heritage category that contains both a history of humiliation and a more complicated collective memory. In a booming real estate market in an area saturated with existing buildings, stakeholders need to cooperate to solve the problem of "what to do about the existing buildings that have largely constituted Shanghai's urban landscape in the inner city". This issue involves a number of considerations. Considering the three aspects, this chapter seeks to answer the questions: (1) "What is the purpose of the local government's initiative to protect the historic *lilong* buildings and neighbourhoods?" (2) "How do local residents who lived or are living in *lilong* communities view the conservation of the typical dwellings and neighbourhoods?" (3) "What are the practical issues related to the conservation of *lilong* raised by their inherent complexity?" In seeking to answer these questions, this chapter explores divergences local discourse regarding the conservation of historic *lilong* buildings and neighbourhoods.

5.2 Shanghai's Initiative: The Legislative System and the Nomination of Urban Heritage

The government and scholars of Shanghai were among the first and most active groups in advocating the conservation of modern heritage as distinct from traditional Chinese buildings, sites, and landscapes. This striking initiative is largely ascribed to the city's natural geographical advantage and frequent transnational exchanges since Shanghai's treaty port opening. National laws, regulations, and principles have given theoretical guidance to heritage policy. Under a coordinated management and strategy for implementation, the local government of Shanghai has issued a series local regulations to protect valued items, monuments, and urban legacies that are significant within its specific administrative boundary, according to local heritage-related goals for regional branding or positioning. At the national level, Shanghai was listed in 1986 as a historical and cultural city for its modern and contemporary historic sites that represent specific events and historical periods in China's social progress. Under the systems of protecting the listed Cultural Relic Protection Units and

protecting the designated Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns and Villages that work in parallel, the government of Shanghai has enacted protection of its heritage at different scales. Under the system as a designated historic city, protection of *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods involves four scales. The scales of Protection Area, Protection Neighbourhood, and Protection Street, and Heritage Architecture are used for managing heritage practice and making conservation plans. Under the system of the CRPS, there are CRPUs and Cultural Relic Protection Spots. *Lilong* housing and neighbourhoods appears within almost every level of heritage conservation.

5.2.1 Initiative in listing post-treaty buildings in Shanghai

Because of the specific development opportunities it had and its historical position in China, modern Shanghai has been at the forefront of heritage conservation and museum management in the country since the concept of conservation of monuments and preservation of antiquities was first introduced to China in the late 19th century. Both before and after the establishment of the PRC, authorities in Shanghai have experimented with proposing a variety of local management methods, measures and regulations, with a forward-looking, international perspective. The cause of heritage conservation in Shanghai started well before the China's liberation. Before 1949, after the opening of the treaty ports, a number of social and cultural undertakings took place in Shanghai. After 1949, the new Shanghai Cultural Relics Management Commission (Shanghai Shi Wenwu Guanli Weiyuanhui, 上海市文物管理委员会) was established, to manage cultural relics both above ground, and underground scattered throughout the city. After the Cultural Revolution, in order to have a unified and systematic organisation for control of the city's cultural relics, since 1988 the Commission has been responsible for the overall management of heritage-related cultural endeavours within Shanghai, including conservation work in Shanghai's subordinate districts and counties. Nevertheless, the CRPS and the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics (the 1982 Law) of 1982 were designed to protect and display antiquities so designated on the basis of long-standing Chinese cultural tradition.[85]

In the period just after the Cultural Revolution, both scholars and the local government of Shanghai were influenced by the dynamic global discourse on heritage conservation. Professor Yongyi Lu and Li (2019) have noted the difficulty in getting national recognition for concession-period legacies, a controversial built

85 The term "cultural relics (*wenwu*)" appeared early in the Chinese history (1050–771 BC), in the Zhou Dynasty, and is still in use today.

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identity related to colonialism. In order to confirm its status as a Famous Historical and Cultural City and maximise the value of its local historical buildings, sites, and urban landscapes, Shanghai's local officers and heritage professionals made great efforts in the 1980s to assert the significance of its post-treaty buildings. It was not until 1989 that Shanghai became the first in China to promote post-treaty architecture, 20th century modern architecture in particular, as cultural relics worthy of listing for their outstanding historical, cultural and aesthetic value. This generated much debate and discussion. The then Shanghai Construction Commission (Shanghai Shi Jianshe Weiyuanhui, 上海市建设委员会), Shanghai Cultural Relics Management Commission (Shanghai Shi Wenwu Guanli Weiyuanhui, 上海市文物管理委员), Shanghai Housing Administration Bureau (Shanghai Shi Fangwu Guanli Ju, SHAB, 上海市房屋管理局), and Shanghai Planning Bureau (Shanghai Shi Guihua Ju, 上海市规划局) discussed and nominated 59 outstanding post-treaty buildings, listed them first in the fifth batch of municipal-level CRPUs of Shanghai, and submitted the list to the national government for nomination at a national level.[86] For the first time, historical *lilong* neighbourhoods were linked to the Chinese heritage conservation discourse, and embedded in the CRPS. Nevertheless, the 59 outstanding post-treaty buildings nominated by Shanghai were excluded in the national government's listing of CRPUs. At that time, post-treaty buildings that qualified as CRPUs as of national significance were usually associated with revolutionary activities, such as the Site of the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the former residence of Sun Zhongshan (Sun Yat-sen), and the Longhua Revolutionary Martyrs' Memorial Site. In this respect, the responsible department in Shanghai promoted the conservation of post-treaty buildings in the city's heritage management system. In addition, the Shanghai Municipal People's Government created a new heritage category in China, naming it "Excellent Modern-age Buildings", and issued the Management Measures for the Protection of Excellent Modern-age Buildings in Shanghai (Shanghai Shi Youxiu Jindai Jianzhu Baohu Guanli Banfa, 上海市优秀近代

86 The Office of Shanghai Chronicles records that on January 14, 1989, the government of Shanghai organized a meeting to assess and appraise the values of modern buildings, and current heritage and architecture-related professionals, such as Chen Zhi (陈植), Wu Jingxiang (吴景祥), Feng Jizhong (冯纪忠), Luo Xiaowei (罗小未) and Li Dehua (李德华), were included in the assessment committee. They selected 59 outstanding sites for nomination. The local government submitted the nominated 59 post-treaty heritage sites to the current Ministry of Construction (建设部) and Ministry of Culture (文化部) for selection as national key Cultural Relic Protection Units. On September 25, 1989, the Shanghai municipal government also approved the 59 outstanding post-treaty architecture as CRPUs of Shanghai. Available online: http://shtong.gov.cn/newsite/node2/node2245/node4467/node20561/node20571/node63799/userobject1ai16103.html, accessed on 20 April 2019.

建筑保护管理办法) on 5 December 1991.[87] This initiative created the administrative mechanism that the Housing Administration Bureau and the Planning Bureau of Shanghai needed to jointly manage modern-age historic buildings and to cooperate with the Cultural Relics Management Commission. By adopting two more post-treaty architectural sites as municipal-level CRPUs, 61 sites that had been built between the mid-19th and mid-20th centuries became the first set of Shanghai's "Excellent Historical Buildings (known as Heritage Architecture today)" in 1993 and approved by the government in February 1994.[88] The post-treaty architecture has occupied a place among the many historic buildings in Shanghai. Conservation of significant modern or recent buildings became fully integrated into the system and discourse of local heritage conservation in Shanghai. As the Cultural Relics Management Commission is only responsible for CRPUs and for the later emerging Cultural Relic Protection Spots, other governmental sectors have taken on more responsibility for heritage conservation in subsequent years. Up to this point in the 1990s, two protection systems for both cultural relics and historic cities worked in tandem, sharing responsibilities for investigating, managing, protecting, and monitoring the city's urban heritage, in particular the modern ones.

5.2.2 The movement for urban heritage conservation in Shanghai

Urban planning for conservation has played a prominent role in underlining the importance of many post-treaty historic buildings. In order to enhance its significance as a city rich in modern and recent buildings and sites, immediately after its establishment in 1986, the Planning Bureau of Shanghai compiled guidelines and urban plans for the conservation of urban heritage located in the inner city. The bureau published the Conservation Plan and Protection Outlines in 1991 and delimited eleven conservation zones in the city centre of Shanghai, including the Sinan Road Protection Area with Revolutionary Historical Sites, Longhua Revolutionary Martyrs' Cemetery Protection Area, Bund Protection Area with

87 In the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China (ICOMOS China 2015), it uses the term "modern and contemporary" (112) to describe "*jinxiandai*". Therein, the word "modern" is used to describe "*jindai*". In this thesis, the author uses the term "modern-age buildings" as a more precise determiner, distinguishing from the idea of modern buildings or modern architecture, a specific typology.

88 The new category is called "youxiu lishi jianzhu" in Chinese, and literally means "outstanding historical buildings". The name "Excellent Historical Buildings" comes from the official English title Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on the Protection of the Areas with Historical Cultural Features and the Excellent Historical Buildings. Today, on the nameplates hung on these listed buildings, the English translation was changed to the uniform name of "Heritage Architecture".

Excellent Modern-age Buildings, and Shanghai Old City Protection Area. This action laid down requirements and scope for urban heritage conservation, architectural controls, and environmental compatibility in development. The scope and names of the eleven conservation zones changed many times. On 25 July 2002, in its 41st meeting, the Standing Committee of the Eleventh Shanghai Municipal People's Congress adopted the Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on the Protection of the Areas with Historical Cultural Features and the Excellent Historical Buildings (Shanghai Shi Lishi Wenhua Fengmao Qu he Youxiu Lishi Jianzhu Baohu Tiaoli, 上海市历史文化风貌区和优秀历史建筑保护条例), which were officially implemented on 1 January 2003 (2003 Regulations on the Protection, hereafter).[89] Therefore, it was not until 2003 that the scope and content of the conservation zones and their names were officially finalised. The government finally designated twelve Protection Areas in city centre in accordance with the previously planned conservation zones. Thereby, areas rich in special historical and cultural features were endowed with a legal significance and protection, strengthening the effectiveness of conservation planning. It is worth noting that promulgation of the national Regulation on Famous Cities did not take place until 2008. Shanghai and other municipal governments of the listed historic cities initiated the long-lasting exploration, practice, debate, correction, and discussion in 1982, and lead the way to national regulations.

The Shanghai local government's efforts to assert the uniqueness of its city lay behind the local legislative actions protecting areas and buildings, outside of the national top-down system of the protection of cultural relics. Under the new local regulations, the Shanghai Planning and Natural Resources Bureau (Shanghai Shi Guihua He Ziran Ziyuan Ju, SPNRB, 上海市规划和自然资源局) monitors historic areas, neighbourhoods, and streets, while the SHAB is responsible for the management of the Shanghai Excellent Historical Buildings. Urban heritage conservation has continuously moved forward in this self-conscious city.
On 17 September 2007, the government further designated 144 Protection Streets within the range of the twelve Protected Areas of the inner city, and classified them into four levels according to the characteristics of features in them and the urban landscapes along the streets. Considering the limited coverage of the listed Protection Areas, in January 2016, the People's Government of Shanghai Municipality also agreed to initiate the designation of 119 Protection Neighbourhoods and 23 Protection Streets with historical and cultural features outside the Protection Areas, to extend the elements under legal protection. There are seven categories of features for the newly listed Protection Neighbourhoods, including types of historical

89 There are various translations of this municipal regulation in different published papers and articles, and the author of this thesis translates in the way she considers the most relevant when expressed in English.

neighbourhoods rich in *lilong* housing, industrial heritage, colleges and universities, historic parks, workers' new villages, traditional villages, and hybrid buildings. Among the 119 places, 58 neighbourhoods were sub-categorised as rich in *lilong* housing, accounting for 48.7% of the total.

Protection Neighbourhoods and Streets, as extensions to the listed protection areas, have complemented the famous historical and cultural city protection system of Shanghai. Within the inner city of Shanghai, compared with the idea behind Protection Areas, Protection Neighbourhoods contain urban and architectural characters with more identifiable details at a smaller spatial scale. In this sense, both Protection Neighbourhoods and Streets are specific in content. Protection Areas, Protection Streets, and Protection Neighbourhoods, as well as the Excellent Historical Buildings, are all components of the city's historic environment at different scales, being different local manifestations of historical cultural districts proposed by the national government (Zhou and Fan 2006). The measures taken by the Shanghai's local government have contributed to redefining the administrative spatial units for conservation, and emphasised the legal status of Protection Neighbourhoods and Streets. As of 26 September 2019, the Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Fifteenth Shanghai People's Congress amended the Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on the Protection of the Areas with Historical Cultural Features and the Excellent Historical Buildings a third time, further regulating heritage practices and the penalties for violations.

Today, under its famous city protection system, the government of Shanghai has put together an integrated system with layered dimensions covering "point, line, and plane" to manage the city's heritage. The layered conservation ranges consist of cultural relics and outstanding historical buildings as the "point", historic streets under protection as the "line", and protection neighbourhoods and protection areas with specific historical and cultural features as the "plane". Together these provide conservation strategies at different scales from "points" to "planes". The Housing Administration Bureau of Shanghai has nominated five batches of Excellent Historical Buildings successively. As of August 2015, when the Shanghai Municipal Government approved and announced the fifth batch with 426 buildings, the total number of the Shanghai Excellent Historical Buildings reached 1,058 sites, including 3,075 single buildings. In addition, the local heritage movement under the CRPS, which concerns cultural heritage at a "point" scale only, has also evolved in the 21st century. On 1 September 2010, the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage (Shanghai Shi Wenwu Ju, SMACH, 上海市文物局) was officially launched as the local government's cultural heritage authority,

managing different levels of protection units.[90] It was not until 19 June 2014, that the Standing Committee of the Fourteenth Shanghai Municipal People's Congress in its thirteenth meeting adopted the **Cultural Relics Protection Regulations of Shanghai** (Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baohu Tiaoli, **上海市文物保护条例**) which went into force on 1 October 2014.[91] In this new regulation, the concept of Cultural Relic Protection Spot was introduced. This new classification provides a transitional space between general immovable historical buildings and the listed CRPUs of different levels. According to the regulation, immovable historic spots need to be registered by the administrative department of cultural heritage of each district or county, and announced as a "Cultural Relic Protection Spot", in case they are not qualified to be listed in a proclamation as CRPUs for the time being. According to statistics in April 2019, Shanghai has 3,435 CRPUs in total, and there was an increase of 130% compared to the statistics of 2015. Among these designated sites, in hierarchical order, there are 29 national CRPUs, 238 municipality-level CRPUs, 423 district-level CRPUs, and 2,745 Cultural Relic Protection Spots.[92] According to the Notice on the Approval and Publication of the Eighth Batch of National Cultural Relics Protection Units (Guanyu Heding bing Gongbu Di Ba Pi Quanguo Zhongdian Wenwu Baohu Danwei de Tongzhi, **关于核定并公布第八批全国重点文物保护单位的通知**) issued on 16 October 2019, the number of CRPUs with national significance increased to 40 in Shanghai, while the total number of immovable cultural relics in Shanghai was 3,434, remaining largely unchanged.[93]

The heritage movement promoted by the Shanghai local government has raised the reputation of the post-treaty buildings in the city centre to a new level. In course of decades of development, a large number of *lilong* buildings and neighbourhoods have been designated under both the CRPS and Feature Protection, including *lilong* factories, *lilong* garden housing and apartments, as well as the most widely distributed *shikumen* architecture. These unique urban vernacular buildings have not only been

90 The sector Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture Heritage is part of and under the guidance and management of the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture and Tourism (Shanghai Shi Wenhua Lvyou Ju, **上海市文化旅游局**).

91 The Thirteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Fourteenth Shanghai Municipal People's Congress adopted this local Cultural Relics Protection Regulations of Shanghai on 19 June 2014.

92 Shanghai is one of the four municipalities directly under the central government, along with Beijing, Tianjin, and Chongqing. Therefore, the municipality-level CRPUs of Shanghai share an equal protection grade with the provincial-level CRPUs of other places, and its district-level CRPUs are equal to city-level or county-level CRPUs.

93 State Council. 2019. Guanyu Heding bing Gongbu Di Ba Pi Quanguo Zhongdian Wenwu Baohu Danwei de Tongzhi [Notice on the Approval and Publication of the Eighth Batch of National Cultural Relics Protection Units]. Beijing, National Cultural Heritage Administration of PRC. http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2019-10/16/content_5440577.htm

recognised for their popularity as dwellings for the most of the early 20th century, but have also been acknowledged for their architectural features. Many scholars acknowledge the importance of *lilong* housing and their association with then outstanding architects for academic research, and recognise their relationship to the regional history, culture, economy, and even political landscape of Shanghai (Fan 2004, Bracken 2013, Li 2014). In Shanghai's heritage movement, the municipal government has successfully implemented conservation measures adapted to the local context under the national conservation-related legislation, and embedded legal ramifications for Shanghai's historic post-treaty heritage neglected in China's protection system.

Nevertheless, this thesis argues that controversial implications of architecture built by foreign settlers in Shanghai's concession period have been deliberately ignored by the local heritage movement. As Shanghai authorities have been creating a global city by embracing the emerging concept in a global post-war heritage discourse of protecting outstanding architecture and significant structures built over a period of 30 years, the post-colonial urban landscape has emerged as the most notable product demonstrating Shanghai's global reach. In this respect, in the name of conservation, the local government of Shanghai on the one hand asserts its status as a historic city with a greater amount of new heritage. On the other hand, it also aims to integrate itself into global discourse in order to attract global attention to Shanghai, including for its cultural promotion, heritage tourism, and potential for development investment. At the same time, it is worth noting that *lilong* housing is not just something that the Shanghai government focuses on for its global objectives, but a fundamental unit in a dynamic urban landscape and in the productive lives of its people.

5.3 Urban Legacies with Post-colonial Characteristics

Beyond all doubt, studies of Chinese treaty ports raise persistent and varied debates, as do the post-treaty legacies. Tracing the origins of this history, many scholars argue strongly that the opium trade in the Far East was at the heart of the matter, and for the moral rightness of waging opium wars (Fay 1975; Gelber 2004; Jackson 2017). Jacques M. Downs (2014), by contrast, has an extremely low tolerance for the Opium War, taking a position opposed to the common Western one. From the perspective of Chinese citizens, the Opium War originated in a conspiracy,

in a manner of speaking. Julia Lovell (2015) argues in her *The Opium War* that the government and the people of China had portrayed an ingrained political image of the Britain-led imperialism through word of mouth of generations. Scholars do hold different perspectives and no one can express ideas with absolutely objective thinking, although a significant number of academics do not willingly admit the existence of bias rooted in cultural and social background or as influenced by authorities' propaganda. Therefore, it is not surprising that the conservation of historic buildings built in the previously foreign concessions of Shanghai creates layers of understanding and interpretation. People might read the same secondary sources and sees similar primary urban landscapes, but their differentiated understandings and interpretations of the value of heritage and identity have affected reactions to the post-treaty cultural heritage listed by Shanghai authorities, and the heritage studies and conservation measures behind it.

From Stella Dong's publication *Shanghai: Gateway to the Celestial Empire 1860-1949* (2003) and Edward Denison and Yu Ren Guang's *Building Shanghai: The Story of China's Gateway* (2006) to Marie-Claire Bergère's *Shanghai: China's Gateway to Modernity* (2009), the "gateway" metaphor emerges as a discursive consensus. The "gateway" functions to intentionally divide the history of Shanghai into two distinct different phases, before and after the city's opening up for frequent and free import-export trade and urban development towards modernity under the Treaty of Nanking (1842). Shanghai's foreign settlements lasted for approximately one hundred years (1845–1943), the longest period and the largest occupied area among all the other Chinese places influenced by colonial forces. During the period, the old Canton System (1757–1842) for Sino-foreign trade ceased to exist (Figure 5.2).[94] In order to seize trading interests in Shanghai, representatives of the upper class of foreign settlers in the then British Concession established the independent management organisation, the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC, 工部局), in 1854. During Shanghai's occupied period, multiple influences synchronously and successively expanded their colonial forces around the globe. On 8 July 1854, the Qing court and consuls from the United Kingdom, the United States, and France together made a new version of the Land Regulations of the British, French, and American Concessions in Shanghai (Shanghai Ying Fa Mei Zujie Di Zhangcheng, 上海英法美租界租地章程).[95] The three powers dominated the affairs of foreign settlements in Shanghai after that.

94 Between 1757 and 1842, the Qing court of China used the Canton System to control its external trade with foreign countries. Guangzhou (Canton) was the only port opening to foreign merchants at that time.

95 The Land Regulations of the British, French, and American Concessions was signed by the then consuls of British, French, and American Settlements in Shanghai in 1854, to rent out land and build houses in Settlements freely at low prices. The three consuls singed the unequal treaty without informing the then Chinese administrators.

In 1862, the Consulate General of France in Shanghai decided to exit the SMC and set up their own administrative organisation, the Conseil D'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Changhai (Municipal Council of the French Concession of Shanghai, MCFCS, 公董局), to protect the independence of the French Concession. By utilising the unequal treaty to expand privileges (e.g., extraterritoriality) in Shanghai after the Opium War, by the end of the 19th century, the main foreign powers had successfully established their administrative divisions and management institutions independent from the Chinese regime. Shanghai thereby inevitably joined in a pattern of "transnational municipalism" around the world, led mainly by the three countries.[96] This significantly changed the urban patterns and landscapes of Chinese cities.



FIG. 5.2 A painting circa 1820, illustrating the scene of the Thirteen Hongs (also known as Thirteen Factories) of Guangzhou under the old Canton System. Source: available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hongs_at_Canton.jpg, accessed on 2 July 2020.

96 The concept "transnational municipalism" is identified by Shane Ewen (2008) in the book Another global city: historical explorations into the transnational municipal moment, 1850-2000, to describe the foreign authorities and administrative system in Shanghai's concessions, since these concessions usually had similar functions and duties to many European municipalities and managed a considerable population in history. This part is from the journal article co-written by Kaiyi Zhu (the author of this thesis) and Leilei Sun (2022, 217). Sun, L., & Zhu, K. (2022). The Social Dimension of Urban Transformation in Shanghai: Population Mobility, Modernity, and Globalization. Journal of Urban History, 48(1), 213–221. https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144220971820

The independent municipal councils established as the SMC and MCFCS, as well as extraterritoriality and most-favoured-nation status, contributed to the development and expansion of foreign settlements. Conforming to its geographical situation of abundant waterways, Shanghai has experienced the influx of foreign populations and domestic immigrants. Under these circumstances, the old round walled city gradually lost its opportunity to develop, and *"faded into urban oblivion"*, while the two foreign settlements were given both the obligation and the rights to promote urban growth (Henriot and Shi and Aubrun 2019, 5).[97] This drove dynamic urban change in Shanghai, in spatial texture and urban landscape. With a large population and foreign capital, Shanghai saw an exceptionally dramatic architectural and construction boom. The population and the urban structure were thus reorganised, and Shanghai as a global city was built with enhanced road networks and urban density, expanding to the west and to the Huangpu River in the south (Figure 5.3). The urban fabric of the city centre took on new shape which has persisted into the present.

In Shanghai's urban transition, emerging capitalism and the open market governed by the SMC and MCFCS were the driving force for Shanghai's prosperity and diversity. Foreign investors had a dominating role in urban and architectural design and construction for a long period. Shanghai became not merely a globalised city that attracted foreign inhabitants from 58 countries to settle in the early 20th century, but an experimental ground with extreme tolerance of diversity and a melting pot of different styles of architecture (Figure 5.4). Since 1844, when Lancelot Dent from the Dent & Co. first leased land and expanded his business from Guangzhou to Shanghai, missionaries, investors and owners of *hongs* successively leased land in Shanghai from Chinese landowners and built modern sectors.[98] Then mega-companies, such as Jardine Matheson Holdings Limited (怡和洋行), Swire Group (太古集团) and Russell & Co. (旗昌洋行) established different Sino-foreign joint venture enterprises in Shanghai. With an increasing number of public sectors, including the financial industry, hospitals, printing houses, entertainment and sport venues, and especially factories (Figure 5.5), Shanghai saw a flourishing real estate market and urban development led by foreign capital.

97 There are two major water systems Huangpu River and Suzhou Creek in Shanghai, and Suzhou Creek (or Soochow Creek) which was known as Wusong Creek (or Woosung Creek) before foreign settlers arrived.

98 These foreign-invested mega companies, also known as *hongs* in the 19th and early 20th centuries, mostly started their businesses in China by smuggling and trafficking in opium in the early days. The early British and American companies, as mentioned in the text, all developed their commercial empires through such a means. Available online: http://61.129.65.112/dfz_web/DFZ/Info?idnode=64465&tableName=userobject1a&id=57961, accessed on 28 July 2020.



FIG. 5.3 The Shanghai map of 1923 shows the maximum expansion of Shanghai's foreign settlements. All the information shown on this map dates to 23 October 1929 but the background urban texture refers to a map of 1923 drawn by the Public Works Department of the SMC. Source: Public Works Department, Shanghai Municipal Council of the Republic of China, https://www.virtualshanghai.net/Maps/Source?ID=1884, accessed on 28 July 2020.



FIG. 5.4 Buildings with distinctive European architectural features along the west bund of Shanghai's Huangpu River. Source: The image courtesy of Teesside Archives, British Steel Archive Project and Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol (www.hpcbristol.net).

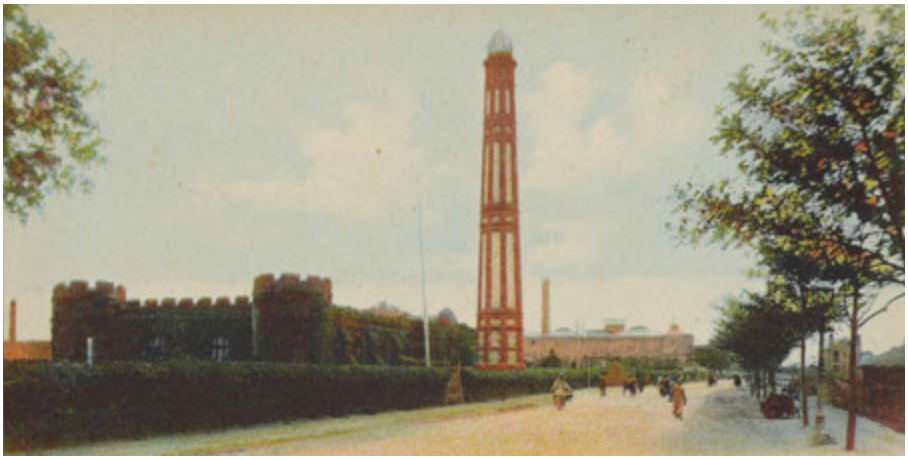


FIG. 5.5 This 1907 painting depicts the street view outside of the Yangshupu Waterwork. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Shanghai._Water_works_Yangtzefoo_Road_(NYPL_Hades-2359414-4043770).jpg, accessed on 6 August 2020.

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FIG. 5.6 This diagram show that population in both the International Settlement and the French Concession had grown continuously, and saw a sharp increase after 1900. The population growth was especially dramatic in the International Settlement between 1910 and 1920. Diagram is drawn by the author. Data source: http://www.shtong.gov.cn/Newsite/node2/node2245/node63852/node63857/node63874/node64465/userobject1ai57960.html, accessed on 15 August 2020.

In the early 20th century, industrial civilisation and urban sprawl had caused a population explosion in Shanghai (Figure 5.6). The native population base had become increasingly crucial in a society of transnational municipalism. In addition to interventions from foreign input, rising social forces in China therefore also affected the formation and transformation of Shanghai's urban structure and architectural typology. The typical residential layout of the gated *lilong* neighbourhood largely emerged and developed in Shanghai to accommodate the constant influx of Chinese labour. The genesis of *lilong* neighbourhoods and the housing within them emerged through the entanglement of many factors. Some of those factors, the opium trade, the forced "gateway" and treaty port opening of Shanghai, the establishment of the International Settlement and the French Concession, the extraterritoriality and the most-favoured-nation clause, were all considered as a history of humiliation for China. Bracken (2014, 23) thus states that Shanghai is more like *"a den of iniquity"* for Chinese people, in particular those who live in places outside of Shanghai. Historic architecture including *lilong* housing in the contemporary inner city and the previous foreign settlements are not appreciated by many. The time and place of their creation in the treaty era saw the growth of modernity that disorganised the order Chinese society had inherited and maintained through Confucian virtues. At the same time, as a result of the port opening, the influx of domestic and international immigrants, increasingly frequent trade contacts and job opportunities, modernisation, industrialisation, urbanisation, and globalisation have offered

Shanghai advantages as well. The built city, whether heritage or not, was born with a contradictory character. Nevertheless, among all the architectural styles and forms in Shanghai's concession era, dwellings for private use and residential purposes have a different nature from public buildings. In short, the value of residential buildings is more closely related to the activities of the users and is bound up with people. *Lilong* housing carries a rich human sense of belonging and ought not be categorised with those that are usually open to the public. The shifting attributes of *lilong* housing existed not only during Shanghai's concession era, but also in every subsequent stage of history. In this respect, this thesis regards historic *lilong* neighbourhoods as a unique heritage category with paradoxes and contradictions that need careful investigation and examination, as one contemplated the conservation of urban legacies.

5.4 Heritage for Living: Ever-changing Lilong Housing and Neighbourhoods

The most obvious attribute of *lilong* housing is its generic residential function. This basic function dictates that its existence is not transitory. On the contrary, *lilong* neighbourhoods have witnessed the rise and fall of Shanghai's inner city and the changes in people's lives (Kaltenbrunner 1991). Therefore, *lilong* neighbourhoods are complex in terms of both tangible and intangible attributes. The genesis and expansion of *lilong* housing reveals a transition from elitism to more democratic commons in the construction of post-treaty architecture in China. Marie-Claire Bergère (2009, 4) has argued that "The meeting of Chinese civilisation and Western modernity took a pragmatic form."

Historically, the *lilong* housing that people see today in the inner city of Shanghai has undergone an evolving process of construction since 1870, becoming mature in the 1910s. *Lilong*, a collective term for a group of dwellings, is composed of two Chinese characters: *li* (里) and *long* (弄). In it, the character "*li*" represents the concept of neighbourhood, a block of compounds, while "*long*", which takes meaning from the word *longtang* (弄堂), means alleyways or lanes that connect subdivided residential compounds and organise these compounds hierarchically into a full neighbourhood and community. *Lilong* housing is therefore also known as

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alleyway housing in translation.[99] The sense of *li* and *long* appearing as a collective form with well-organised alleyways emphasises the concept as an urban space, a physical urban neighbourhood and a block composed of orderly arranged houses rather than any striking single building. As a compound term commonly used to describe the typical urban organisational form of Shanghai's neighbourhoods built during the concession period, it was never subjected to a fixed architectural typology. *Lilong* are not classified as is well-known classical, neo-classical, Gothic, or brutalist architecture. The specific form of *lilong* housing usually changes according to technological innovations, popular aesthetic changes, or market demands, among many factors. In term of architectural expression, it tends to embody the sense of order and modularity in traditional Chinese courtyard vernacular, and also the modernism and industrialised production from Europe and North America, represented by common *shikumen* housing. *Lilong* residential form evolved within and through settler-colonialism, and by the end of the concession period, three quarters of Shanghai's urban residences were in the form of *lilong* housing. This common and distinctive residential morphology has principally shaped Shanghai's community life, urban landscape, and the group characteristics and identity of Shanghainese.[100]

In addition, the *lilong* neighbourhood has a layered and multiple characters in terms of the intangible significance of a time span. Residents' roles and sense of belonging to their *lilong* neighbourhood have been always changing, a natural reaction to the shifting attributes within each locality. Taking the changing economy and society into consideration, each specific historical event, political revolution, policy, or socio-cultural ideology, in both national and local contexts, has shaped the multifarious attributes of a *lilong* community composed of various characters. For example, during Shanghai's concession era, foreign imperialist forces and individual investors seeking fortune in Asia were the main factors behind the birth of Shanghai's real estate market and promoted this kind of commercialised dwelling, which had not never existed in China before. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, *lilong* housing changed according to China's national housing and economic policies at different times. Which period had the most impact, was more important, or most intricate cannot be said: they are not comparable. Each characteristic

99 The world "*lilong*" is directly derived from phonetic Chinese characters. Author choose to translate differently, and the English translation "alleyways housing" refers to Gregory Bracken's (2014) book *The Shanghai Alleyway House: A Vanishing Urban Vernacular*.

100 "Shanghainese" is a group differs from "Shanghailander". "Shanghainese" refers to Chinese residents in Shanghai while "Shanghailander" means foreign settlers who lived in in the extraterritorial areas, including the previous International Settlement and the French Concession. In James Farrer's book *International Migrants in China's Global City: the new Shanghailander*s (2019), he clearly illustrates the difference.

embedded in Shanghai's existing *lilong* communities reveals part of the history of their formation, and the conservation attitudes held by different stakeholders or participants.

This section briefly investigates, identifies, and elaborates characteristics of *lilong* housing shaped by different groups of people and events at different times. This thesis divides the over one hundred years of development of *lilong* into four main phases: (1) the creation of the *lilong* housing prototype and its early transition from shelter to residents' home (1853–1901), (2) the commercialisation of *lilong* housing and the process of mass construction covering almost the whole city (1901–1949), (3) the socialist transformation of *lilong* neighbourhoods and community chaos in the context of social revolution (1949–1978), and (4) China's economic reforms and re-commercialisation of *lilong* housing (1978–1998). In analysing the collective attributes of *lilong* neighbourhoods, there are clues to understanding the multiple heritage discourses produced by different groups in contemporary heritage practice.

5.4.1 1853–1901: germination of lilong housing

The germination of *lilong* housing is largely attributed to the growth of the urban population in Shanghai. As commercial and industrial expansion occurred following Shanghai's treaty port opening, the city saw a wave of increasing immigration, bringing in massive huge social transformations in the second half of the 19th century in Shanghai. In addition to foreign settlers, immigrants from other regions of China were the largest source of population influx. People from wealthy regions, such as northern Zhejiang and southern Jiangsu provinces (*Jiangnan* area), started to seek more opportunities and exploit new business in Shanghai. Immigrants from more impoverished regions, such as northern Jiangsu and Anhui provinces, moved to the growing modern city to survive and became involved in unskilled work for as rickshaw pullers, garbage collectors, or prostitutes (Honig 1992). Between 1853 and 1901, the development of *lilong* neighbourhoods and the buildings in them underwent two main historical phases: (1) an influx of refugees and the formation of the *lilong* (1853–1870), (2) an emergence of a real estate market spurred by foreign investors in Shanghai (1870–1901).

In the first phase, ending around 1870, as a result form the Small Swords Society uprising and the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom rebellion in the 1850s and the 1860s, refugees became residents in a time of social turbulence, escaping to foreign settlements

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for security reasons.[101] The Chinese population in the joint British-American settlement increased from 500 in 1853 to 20,000 in 1855 when the first census was taken in the concession.[102] Under such circumstances, the influx of Chinese people into the early British and American settlements immediately broke rules made in the Land Regulations, which Chinese and foreigners live separately. A hybrid living situation containing both Chinese and foreign residents subsequently appeared. A British merchant Edwin Smith, speaking from a businessman's perspective and seeking opportunities for wealth, put his opinion in a cruel and seemingly cold-blooded manner that:

"You, as H. M.'s consul, are bound to look to national and permanent interests — but it is my business to make a fortune with the least possible loss of time, by letting my land to Chinese, and building for them at thirty or forty percent interest, if that is the best thing I can do with my money. In two or three years at farthest, I hope to realise a fortune and get away; and what can it matter to me if all Shanghai disappear afterwards in fire or flood…We are money-making, practical men. Our business is to make money, as much and as fast as we can; and for this end, all modes and means are good which the law permits."[103]

In this respect, beginning in September 1853, foreign investors started to build shelter-type houses in the area of Guangdong Road (old Canton Road) and Fujian Road (old Shaklee Road), in the form of simple row-style timber houses for renting. After a decade, by 1863 the number of these had grown to 8,740 or more. During this period, because of the predominance of rough rental housing owned by foreign speculators, Chinese residents had little opportunity to choose how to where to live. As refugees in the foreign settlements, early immigrants and other local residents all shared the struggles for survival in a dark time period.

In the second phase, foreign settlers forced the Qing court to legalise residential development for Chinese inhabitants in the concession areas and created the "Title Deed" system (also known in the French Concession as "Traduction Titre de Propriété"

101 The Small Swords Society (小刀会) was a civil secret organization formed by nomads, farmers, workers and businessmen, aiming at protecting each other in turbulent times. When the Qing court grew decadent, Hong Xiuquan and Feng Yunshan established the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (太平天国) as an unofficial civil regime. On September 7th, 1853, the Small Swords Society and the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom united and initiated an uprising in Shanghai.

102 There were only 50 Chinese residents in the foreign concession in 1850, and when in 1855, Chinese residents were in the majority.

103 The original text is from Sir Rutherford Alcock, *Capital of the Tycoon: a narrative of a three years' residence in Japan* (New York, Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1863, 37–38), and quoted in Lu Hanchao, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century*, 1999, op. cit., 34.

for land leasing, and as "道契" in Chinese). Investors who wanted to launch a real estate development business then had to follow its terms. In the late 19th century, shelter housing became organised spatially in a traditional *lifang* pattern, and evolved into the prototype of Shanghai's *lilong* housing. The growing real estate industry promoted the development and evolution of *lilong* housing. Between 1870 and the 1900s, foreign developers followed Chinese construction techniques and architectural layout, reprising the zeal of Chinese compradors, contractors, or crafts people who were contributing to Shanghai's development at that time (Denison and Ren 2006; Liang 2008). In this process, *shikumen* architecture, adaptable for Chinese inhabitants, became the most numerous and noticeable architectural type in all *lilong* neighbourhoods. *Shikumen* architecture is named after its distinctive entrance feature which is built with stone-framed gate in a Sino-foreign style popular at the time (Figure 5.7).[104]



FIG. 5.7 Street view of Nanjing Road in 1902: architecture with Sino-Western characters and the entrance of a lilong neighbourhood with a typical shikumen front (on the far right side of the photo) appear on this bustling street. Source: Photography by Charles Ewart Darwent. The image courtesy of Jane Hayward, Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol (www.hpcbristol.net).

104 The term *shikumen* contains three Chinese characters: *shi* means stone, *men* means gates of the front entrance, and *ku* stands for accommodation, linking gate to a stone-framed entrance by a stone hoop. In Shanghai's dialect, people prefer to name the action of hooping a thing as "ku (箍)", despite its pronunciation in Mandarin — "gu", and in this respect, regarding the dialect as Mandarin, the Chinese name of this sub-typology has gradually changed to "Shi-Ku-Men", widely known by people from other regions of China.

To solve the problem of accommodation, neighbourhoods developed an urban form of hierarchically interlocking *longtang*. Chinese residents began to see a glimpse of dawn to live with dignity in the International Settlement and the French Concession, although there remained a series of problems concerning where

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they were considered to be citizens belonging to the areas occupied by foreign settlers. At the end of the 19th century, dwellings in *lilong* neighbourhoods had become the most common housing form for people in Shanghai, accommodating about 70 to 80 percent of the population (Lu 1999). Shanghai's overall urban landscape transformed into a hybrid pattern with a Sino-Western imprint in the 1900s, and the International Settlement and the French Concession became the two primary urban zones in Shanghai.

5.4.2 1901–1949: large-scale and rapid construction of lilong housing and its fall

Industrialisation and development of the financial sector in Shanghai predominantly promoted the large-scale and rapid urban construction in the first half in the 20th century. Lewis Mumford (1961) argues in his book *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* that as human beings' concerns can be diverted from nutrition and reproduction, rural population would shift to urban spaces and seek for other purposes beyond survival. In the case of Shanghai, if basic nutrition and reproduction were achieved when British settlers introduced technologically advanced production methods to China, local residents' attention shifted to financial interests that brought them to gradually modernise in urban life. In the period of urban prosperity and turmoil, *lilong* neighbourhoods underwent three main stages: (1) gradually matured *lilong* neighbourhoods became established with a standardised housing construction code (1901–1912), (2) architectural typologies for lilong neighbourhoods diversified with technological and material revolutions (1912–1932), and (3) a continued influx of refugees and immigrants, but increasingly congested and decaying *lilong* dwellings (1932–1949).

In the first stage, introduction of new construction materials from industrialised foreign countries lowered the cost of building a *lilong* residence significantly. This brought both improved returns for developers and rapid population expansion. New construction of *lilong* housing not only brought hybrid structures of brick, cement and timber, but also undergirded a booming architectural materials industry established by foreign enterprises able to manufacture long-lasting construction materials. When the *lilong* first appeared in Shanghai, they largely followed traditional Chinese characteristics of *shenzhai dayuan* (深宅大院) (Figure 5.8), organised by connecting courtyards and surrounding dwelling quarters (Li 2015). New and the ever-improving architectural materials were used in the adoption and upgrading of *shikumen lilong* housing. Commodification of *lilong* residences through the rental business created the conditions for equitable housing leasing. For a

variety of reasons, *lilong* housing became tightly and directly connected with the urban poor, for whom humble vernacular buildings and living habits were the focus of interest. In these circumstances, *lilong* housing generated a kind of natural urban democracy through the emergence of social community in diverse neighbourhoods. Regardless of each specific architectural form, *lilong* neighbourhoods have a stratified organisation, with gradually increasing privacy from the outer to the inner community. A community organisation in which intimacy is realised in progressive privacy protected from the public has a high degree of similarity to the traditional Chinese family clan system. In the early 20th century, in China's social transition from a feudal society to a sovereign regime, inhabitants in one *lilong* neighbourhood usually shared similar identity as a social group, through kinship, occupation and employment relationships, or social positions, creating a shared social cohesion.

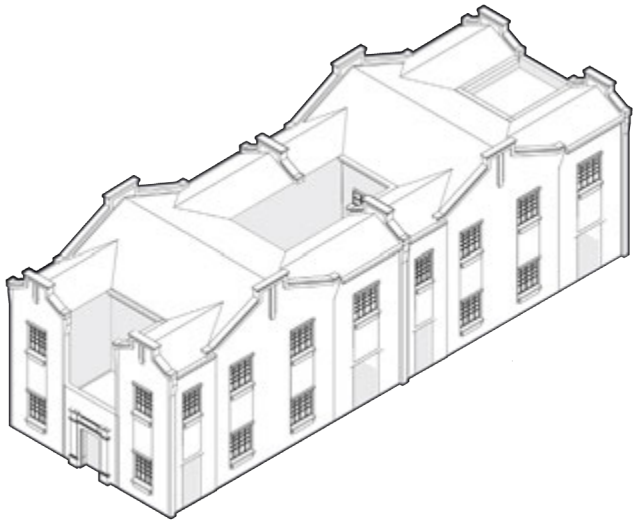


FIG. 5.8 The lilong housing of the neighbourhood Jinyifang (锦衣坊), which was built around the turn of the century, and located outside the northwest corner of Shanghai's old walled city in the French Concession. It was organised with traditional connecting courtyards, reflecting the unique characteristic of shenzhai dayuan. This diagram is a speculative depiction based on the current state of the historic lilong house. Source: author and Chen Yichao, 2021.

Between 1912 and 1932, the success of the 1911 Revolution and the establishment of the Republic of China (ROC) promoted an environment of relative economic and social stability. The architectural quality of *lilong* housing thus generally improved, and with a standardised housing construction code reached a larger customer

market. Charles Mayne, the chief engineer and surveyor of the SMC, oversaw a series of changes in Shanghai and remarked in the 1904 annual report that the quality of materials used in building construction had improved (Denison and Ren 2006).[105] Increasing industrialised manufacturing and a constant supply of raw materials from abroad and inland regions made *lilong* housing much more affordable, attracting a continuous stream of immigrants, and forming a unique urban culture and temperament generated from everyday living customs. In the process of becoming an increasingly cost-friendly residential commodity, the most common *shikumen* housing features changed for economic purposes. Compared with the courtyard-style housing and older *shikumen* architecture, the new one was designed with narrower alleyways, fewer ornaments, lower ceiling height, and more floors. Manufactured bricks and concrete took the place of the previous column-and-tie wooden structure (*chuandoushi*), while sanitary facilities were also introduced into the interior installation. *Shikumen* housing in its evolution provided a vital link in the transformation of traditional residential housing in the Yangtze River Delta area from courtyard-style single-family houses to terraces and apartments. Apart from the affordable *shikumen* housing in *lilong* communities, closely before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, foreign settlers had been dedicated to creating a "better house" and "a 'foreign air' to the structures" in Shanghai as well (Denison and Ren 2006, 125).[106] Their modern architectural forms of apartments and garden villas organised in a urban structure of the *lilong* neighbourhood provided informative and physical manifestations for the contemporary population to learn about and apprehend the "upper corner" (*shangzhijiao*, 上之角) cultural complex of the settler-colonial Shanghai.

Shanghai continued to attract a continuous stream of immigrants in the 20th century, and developed the unique urban culture and temperament generated from everyday living customs. The particular Shanghai-style culture and lifestyle strengthened social cohesion for residents of *lilong* communities, the majority in the city. From this time on, Shanghai-style culture exhibited a dynamic, glamourous but mysterious social atmosphere, which combined both the delicacy and elegance of traditional *Jiangnan* culture (*Wu-Yue* Culture) and the modernity and fashion trends of a cosmopolitan city, a unique, open and self-contained cultural school among the others in China.[107] In the 1920s and 1930s, as warlords implemented repressive cultural policies in northern China, active intellectuals, professors and literati headed

105 Municipal Council Report for 1904, Kelly &Walsh (Shanghai), 1905, p. 238.

106 Municipal Council Report for 1912, Kelly & Walsh (Shanghai), 1913, p. 17b.

107 Shanghai was the fifth largest city in the world in the 1930s, was so qualified based on its urban land and population size (Lee 2001).

south in droves. Shanghai became the most important stronghold of the New Cultural Movement since the 1920s, and many *lilong* neighbourhoods were bases for the activities and lives of the Left Wing writers and activists. During their promotion of the concepts of "democracy (*de-Xian sheng*)" and "science (*sai-Xiansheng*)", the youth of that vanguard contributed to social progress and made Shanghai an iconic place. Nevertheless, they also saw the co-existing and persistent social wrongdoing there, and regarded Shanghai as "a bastion of evil," feeling a combination of ambivalence, hesitance, perplexity, and anxiety for the city's vibrant settler-colonialism led activities (Lee 2001, 4).[108] For example, incompatible but yet orderly coexisting heterogeneous urban scenarios were there: as there were publishers' businesses, book stores, and churches at one end of the road (Fuzhou Road), there was also one entire *lilong* neighbourhood of brothels (Huileli, 会乐里) on the same road. The hyper-scenario and inclusive culture had endowed the city's inhabitants a certain freedom, living and working in a fresh environment, and making *lilong* houses home for the majority belonging to different social statuses and classes. The urban scene of co-existence, of conflict-in-harmony, has grown and persisted, shaping a sense of both uniqueness and conflict in Shanghai culture.

In the last years of Shanghai's treaty port era, the flourishing development in Shanghai met its decline on the evening of 28 January of 1932, when a Japanese naval landing party of 2000 armed soldiers broke through the defensive line of the International Settlement in Zhabei (also known as Chapei).[109] The development of *lilong* housing faced a turning point and entered a turbulent period. *Lilong* neighbourhoods built with garden houses and apartments, as more upmarket versions, suffered relatively less impact, but the more popularised *shikumen* housing built for general citizens and a broader working class faced decline and deterioration, resulting from increased population density and polarisation of wealth.[110] Construction of *shikumen lilong* housing virtually ceased after 1935 (Li 2014). However, in addition to the 1.2 million local refugees coming to the city, Shanghai was receiving a constant influx of international and domestic

108 Leo Ou-fan Lee noted in his book *Shanghai modern: the flowering of a new urban culture in China, 1930-1945* that in *Websters Living Dictionary*, the term "to Shanghai" (2001, 4).

109 The first Sino-Japanese War started in 1931 and the Second Sino-Japanese War started in 1937. In this respect, although people usually think the Sino-Japanese War lasted for eight years, the resistance actually lasted longer as it is claimed that "The Sino- Japanese War that ended in 1945 began not in 1937 but in 1931 in Manchuria and 1932 in Shanghai" (Jackson 2017, 158).

110 In order to reveal architectural aesthetics and realise maximum economic benefits, construction of upmarket residences often appeared in the form of a single building, in particular for garden houses.

migrants and refugees.[111] As a result of the enormous population density, almost every *lilong* unit was divided into multiple private spaces for several households, and the average living space for every person was approximate three square meters (Arkaraprasertkul 2009). Houses in *lilong* neighbourhoods were still home for many families, but they also became "dormitories" and "refugee camps" (Figure 5.9), especially for those in Hongkou and Yangpu districts of the International Settlement, which Japanese armies took control of after the Shanghai Incident (Li 2015).



FIG. 5.9 The famous "Shanghai Ghetto" for Jewish refugees appeared in the 1940s. Many lilong neighbourhoods became refuge for displaced Jewish people. This photo shows refugees cooking in an open-air kitchen in a lilong neighbourhood of Shanghai during the World War II. (Courtesy Above the Drowning Sea/ Time & Rhythm Cinema). Source: available at https://www.timesofisrael.com/in-new-film-survivors-recall-placid-wwii-days-in-the-safe-harbor-of-shanghai, accessed on 28 August 2020.

Indeed, many *lilong* units also functioned as work places or sites for social revolution-related events, and in the turbulent Shanghai during and after Japanese invasion the significance of those housing spaces for non-living purposes was enhanced and enlarged.[112] *Lilong* neighbourhoods thus became the most prominent vehicle for socio-cultural and economic changes in Shanghai, and were not

111 Jie Li remarked in the book *Shanghai Homes: Palimpsests of Private life* that after the Japanese invasion in 1932, there were "more than 6,000 Chinese dead and 1.2 million turned refugees" in Shanghai (2015, 43).

112 The Site of the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China held in 1921.

residential space alone. The city and inhabitants within in Shanghai's concession period have established a strong attachment to *lilong* neighbourhoods that observed and undergone a series of historical events.

5.4.3 1949–1978: lilong neighbourhoods in China's socialist reform

Lilong neighbourhoods had transformed, over many historical events and in a continuous evolution, towards economic moderation and popularisation. Upscale housing property was scare and mostly owned by the wealth and often transmigratory families in Shanghai. As part of foreign investments and expropriation f financial benefits, before 1949, *lilong*'s role as a commodity before 1949 was no doubt unequivocal, accelerating Shanghai's urban transformation and capitalist accumulation. However, after the establishment of the PRC, between 1949 and 1978 *lilong* housing was nationalised as publicly owned property in reforms by the new regime. There were shifts in how local dwellers felt belonging and attachment to each *lilong* community that were predominantly connected to changes in the social environment. These can be divided roughly into three phases: (1) the primary stage of socialist transformation as a transition period (1949–1958); (2) the Great Leap Forward (1958–1960) and subsequent stage of developing socialist production (1958–1966), and (3) the stage of social-political turmoil and recovery (1966–1978).

Immediately after the establishment of the PRC in 1949, the Communist Party of China (CCP), the ruling party in the new regime, started to pursue a very fundamental and simple idea—eliminate foreign control over China—in order to further eliminate the consequences of the cultural influence that was shaped by the penetration of foreign forces in the treaty era (Whyte and Parish 1984). According to the statistics published by the Office of Shanghai Chronicles, the *shikumen lilong* housing alone was over half of the housing stock available in 1949, without counting garden houses and apartments erected in the form of *lilong* neighbourhoods (Figure 5.10). Although the socialist reform of pre-PRC property involved various estates, the general population had witnessed and understood the social-political reform process through authentic experience of the reorganisation of their living space under the state government. In the transition period, the Shanghai municipality advocated moderate and progressive reform measures (Figure 5.11). These moderate means were applied to the transfer of property ownership and registration within households, and historical community management. In, but not limited to, Shanghai, different urban neighbourhoods have incorporated into

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an unprecedented community organisation system by taking the emerging urban residents committee (*juweihui*, 居委会in Chinese) as both a link to and a component within the community organisation, which replaced the previous *baojia* (or *paochia*) system imposed during the Japanese occupation.[113] In 1958, when the last category of private property was nationalised, the socialist reform period came to the end as well. These reforms aimed to eradicate brothels and opium dens, other illicit pornography, gambling, and drug industries in every neighbourhood. In the period of the planned economy, after the nationalisation of property ownership, vacant *lilong* housing in Shanghai was offered by the government to senior intellectuals and officials, and to returned overseas Chinese celebrities as reward, with the goal of uniting the elites and the masses. From this point on, various historical residences, which were *lilong* housing in this context, were state-controlled and utilised for different purposes, in particular immediate demands.

113 The history of *baojia* system can be dated back to Song dynasty (960–1279). It was a household registration management system with military connections in China's long feudal ruling history. It emphasised the existence of the household (*hu*, which usually appeared in the form of a family) as the basic unit functioning in social activities, weakening the essence of individual that the Western countries always stressed. In early Republican Shanghai, influenced by foreign concepts, theory, and ideological trends of the time, the *baojia* system was abolished. However, when it came to 1937, the Nationalists officially re-launched this household registration system of the old society from old, and the Executive Institute (*xingzheng yuan*, the executive branch of the Republic of China) issued the Regulation of Baojia to promote and assure its implementation nationwide.

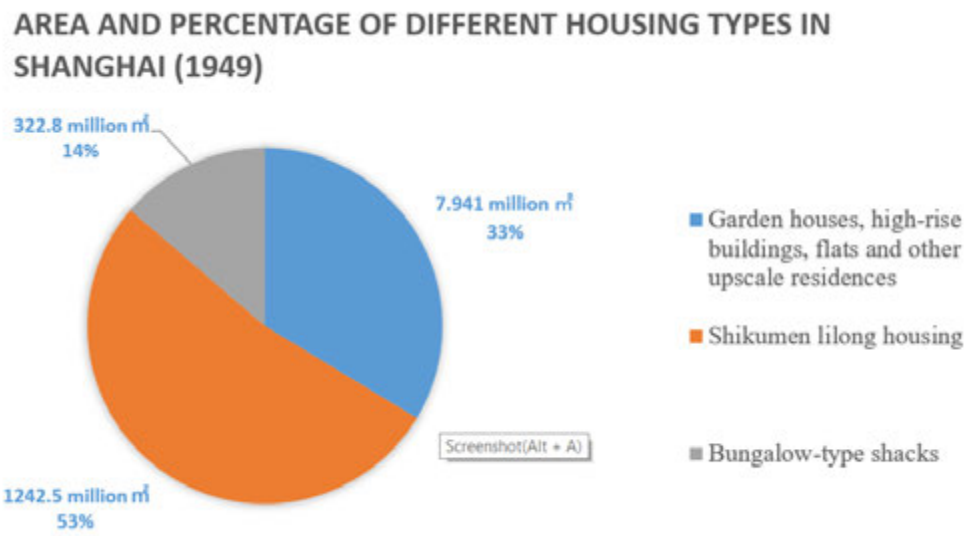


FIG. 5.10 The different housing types in Shanghai in the early years of the country. Data sources: http://www.shtong.gov.cn/dfz_web/DFZ/Info?idnode=56284&tableName=userobject1a&id=42849, accessed on 22 December 2020.

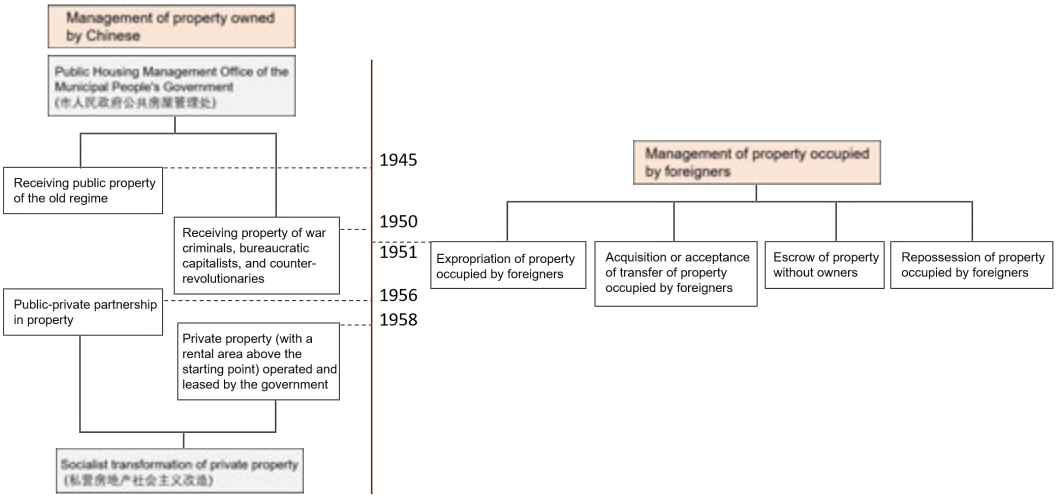


FIG. 5.11 In this diagram, reform management is divided into two categories, management of property previously owned by Chinese investors and property previously occupied by foreigners, and locates each phase chronologically in the diagram, to show progressive social reform of property.

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After 1958, the commodity attributes of *lilong* housing were erased, and the housing market mechanisms that had existed for around a century in Shanghai were excluded and replaced by the management of real estate by the socialist planned economic system. *Lilong* housing was transformed into publicly owned property managed directly by the government (*zhiguan gongfang*, 直管公房) or by enterprises and public institutions under the management of the state. Between 1958 and 1966, after the full liberation of China, the government's propaganda pitched campaigns of austerity and economic recovery, and in terms of concrete measures, promoted sufficient and even productive industrial capacity. The year 1958 marked the starting point of the Great Leap Forward. Shanghai was criticised as a "non-productive" and even a "parasitic" city where consumption exceeded production.[114] How to engaging the nearly half the population seen as "surplus" in industrial production for the city's self-sufficiency thus became the Shanghai government's goal. Urban industrialisation became organised from the bottom-up in the form of *lilong* production groups (*lilong* shengchan zu, 里弄生产组).[115] As many *longtang* factories and neighbourhood factories sprang up in *lilong* neighbourhoods and blocks, a large number of housewives stepped out of their homes and joined in community production work. Vacant *lilong* houses, especially large upscale houses, were allocated to enterprises or institutions as offices or factory buildings. The former handsome interior features of *lilong* architecture disappeared, replaced by heavy cement layers, large machine tools, barracks and industrial waste, and other rough alterations. Compared with the newly built multi-storey residential compounds, *lilong* housing came closer to the thrifty and productive image that the government and the Communists advocated at the time.

In the third phase, impacted by the Cultural Revolution, *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods suffered mainly in two dimensions: (1) through a disordered housing management system, and (2) as historical objects subject to damage. Drawing on Cultural Revolution rhetoric, the Red Guard (*hongweibin*g) undertook the unfortunate trend of pillaging the dwellings (known as "*qiangfang feng*" in Chinese)

114 Chou Yu-Kuang. "The economic reform of Shanghai", Ching-chi Chou-pao [Economic Weekly], 25 August, 1949: 18.

115 In 1958, many complementary efforts were needed to build Shanghai into one of the largest industrial cities in the country. In response to Chairman Mao's call for the liberation of women's labour, the development of the human resources of housewives became a new trend in society. A large number of former housewives came out of their homes and set up their own businesses in the alleyways of *lilong* neighbourhoods. The Shanghai *Lilong* Production Group was thus set up in 1958. Zhang, Zhongjiang, 2011. "Longtang Gongchang Li de Nvren Men: Zouchu Jiamen Tisheng Diwei [Women in the Lilong Factories: Getting out of the House to Improve their Social Status]." Wenhui Reading Weekly Newspaper. Available: https://www.chinanews.com.cn/cul/2011/05-05/3019378.shtml, accessed on 30 December 2021.

of legally unproblematic but yet persecuted local residents, in particular intellectuals and merchants who were ideologically defined as reactionaries.[116] In addition, the Red Guards and other rebellious organisations destroyed major historical pieces linked to "feudalism, capitalism, and revisionism (*feng, zi, xiu*)" under the then current definitions. Architecture in *lilong* neighbourhoods, being generated by foreign settlers pursuing capitalism, had feudal and capital characteristics. Supported by the central government, the revolutionaries in Shanghai rushed into these public homes and destroyed sculptures or carvings with Chinese traditional or Western features, gates carved with foreign languages, and pieces that they saw as expressions of "feudalism, capitalism, and revisionism" or the "Four Olds".[117] In general, the philosophy of living generated amongst, Shanghainese in *lilong* community during the treaty port era to "not bring trouble for others" was vanishing. When the Cultural Revolution ended in 1976, there was little decency left in the ways of occupancy and the architectural aesthetic in *lilong* space.

From 1949 to the end of the 1970s, *lilong* housing had lost its earlier attribute as a commodity in a free market, and become the publicly owned or else privately owned property that cannot be traded. From first the functional changes to the buildings during the great industrial production period, and the re-allocation of living space by Red Guards and others, livelihood in *lilong* communities became a mess. Those who have lived in *lilong* neighbourhoods after the 1960s largely lost their attachment to the historical residences, living there without dignity or a quality life. Radicals even treated the pillaged *lilong* residences as their "trophies". The deteriorating dwellings and vanishing spirit of community in Shanghai brought explosive social problems in the late 1970s, with housing shortages, a collapsed housing management system, confusing ownership, and cultural trauma. Disorganised and haphazard construction, a deteriorating urban landscape and retrogressive lifestyles have reconfigured *lilong* architecture and community. The previous strong character of *lilong* as "home" for approximately 80 percent of the population in Shanghai was evaporating.

116 Even if the local residents were not swept away by rebels, they were still forced to hand over larger rooms with better quality for re-allocating, and moved themselves to those narrow and rough parts of one dwelling, such as storage rooms, kitchen areas, attics, or spare small rooms above the kitchen (*tingzijian*, or known as "pavilion room"). In the late 1960s, three serious episodes of robbing of houses occurred in Shanghai, and a total of 17,650 households were unscrupulously occupied (Lu 1999).

117 The "Four Olds (*sijiu*)" includes old ideas, old culture, old habits, and old customs, which were discarded as dross in the Cultural Revolution.

5.4.4 1978–1998: market-oriented economy and multiple interventions

Since 1978, decisions by the national government, including the open economic policy, and the goal of cultural recovery and revitalisation, have substantially affected Shanghai's urban planning and management of historical areas. Although the propaganda of both the national and local governments could not completely change the perceptions of local residents who had suffered social turmoil, the sentiments of the population has slowly changed, paving the way for subsequent actions from both the top and the bottom. In 1998, when the reform of housing commercialisation completed in China, *lilong* housing regained market potential and economic interests. There followed a dynamic transformation of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods after 1998. This section situates changes in belonging for *lilong* inhabitants and shifts in the attributes of *lilong* neighbourhoods into two main periods prior to 1998: (1) a transition period in which the national and local governments adjusted housing management policies and refurbished the damaged *lilong* buildings (1978–1988), and (2) the primary period in which *lilong* housing was re-commercialised, and there was an emphasis on and popularisation of the values of *lilong* neighbourhoods for their historic, cultural, economic, and aesthetic significance (1988–1998).

Between 1978 and 1988, the national government underwent a transition preparing reform of the housing system, through exploration, investigation, measurements, exploring proper strategic plan design and making of regulations, and pilot practices in the still unformed real estate market. During this period, the country was facing two major challenges regarding housing management. First, in order to implement the political goal to "eliminate chaos and return to normal (*boluan fanzheng*)" in the post-Cultural Revolution era, the government had to take responsibility for repairing those maliciously damaged buildings and dwellings. Since 1978, Shanghai's Urban Construction Bureau and the Institute of Housing Science have started assessing *lilong* housing conditions through the perspectives of technology, economy, and social benefits, and proposed principles for remodelling (*gaijian*). The focus of reconstruction was mainly to facilitate meeting standards for newly built housing, although experts affirmed necessary maintenance of historical architectural structures and styles. Reconstruction of old dwellings was a civil project, which could consume a considerable amount of time and money. In this respect, a second challenge was that the government's efforts to repair old dwellings could not meet the surge of population growth of Shanghai. In the 1960s and 1970s, educated youth (*zhishi qingnian*, and also known as *zhiqing* in short), more than one million people, had been transferred from Shanghai to distant villages or farms in Xinjiang or Jiangxi to be "re-educated" by peasants. After 1978, they returned to Shanghai, one after another. These returning educated youth and their new family members

worsened the congestion in already decaying urban *lilong* housing. The costs of repairing *lilong* housing after its hundred years of frequent social upheaval were enormous, putting a heavy burden on municipal expenditures. Facing this difficulty, the state liberalised its absolute ownership of land and devolved ownership to private sectors, thereby regenerating real estate industry in Shanghai.

Between 1988 and 1998, socialist welfare-housing allocation and commercial housing construction developed in two parallel tracks. For historical housing, demolition and conservation also moved forward in two parallel tracks. Suffering the consequences of historical radicalism and the distortion of "culture" in the Cultural Revolution, although many *lilong* houses still existed, they were seriously damaged and often abandoned. The shabby historic urban landscapes that resulted encouraged a determination to demolish and transform the city. Under a land leasing policy, *lilong* neighbourhoods that had been nationalised after the establishment of the PRC entered into a commercial market for historic housing. The favourable conditions for real estate development and the commodity economy now led by neoliberal capitalism forced the lilong properties into a capitalised environment (Butler 2007; Harvey 2005). Between 1993 and 1999, as a result of radical redevelopment, the number of well-conserved lilong neighbourhoods dropped dramatically from 3,754 to 952, without counting the *lilong* architecture built in forms of luxury apartments and garden houses (Zhang 2006; Shen 1993). The socialist welfare-housing allocation system was challenged and accused of corruption and exploitation of power by the leaders of various state-owned enterprises in the allocation of housing. An existing 16 million square metres of *lilong* housing (about 533,000 households) needed to be improved, and the government started to compile specific plans in 1996. A new strategy aimed to increase fiscal revenue by leasing land in existing *lilong* neighbourhoods and overtook the previous strategy to repair what was there for welfare housing distribution.

On 29 June 1998, the central government abolished the socialist welfare-housing system in China. The allocation of housing stopped, and housing became a market commodity. For the welfare housing owned by state enterprises, residents could convert their seniority by age into an offset from the cost of construction and acquire ownership of their home by paying the price difference. Alternatively, local residents could rent public housing owned by the government at extremely low and almost unchanging prices for decades. However, there has been a sharp decline in the number of lilong neighbourhoods. The alleyways of *lilong* neighbourhoods decreased to about 2,560 in 2000, and in 2013, only about 1,490 alleyways

existed.[118] Noticing the rapid loss of historic features in the inner city, scholars in Shanghai turned their attention to the cultural value of historic buildings under the impact of housing reform in 1998, in order to mitigate the irreversible damage to historic buildings caused by commercialisation and a booming real estate market. Nevertheless, with all their complex attributes, *lilong* neighbourhoods headed into an indeterminate future.

5.5 The Controversial Character of Historic Lilong and Cases Selection

5.5.1 Controversial Heritage

From the perspective of heritage studies, the historic *lilong* neighbourhoods have over time become an aggregate of its socio-cultural, economic, and political status and significance, as its dynamic nature changed from single to multiple, from simple to complex. As discussed above, shifting social events and national ideologies have significantly affected the development of *lilong* communities and inhabitants' attachment to them. Treatment to urban legacies in Shanghai's previous foreign settlements remains as a debatable topic. The post-treaty buildings in Shanghai with settler-colonial character are in an awkward situation in conservation practices. Many of the historic *lilong* residences have encountered the exclusion for being their informality according to modern programmed architectural standards (Jou and Clark and Chen 2016; Oakes 2019). This thesis proposes defining *lilong* buildings and sites as controversial heritage for their settler-colonial identity. The controversy extends beyond just the history of settler-colonialism in the history. It thus summarises three pairs of contradictory properties that emerged in the genesis and development of this unique urban vernacular housing, seen in features of cultural identity, belongingness, and commoditisation.

118 Before Shanghai's liberation in 1949, there were about 3840 *longtang* (alleyways) in Shanghai, constituting the most typical urban form in the cityscape.

The first set of controversial characteristics is found in the overarching settler-colonial identity of the *lilong* legacies with the treaty-port period and the scattered *lilong* units related to patriotic revolutionary activities. The second set of paradoxes regards the belongingness of and property ownership of *lilong* housing. Its public ownership as a communal property under the direct management of the government runs into conflicts with privacy as dwellings housing residents' everyday living. There is a conflict, then, between the system and real life. After China's socialist transformation in the mid-20th century, many local residents have been guaranteed the right to live in the government-owned lilong housing with low rents and to pass on residency rights to their descendants. This thesis suggests that contradictions emerged in the encroachment of private rights on public rights, and the sacrifice of the interests of the wider population by authorities trying to satisfy the demands of a small group of people and to stabilise that group who were accustomed to living in *lilong* communities. In general, the sense of belonging attached to the *lilong* community has vanished. In particular, for those who moved to *lilong* neighbourhoods after 1943, the end of Shanghai's concession period, the character of being a family home or community built on human relationships has been diluted. The third pair of contradictory features emerges in the late 20th century, after approval of the land leasing policy and re-commercialisation of housing. This contradictoriness is embedded in the increasingly expensive land prices and the ever-decaying architectural elements and physical facilities.

In heritage practice, many contradictory perspectives emerged. The varied perspectives and subsequent measures have created vastly different approaches and discourses under the formulated heritage-related laws and regulations. Stakeholders usually do not challenge heritage-related legislation when undertaking conservation measures. Instead, the easiest and most convenient method to obtain approval from government authorities is to offer a justification of conserving the historic site to be transformed. Involvement of professional consultants has had little effect. Professor Yu hai of Fudan University once argued that in the entanglement of multiple stakeholders who can influence the production and reproduction of urban space, experts are "the ruled group" among the ruling ones making decisions about the fate of the cultural heritage asset (Yao and Pang and Wang 2012, 142). This strategic path creates a problem where stakeholders' opinions have become the criteria for determining whether a project is about heritage conservation, and not the principles of conservation authorities.

5.5.2 Three cases in the old French Concession of Shanghai

The ever-changing social environment has consistently shaped inhabitants' dwelling habits and their views on urban cultural heritage. *Lilong*, as a special urban morphology and sometimes a synonym for the typical *shikumen* architectural typology, has a remarkable complexity generated over a history of more than one hundred years, epitomising what some call Shanghai's living culture (Arkaraprasertkul 2009). Stakeholders' engagement in each specific period is full of directionality, speculation, and uncertainty. Stakeholders, who control more resources in the society and whose voices are thereby louder, could usually dominate the values, functions, roles, and developing direction of *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods. Under historical circumstances, whether the real estate market of the late Qing Dynasty of Shanghai, the disturbances of the Cultural Revolution, the market-oriented commodity economy, or cultural heritage conservation, Chinese society has somehow been unprepared when adopting new concepts from the outside, yet promoting the unfamiliar through radical means. Up to today, after a long time engaging in globalisation, Chinese society has remained in a stage of tentatively developing, exploring, and practicing. As it confronts opportunities and challenges, it has faced reality.

Among all Chinese cities, Shanghai was formed by the rare accumulation of capital, speculation, and dynamic cultural fusion. The city has seen an evolving series of stakeholders' approaches towards heritage in the *lilong* buildings and neighbourhoods since the late 20th century. Because local government can gain fiscal revenue by leasing land to the private sector for new urban developments, concern for *lilong* areas began to be raised in the 1990s. In the absence of any standards of operation for *lilong* housing, each individual's behaviour and decision-making brought great uncertainty, serving stakeholders' interests but not others'. In the 21st century, accompanied with a series regulations using point-line-plane scales for the conservation of heritage, debates, as well as challenges and criticism regarding *lilong* buildings and neighbourhoods continue concerning stakeholders' interventions and urban conservation practices.

Professor Qing Chang (2009; 2017) without evaluating the success or failure of individual sites, has isolated four models of approaches to conservation which are recognised by sector insiders in Shanghai. The four models are named after the name of different blocks, according to operational forms, the dominant stakeholders, and the results. These are also recognised as the four conservation models: Xintiandi model, Tianzifang model, Jianyeli model, and Bugaoli model (or cultural relic conservation model) (González Martínez 2019). Xintiandi is offered as a typical model for its commercial success, and has been referenced nationwide, as seen in

the creation of the Nanjing 1912 block and Ningbo Tianyi Square (Zheng 2004; Li 2004). Chang (2017) sees it as a case of redevelopment and gentrification rather than a conservation project. The case of Tianzifang is categorised as a model of a bottom-up initiative to build creative industry by involving multiple participants to correct "the government-developer-led large-scale demolition and high-end reconstruction model" (Chang 2017, 17). In Chang's analysis, the model of Jianyeli is a combination of urban demolition and conservation measures, a new approach. The Bugaoli model in particular represents the conservation of the *lilong* neighbourhoods that are listed as CRPUs and under the protection of the CRPS. It is worth noting that none of these models are recommended for imitation because each has drawbacks. From the perspective of conservation, whether a proper heritage approach was adopted in each model, and whether the measures can be defined as "conservation" is complicated. Chang's paper provides readers one angle from which to examine the different processes of transformation of historic *shikumen lilong* housing in Shanghai's contemporary urban change.



FIG. 5.12 The urban texture of Jianyeli (red wireframe) is similar to its neighbour Yiyuan (**懿园**, yellow wireframe), which has been maintained with no transformation. Source: author, 2021.

This thesis argues that the four models actually do have relevance to conservation to some extent. It is not easy to simply identify each of them with a certain procedure, such as mass-demolition, redevelopment, urban renewal, renovation, urban regeneration or preservation. The making of these historic *lilong* neighbourhoods has been dynamic and involved multiple transformation measures. In this respect, from the perspective of the stakeholders involved and the results seen, this thesis suggests that the later Jianyeli project shares much with Xintiandi, in that both are sites of high-end consumerism. The historic urban texture of Jianyeli, however, was respected during construction (Figure 5.12). In Xiaohua Zhong and Xiangming

Chen's (2017) paper "Demolition, rehabilitation, and conservation: heritage in Shanghai's urban regeneration, 1990–2015", the authors select three cases for analysis, Xintiandi, Tianzifang, and Bugaoli, to investigate how urban heritage can be preserved in the context of rapid and radical urbanisation. The authors indicate a confrontational relationship between urban conservation and urban (re)development, and use the three cases to illustrate three stages in the transformation of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai's evolving urban process: from demolition (Xintiandi), to rehabilitation (Tianzifang) and conservation (Bugaoli).

This thesis recognises the model's classification as ways to emphasise differences, but does not agree with the progressive relationship they are put in. It sees urban conservation and urban development as dualities of transformation rather than confrontation. In a sense, from the perspectives of architectural conservation or urban conservation, each of the three cases, Xintiandi, Tianzifang, and Bugaoli, follows as well as undermines the principle of conservation to some extent. In this respect, it would be inaccurate to define the mode and process of the urban regeneration of Shanghai *lilong* neighbourhoods in terms of any generally defined operational approach. In reality, the techniques of demolition, rehabilitation and conservation, or other approaches, have been played out in turn or combined as methods of urban regeneration for the past twenty years or so. In scholarly work, much is written affirming the conservation value of the Xintiandi project. Likewise, Tianzifang was designated as a Protection Neighbourhood in 2016, as a result of participants' continuous urban practice and experts efforts in this area for more than a decade. Under the Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on the Protection of the Areas with Historical Cultural Features and the Excellent Historical Buildings, the government of Shanghai issued many lists of built cultural heritage and measure guidelines in the heritage movement in the 21st century. Heritage and heritage conservation are dynamic and are both about the art of interpretation. Regardless of different heritage approaches on the ground, buildings or neighbourhoods in the areas of Xintiandi, Tianzifang, and Bugaoli are respectively listed under the CRPS and the system for protecting outstanding buildings and sites with historical and cultural features. Therefore, this thesis selects Xintiandi, Tianzifang, and Bugaoli as the three comparable cases, for their similarity in being located in the Huangpu District and in having a common development background, and in their differentiation in designation status and varied heritage approaches and conservation measures.

5.6 Conclusion

Historic *lilong* neighbourhoods have long embodied the city's socio-cultural, political, and economic changes, and they sustain the collective memories of generations. The regulations issued can mitigate the disappearance of the historic urban landscape of Shanghai's inner city and enhance public perception and awareness by restricting government decisions and capital development, but the damage and demolition of built heritage in cities cannot be eradicated. Taking historic *lilong* housing as a case, this chapter investigates the transition it has undergone from a macro perspective, showing the inevitability of the emergence of *lilong* housing and its changing character in a historical narrative. In this, we see the complexity of this urban vernacular form of dwelling since its birth, as both a product of the unequal treaties and the presence of foreign powers and as the home of most Shanghainese. Stakeholders involved in each practical project today need to challenge themselves and ask "what is the value of urban vernacular dwellings?" and "are there adaptive options rather than large-scale demolition in the inner city?"

In contemporary heritage practice where *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods are listed in different categories and grades, the public encounters their transformation in terms that depict justifications for it. The use of the terms "urban conservation" or "conservation of historic buildings" is common, although these have sparked years of debates in the meantime. The power of capital and the global economy that accompanied the opening of a free real estate market in Shanghai have contributed complexity and uncertainty. On the one hand, the involvement of private investors ensures sufficient funds for the maintenance, repair, alternation, restoration, and conservation of the historical sites. On the other hand, without mincing words about the intentions of capital, stakeholders are likely to act in a manner harmful to heritage after having obtained the right to use historic buildings which they gain through speculative utilisation of heritage conservation-related discourse. One thing certain is that after the economic reforms and land leasing policy, the market in Shanghai has paid more attention to the commercial benefits of historical and cultural *lilong* neighbourhoods. Taking into account the dominance of capital in a booming globalised environment and the social-political orientation of China's one-party dictatorship and form of socialism, residents' role in any urban transformation project for Shanghai's historical *lilong* neighbourhoods seems insignificant. The utilisation of *lilong* dwellings and neighbourhoods has been led largely by capital or the coordinated interests formed between the government and investors. No matter how active capital is, or what position stakeholders take to interpret or even whitewash their actions as heritage "conservation", government endorsement is

the most powerful support for their effectiveness. This thesis summarises local government's intentions as enhancing the attractiveness of *lilong* neighbourhood in the name of conservation, and consolidating its cultural identity as a historic city. However, although there are cases of *lilong* neighbourhoods popularly and successfully transformed for the tourism industry, it cannot be concluded that they present proper conservation in terms of both architectural authenticity and urban integrity. Promulgation of the first Regulations of Shanghai on Urban Regeneration (Shanghai Chengshi Gengxin Tiaoli, 上海城市更新条例) in 2021 might mark the end of an era of heritage practice in the name of conservation, and the rise of an era in the name of regeneration.[119] In this respect, the following three chapters review three of the most representative examples of the transformed historic *lilong* areas in Shanghai over the past two decades. They analyse the trajectory of their transformation, the different participants' approaches and diverse interpretations and justifications in the name of conservation, and the causes promoting and the complexity arising within each specific case. Through analysis of the three cases, the thesis aims to point out the uncertainty of "conservation" in the reality of urban practice, and the dangers embedded in a thriving trend towards heritagisation and regeneration.

119 The Thirty-fourth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Fifteenth Shanghai Municipal People's Congress adopted the first Regulations of Shanghai on Urban Regeneration on 25 August 2021.

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6 Xintiandi

Revolutionary Value Dominated Site and Commercial Benefits Oriented Redevelopment

6.1 Introduction

Xintiandi, New Heaven and Earth in its translation, is the first large-scale urban revitalisation project in Shanghai. The launch of the Xintiandi project has led to booming commercial transformation and redevelopment of historical *lilong* neighbourhoods. The well-known saying "if you have never been to Xintiandi, you have never been to Shanghai" has propelled it into the limelight and recognises its outstanding status (Yang and Chen 2005, Sun 2007). The early Xintiandi redevelopment made up a small part of the overall Taipingqiao transforming development invested by Shui On Group (Figure 6.1). Although the redevelopment started in the late 1990s includes four plots (No. 108, 109, 112, and 113), the most prominent part of Xintiandi, being a cultural brand and a landmark of Shanghai, is known by the public for its Beili (transformed No. 109 plot) and Nanli (transformed No. 112 plot).

This chapter investigates the connection between the commercial urban transformation of a historic area and heritage conservation. The analysis includes two aspects: the physical and intangible changes in implementation and stakeholders' conservation interpretations in their heritage discourse to justify different approaches. First, it takes the historical and legislative conditions as a starting point for discussion. This procedure establishes a confine, within which the three cases are heritage sites recognised by heritage-related authorities of Shanghai (at the provincial level of China) for their historical and cultural significance. It then studies the turning point for place transformation, involving different stakeholders.

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Second, it studies the use of heritage-related terms and vocabularies in academic publications with higher rates of citation as a clue by analysing Chinese and English papers focusing on the Xintiandi project. It categorises the term for understanding the mainstream opinions and criticisms in academia. Third, according to the basic information research, this chapter analyses intervention that has changed tangible and intangible features of the historical Taipingqiao site. Fourth, in the Xintiandi project, the main stakeholders are the local government of Shanghai, the developer, the architectural designer in chief, and increasingly emerging consumers. By analysing their respective words as a fulcrum, this chapter further analyses their varied roles in the process for implementing urban heritage conservation, and engagement of varying degrees and attachment to historical and cultural buildings.



FIG. 6.1 The whole Taipingqiao area and divided plots within in Shanghai's urban planning. Source: author, 2021.

6.2 Taipingqiao transformation and its historical background

6.2.1 Historical background of Taipingqiao area

In the history, Taipingqiao (Taiping Bridge) was a folk place name, to express the public's aspiration for "peace and tranquillity". The transformed Taipingqiao area has been urbanised along with the second expansion of the French Concession since 1900. Being a relatively independent and infrastructure well-equipped Chinese community at the time, the area has developed with both characteristics influenced by the construction and management of French Concession and traditional Chinese lifestyle. Adjacent to the old walled city to the east and city harbour to the south, the Taipingqiao block has had an inherent-resembling transition attribute in both space and time dimensions.

From the perspective of spatial dimension, based on regional demographics, there had been a gradual deterioration of urban environment and living conditions from the northwest corner to the southeast in Taipingqiao area before the lunched redevelopment in the 1990s. From the perspective of temporal dimension, the block has actually seen its first decline since the 1930s. Before the centre of the French Concession moved westwards in the 1930s, Taipingqiao area had its glory for two decades, overflowing with rapid urban development and growing immigration. Before 1910, there were only four *lilong* neighbourhoods in total. Between 1910 and 1920, with the influx of residents from Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, small business under individual ownership emerged, and the area has gradually become a settlement which attracted many Chinese merchants with capital to invest in real estate development. Although the Chinese investors' behaviour was always hovering on the fringe of the Concession's management measures, the MCFCS acquiesced to the operations of native Chinese purchasing or leasing land from foreign landowners for development for the financial interests. The MCFCS even subsequently designated areas with a large number of Chinese communities as "temporary construction areas" (Figure 6.2). Under such circumstances, 41 *lilong* neighbourhoods were built in the 1910s, and 97 in the 1920s (Luo et al. 2002). Relying on the large openings of the early *shikumen lilong* housing in Taipingqiao area, the buildings along the streets have hosted a variety of commercial activities, contributing to growing prosperity of the district. Taipingqiao area thus completed its landscape transition from rural to urban in the late 1920s, becoming the "upper corner" of Shanghai at the time.



FIG. 6.2 In the amenities management map released by the MCFCS in November 1938, it clearly shows that the Taipingqiao area was included in a temporary construction area. Source: Shanghai Survey and Mapping Annals (Shanghai Cehui Zhi, 上海测绘志) (Compilation Committee of the Shanghai Survey and Mapping Annals 1999, 65), available at vcMap_ID-755_No-1.jpeg (2400×1551) (virtualshanghai.net), accessed on 2 August 2021.

A growing population can bring urban flourishment through labour and financial exporting. However, when the population becomes oversaturated, certain urban areas may develop spasmodically and even stagnate resulting from the population burden. Before the 1930s, there was a large group of "decent" residents, including lawyers, doctors, government officials, and people involved in national industry and commerce, pawn-broking, and catering. Following the thriving urban growth, primary and secondary education emerged, as well as various cultural activities. In addition, many *longtang* factories engaged in production sprung up. Gathering of gangsters led to a number of seedy businesses such as opium dens, casinos and brothels as well. Therefore, in the 1930s, although Taipingqiao area still harboured tigers and dragons hiding in deep waters, it also sheltered evil people and countenanced iniquitous practices, and gradually changed from being known as the "upper corner" to the "lower corner (*xiazhijiao*, 下之角)" (Luo et al. 2002, 76).

The persistently high population density in social transition since the 1930s left the Taipingqiao area without a chance of turnaround for decades. At the end of 1948, before the establishment of the PRC, there were 193 alleyways in *lilong* neighbourhoods in this area (Luo et al. 2002). After 1949, conditions of *lilong* neighbourhoods did not improve. Focusing on the later Xintiandi plot of Taipingqiao, from surrounding urban landscapes and environment, architectural exteriors and interiors, and living facilities, to permanent residents and community atmosphere, all the tangible and intangible features within the area experienced a decline in quality before the launch of large-scale transformation.

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Nevertheless, various historic sites are located in this area, and need to be protected for their rich values. In the history, the revolutionary Chen Duxiu and Li Hanjun (李汉俊), the poet Liu Yazi (柳亚子), the painter Zhang Daqian (张大千), feminist writer Ding Ling (丁玲), Chiang Kai-shek, and Ding Shisun (丁石孙) the then chancellor of Peking University, had all lived in or worked at places surrounding the district of Taipingqiao that became Xintiandi in the late 1990s. Historical buildings including No. 155 Taicang Road, No. 330 South Huangpi Road, and No. 217 Madang Road (Tonghui Primary School), are described by Professor Luo Xiaowei (2002, 61–64) with relatively higher architectural construction quality and exquisite building exteriors and interiors, or with significant socio-cultural and patriotic educational values. These were built and served historical residential families with considerable financial resources or status. Among these, the Site of the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China (the Site hereafter, 中国共产党第一次全国代表大会会址), in particular, is one the most important historic sites, which was listed in 1961 among the first 180 national CRPUs.

6.2.2 Legislative conditions: heritage-related characters of Xintiandi

The opportunity for Taipingqiao to gain access to redevelopment was the existence of the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC. Revolutionary cultural relics are a typical heritage category designated in China resulting from the special activities and events held during the Sino-Japanese War from 1931 to 1945. Because of the time point in which the wartime-history started, most of the revolutionary cultural relics are present or modern architecture, such as residential buildings, industrial factories, school buildings, or publishing headquarters. In the process of formulating a legislative system and regime for the protection of cultural relics adapted to China's local context, from the 1961 *Notice* to the No. 158 document during the Cultural Revolution, and the Law promulgated in 1982, protection of revolutionary relics is always highlighted in the first place, for its patriotism-related educational significance for the general public.

Shanghai is the birthplace of the Communist Party of China, and one of the cradles of China's modern revolution. To celebrate the 100th anniversary (1921–2021) of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC), in 2021, the Party History Research Office of the CPC Shanghai Municipal Committee (Zhonggong Shanghai Shiwei Dangshi Yangjiushi, 中共上海市委党史研究室) has compiled and recorded more than 600 "red" cultural resources, including CRPUs, Cultural Relic Protection Sites, Heritage Architecture, and other "red" sites, ruins, and commemorative facilities with

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revolutionary significance (Figure 6.3). This compilation is certainly associated with the centenary celebration, and meanwhile, as a side note, this action also reflects the rich revolutionary resources in Shanghai and the importance which the local government attaches to them.

Being one of the very first listed national CRPUs approved by the State Council, the Site has always had its absolute sublime status among the listed cultural relics. The supreme revolutionary significance of the Site has crowded out the rest of its content in collective memories, including the location in the old French Concession, the construction history related to settler-colonialism, and its attribute as a foreigners' property. Back to the history, on July 23, 1921, thirteen men converged in the downstairs living room at No. 106 Rue Wantz (now No.76 Xingye Road) of the Taipingqiao area, and held the First National Congress of the CPC. The building held the congress was a *lilong* residential unit that completed in 1920. It was subsequently rented by the Li brothers: Li Hanjun and Li Shucheng (李书城).[120] In 1921, Li Hanjun, one of the founders of the early Communist Group of Shanghai, offered the living room in his "Li's *Gongguan*" with the other 12 members for convening the first congress.[121] Names of many big figures attended, such as Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao (李大钊), Dong Biwu (董必武) and Mao Zedong (毛泽东, Chairman Mao of the PRC), and one particular foreign name Hendricus Josephus Franciscus Marie (Henk) Sneevliet (also known as "Maring", the pseudonym), a Dutch person who was sent to China by Lenin to help with founding the China Communist Party. From July 23 to July 30, due to the nature of this historic event, this ordinary *lilong* unit was unwittingly imbued with other extraordinary connotations. Although its revolutionary significance was not addressed until 1950, when the national government of the new PRC government and the CPC Shanghai Municipal Committee prepared to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Party.

120 Li Hanjun was one of the 13 men who participated in the first national congress of the CPC, and his brother Li Shucheng was also a revolutionist, one of the founders of the *Tongmenghui* of China (Chinese United League). The Li brothers rented both No. 106 and No. 108 *lilong* residences on the old Rue Wantz, and broke the inner walls of the two residential unit, to make it one integrated family house. This house was known by the neighbours as "Li's *Gongguan*".

121 The term "*gongguan*" usually refers to decent houses, in particular for rich people or those with a certain social status. This term is often seen in Chinese novels when describing the historical local residents' life in Shanghai's foreign settlements.



FIG. 6.3 On 10 June 2021, the Publicity Department of the CPC Shanghai Municipal Committee (**中共上海市委宣传部**), the Party History Research Office of the CPC Shanghai Municipal Committee, the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture and Tourism (**上海市文化和旅游局**), and the Shanghai Bureau of Planning and Land Resources (**上海市规划和国土资源管理局**) jointly released the map titled "Shanghai Red Culture Map (2021 Edition)". This map marks 379 "red" urban historic spots chosen from more than 600 historical revolutionary sites in Shanghai, including 195 old revolutionary sites, 83 revolutionary ruins, and 101 commemorative facilities. Source: The Paper, available at http://m.thepaper.cn/kuaibao_detail.jsp?contid=13082442&from=kuaibao, access August 10 2021.

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The rise of nationalism and revolutionary spirit in China since the early 20th century has led to the national authorities' attention to heritage sites, promoting patriotic education for enhancing social cohesion in the period of rebuilding the country in a new regime. When the CPC Shanghai Municipal Committee found the location of the Site, the residence located at the No. 106 Xingye Road subsequently became the first memorial museum to display Shanghai's revolutionary history in 1952 (Figure 6.4). It only functioned to host important Chinese and foreign guests in the early phase of the museum.



FIG. 6.4 Entitled "Reverently looking up to the site of the first national congress of the Chinese Communist Party," this city poster was designed by Jin Ming (金铭) and published by Shanghai Renmin Chu Ban She (上海人民出版社) in March 1973. It depicted a scene of pilgrimage by the Chinese public to the Site. Source: Shanghai Renmin Chu Ban She, available at https://chineseposters.net/posters/e15-453, accessed on 17 April 2021.

Between 1950 and 2021, heritage practitioners took many conservation-related actions on the Site. From the perspective of heritage conservation, before the redevelopment of the historical Taipingqiao area, the Site successively experienced simple refurbishment and maintenance in 1950 (completed in 1952) and the conservation of the Site in 1958 in order to restore the buildings to the original appearance in 1921. When the Luwan government compiled the planning design of the Taipingqiao area, within and surrounding the Xintiandi project, including No.76 and No. 66 on Xingye Road, and No. 127 on Taicang Road, three places were classified into the conservation coverage for being historic architectural sites (Figure 6.5).

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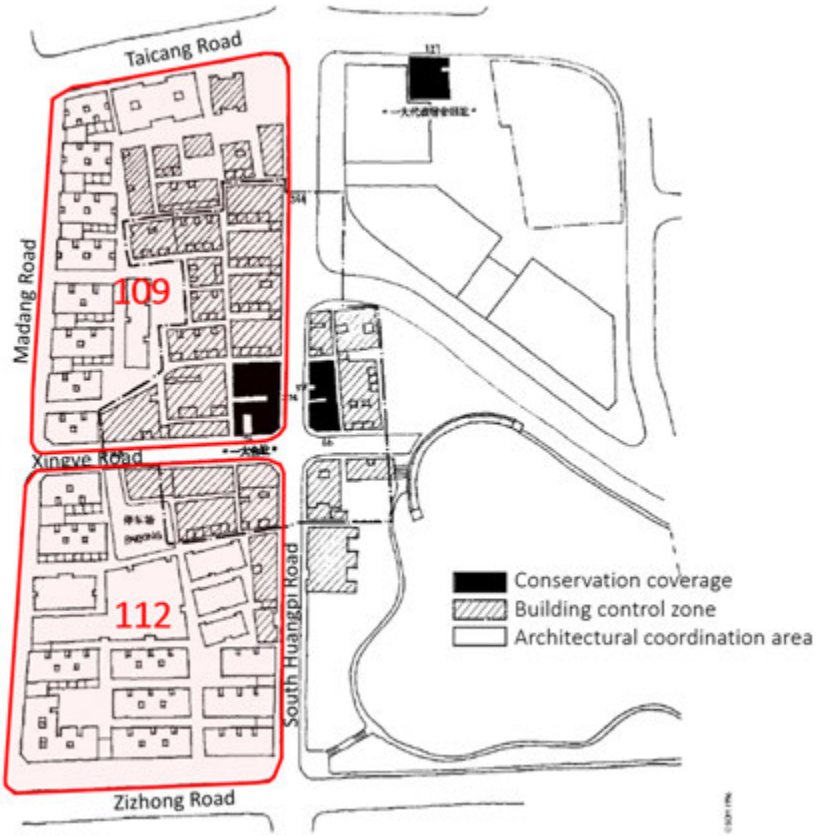


FIG. 6.5 In the project text "Shanghai Luwan District Taipingqiao Area Specific Plan" compiled by the government of Luwan District (19 December 1996), the planning designer office Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) clearly drew and presented this "scope map of historic conservation area" according to the listed status of the Site of the First National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, and classified the "building control zones". Source: SOM, 1996.

In addition, the planning design also delineated the scope of "building control zones" including an area 20 meters to the east, 45 meters to the south, 80 meters to the north and 35 meters to the west of the major architectural body of the Site. Obviously, a certain area of the Xintiandi project is within the range of the "building control zones", or according to Zhu Xiaoming and Gu Xiaoying (2010), it is located within the "protection construction control area (baohu Jianshe kongzhi fanwei, 保护建设控制范围)".[122]

122 In Zhu Xiaoming and Gu Xiaoying's (2010) paper "Evaluation and Analysis on Four Kinds of Cases Concerning Protection and Renovation of Shikumen Lane in Shanghai", the authors use the term "protection" as a cross-reference to "*baohu*" in the English translation. In this context, this thesis refers "*baohu*" and its corresponding English translation "protection" in the article by default.

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In addition to the specific strategic plan, municipal and district planning departments also formulated the conservation planning strategic schemes in the 1990s, fitting the Shanghai local government's development objectives.

In 1991 and 1999 respectively, the local governmental made new urban planning and classified many historic districts as the "Area with Historical and Cultural Features (Lishi Wenhua Fengmao Qu, 历史文化风貌区)" to restrain the developers' radical investment. The urban planning strategy was a response the dilemma between Shanghai's listed status as a national Famous Historical and Cultural City and the growing capital interest in historic urban districts. According to the earliest proposal of the Municipal Planning Bureau in 1984, Shanghai initiated to classify areas with revolutionary historical sites as protection areas. For example, the area in the old French Concession where has many revolutionary sites, including the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC, the former residence of Chairman Mao Zedong, and Zhou's *Gongguan* of Zhou Enlai, was designated in 1991, and titled "Sinan Road Protection Area with Revolutionary Historical Sites (思南路革命史迹保护区)". In 1999, including the updated "Sinan Road Protection Area with Historical and Cultural Features (思南路历史文化风貌保护区, Sinan Road Protection Area, hereafter)", overall eleven protection areas were designated for their outstanding historical and cultural features in the city centre of Shanghai.[123] Along with the changeable successive urban plans, plots 108, 109 (the later Beili) and 112 (the later Nanli) were within the spatial range of the 1999 Sinan Road Protection Area. Historic buildings on plots 107, 110, and 106 of the Taipingqiao area were maintained in a promising quality. However, plots 107 and 110, as well as plot 111, which were included the protection area in 1991, were unfortunately removed from the protective range in 1999 (Lü 2007).

The municipal government's political strategy to make conservation plans of Shanghai's historic areas has brought dualities in urban developing dualities in Taipingqiao in the 1990s. On the one hand, the successive conservation plans proposed two levels of conservation measures for protecting architectural and urban features in listed plots, and operational details in implementation. For example, the "Shanghai Luwan District Taipingqiao Area Specific Plan" demonstrated that CRPUs are the core conservation objects that need to be conserved in accordance with the legislative requirements; the surrounding environment of a CRPU is the "building control zone", within which architectural height, volume, structure, and colour need to be controlled within certain limits in new construction, expansion, and alteration, creating a new scenario

123 The creation of the eleven protection areas with historical and cultural features was included in the Shanghai Master Plan (1999–2020) and Shanghai Conservation Plan of Famous Historical and Cultural City (上海历史文化名城保护规划) of 1999 (Lü 2007).

consistent with the historic urban landscape. On the other hand, according to the plan of the Sinan Road Protection Area, when Shui On Group promoted the redevelopment project at the turn of the century, only the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC was a core protection object, being a CRPU at the national level. It has consciously defaulted to the possibility of the demolition of other historic buildings in the historical Taipingqiao area, even though a certain number of those had considerable socio-cultural significance and remained in a pleasant architectural quality for further polishing. In addition, the "building control zones" decreased for concerning the surroundings of the Site only. The intention of a series of specific plans was to conserve historic buildings, sites, and urban landscapes surrounding Xingye Road and Sinan Road. Nonetheless, it is not difficult to imagine why the Site ended up as the only building with a core significance in the Taipingqiao area if taking the nationalism character inherited in China's heritage conservation movement into consideration.

6.2.3 Turning point: favourable economic conditions for redevelopment

Legislative conditions concerning heritage conservation became constraining conditions for urban redevelopment in a sense. A series of local favourable economic strategies created after the national economic reform policy were the key driving forces for extensive and aggressive urban transformation in Shanghai. Since the 1980s, there has been a gradual administrative decentralisation of China's central government, leading its transformation from an omnipotent body to a governing apparatus (Leaf 2005; He and Wu 2005). Since 1984, Shanghai has been granted for arrival of foreign investment in the real estate market, but it was not until 1990 when the Special Economic Zone officially launched in Pudong District, the city started to recover from a state of developmental stagnation and isolation (Scheen 2012; Li 2015). In December 1987, the municipal government of Shanghai first promulgated the Shanghai Measures on the Transfer of Land Use Rights for Compensation (Shanghai Shi Tudi Shiyongquan Youchang Zhuanrang Banfa, 上海市土地使用权有偿转让办法), and aimed to increase fiscal revenue by allowing private sectors' participation in real estate activities through acquiring the right of land use under the new policy. This implementation provided an exemplary function for other cities and largely accelerated the reforming process of land use in Shanghai. After 1992, when Shanghai first leased its urban land to foreign investors, the city has encountered a flourishing era of urban (re)development. The local government has aggressively taken charge of property-led land development for decades (Ren 2008; He and Wu 2005, 4). As investment from outside the mainland of China was continuously emerging in urban development in the 1990s, previous financial deficiency of the local government of Shanghai has subsequently been reversed.

With sufficient investment funds, it is a matter of urgency for the local government to revitalise a large number of rundown urban areas, restructure urban spaces, and rationalise functional zoning. In the 1990s, various Chinese historical centres gradually shifted from production-led to consumption-led urban spaces (Wu 2003). The Shui On Properties Ltd., a member of Shui On Group, speculatively seized the emerging development opportunity in Shanghai, by drawing on their commercial acumen for participating in the real estate market (started in 1985) in Chinese mainland for more than ten years (He and Wu 2005). Construction of the Xintiandi project lasted from 1999 to 2001, and Shui On Group was involved in the decision-making process together with the Luwan District Government for the redevelopment plan of Taipingqiao as early in 1996. The two sides signed a letter of intent to cooperate between Shanghai and Hong Kong to transform the Taipingqiao area in Shanghai's Luwan District into an internationally acclaimed spot (Guan and Guo 2011). In a sense, the "Shanghai Luwan District Taipingqiao Area Specific Plan" designed by SOM and compiled by the Luwan District Government accommodated the developing goal of Shui On, in order to achieve a favourable situation for the interests of both the developer and district government. In the process, in 1997, the developer hired the American design company Wood and Zapata, who quickly made an urban regeneration scheme and proposed to redevelop commercial sectors in the shell of the historical *lilong* buildings. This later well-known Xintiandi scheme quickly gained unanimous approval from Shui On Group and the municipal and local governments.

Many political strategies created in the historical period led to the successful operation and completion of the Xintiandi design scheme. Including the consent for involving investment from outside mainland China, the issue of the land leasing policy, the nationalism-led heritage discourse since the 1930s, the national progressive emphasis on cultural heritage, and the reform to reinvent China's international image, have all contributed to the accomplishment of the Xintiandi redevelopment in the late 1990s. On the one hand, Shui On Group, being an early investor in the real estate market in Shanghai, has gained many beneficial conditions from both district and municipal governments. For example, it was allowed to develop the luxury commercial apartment community Lake Villa (Cuihu Tidian) to the south of the Xintiandi. The favourable conditions enabled Shui On to make a huge fortune through the redevelopment of the historical Taipingqiao area. In addition, Shui On Group has earned a positive reputation that continues to this day in Chinese mainland, for acting as the initial primary participator and proposing to "conserve" the CRPU and its surroundings. On the other hand, the bonus package, the benefits from its unique investment vision, Shui On Group enjoyed on the integrated Taipingqiao project is unrepeatable. The positive image and reputation of the Xintiandi have led to a number of incoherent and even misguided discussions on urban heritage conservation. It further significantly influence the formation and

development of Shanghai's heritage discourse in urban practice. This thesis aims to figure out the general understanding biases among not only academia but also the public, in particular, the practitioners in heritage practices. It also attempts to point out the possible negative effects such recognition could cause, in order to offer critical ideas for increasingly extensive urban heritage practices.

6.3 Academic discourse: Movement of "Conservation" Related Interpretations

6.3.1 Database analysis and discourse classification

Analysis of academic literature is mainly based on two databases: Cnki for Chinese literature, and Scopus for English literature. Meanwhile, the Chinese WANFANG database and the Web of Science database are applied as platforms for complementary literature. Being the very first large-scale urban development project to transform *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai and nationwide, the Shanghai Taipingqiao Xintiandi project is widely discussed, studied, and disputed since its commencement.[124] In order to obtain a comprehensive overview of Xintiandi-related research in the urban transformation process of the historical Taipingqiao area and its relevance to heritage conservation in analytical discourse, the keyword and subject search is divided into two steps.

First, I searched the keyword and subject "上海新天地" in the Chinese Cnki database, to equip myself with a basic understanding of Xintiandi-related literature.[125] Limiting the results to journal papers, there were 232 articles across 20 different subjects and categories. Furthermore, according to the content to be discussed in this thesis, I framed the qualifiers into 6 categories, including building science and engineering, macroeconomic management and sustainable development, tourism, economic

124 There are many similar commercial Xintiandi projects nationwide developed by Shui On Group after the success of the first Xintiandi in Luwan District, such as the Hongqiao-tiandi located in a different site of Shanghai, and those in cities like Wuhan, Foshan Lingnan, and Chongqing.

125 The keyword "上海新天地" is the Chinese name of "Shanghai Xintiandi".

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reform, service economy, and cultural economy. Under the restricted searching terms, the results were first limited to 139 articles. Second, adding the determiner "保护 (*baohu*)", 39 of the 139 articles were further screened out, falling within the category "building science and engineering".

As of 12 August 2021, the relevant publication diagram in the Cnki database was shown as Figure 6.6. This thesis sets the starting point of the publication volume curve at 1996, the same year as the birth the specific plan of Taipingqiao area. Result diagrams of literature regarding Tianzifang and Bugaoli follow the same searching strategy in the following two chapters. Relevant papers first appeared in 1996, and after 2001, at which time the Xintiandi Plaza was fully completed, the number of published journal papers has maintained at a certain level every year. There were relatively higher numbers of publications between 2001 and 2015, almost at a volume of six or more per year. Furthermore, because of the forward-thinking, topical, symbolic, controversial, and landmark nature of Xintiandi, on the basis of the selected 139 Xintiandi-related papers, discussions also extended to adaptive reuse of old buildings (Ma 2003), and the application of "catalyst" in urban regeneration or revitalisation of historical districts (Sun 2008; Xu 2012). In the keywords co-occurrence network, apart from the highly frequented associated terms "Shanghai Xintiandi" (76 times) and "*shikumen*" (59 times), the research keywords, in order of frequency of their occurrence, are: "transformation of old cities (jiucheng gaizao, 旧城改造)", "urban regeneration (chengshi gengxin, 城市更新)", "historical and cultural features (lishi wenhua fengmao, 历史文化风貌)", "urban tourism (dushi lvyou, 都市旅游)", and "historic buildings (lishi jianzhu, 历史建筑)".

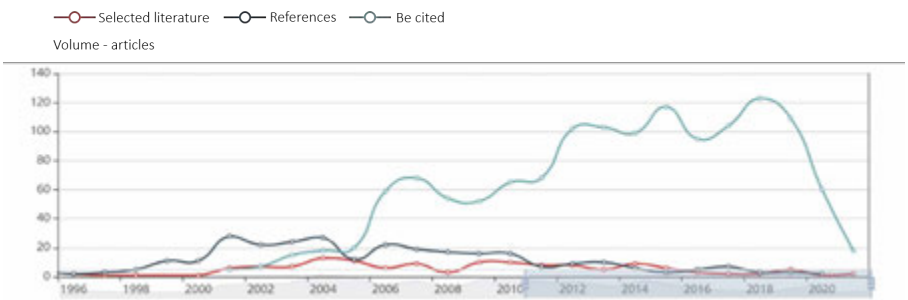


FIG. 6.6 The study on Xintiandi project has been popular since the 21st century. The publication volume curve diagram also reveals that there are a large number journal papers referencing the 139 Xintiandi-related studies, more than 11 times as the selected ones. Source: Cnki, accessed on 12 August 2021.

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Spotlighting 39 publications from 139, the keyword co-occurrence network subsequently changed. In the scholarship, "transformation of old cities" was still the most trending keyword for Xintiandi-related research. The term "urban construction", which was associated with Shui On Group's redevelopment goal and the Luwan government's specific planning strategy created in the late 1990s, appeared in the network diagram (Figure 6.7). Therein, "features (*fengmao*)" of architecture and urban landscapes became a highlight in academic discussion. This was in line with Shanghai's successive municipal outlines and urban planning strategies for the protection of "Areas with Historical and Cultural Features", which first appeared as a prototype within Shanghai's urban conservation plan scope in 1986, and the 2002 Regulations on the Protection.[126] This thesis thus suggests that topics of academic research, in a sense, intentionally, follow precisely the changes of various political documents, and the national and local strategic development tendency regarding urban heritage. Meanwhile, scholarly debates, discussions, and critiques have interacted with the political heritage movement since the late 1990s, and influenced decision-making in local practices of Shanghai.

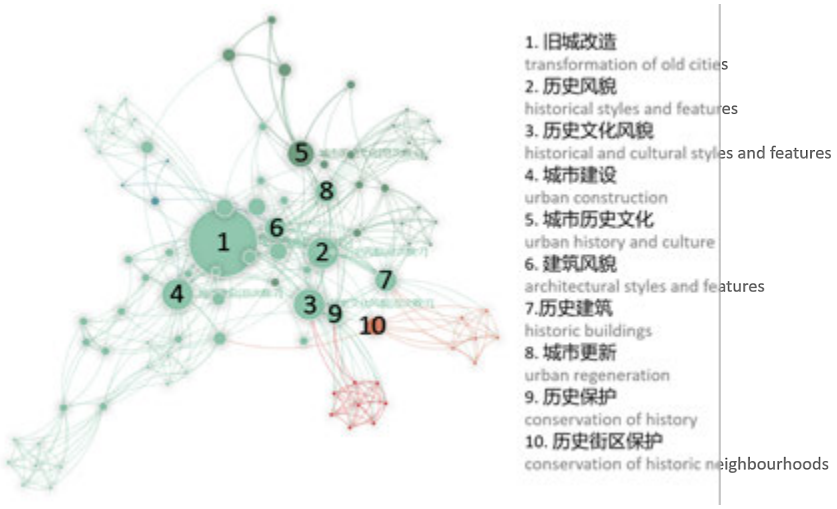


FIG. 6.7 Diagram of the keyword co-occurrence network. Source: Cnki, accessed on 12 August 2021.

126 The corresponding English term of *fengmao* (风貌) follows the official translation "features", and in a sense, *fengmao* can also be expanded to "styles and features" according to the author's understanding.

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Similarly, the two steps need to be applied in the same way in the Scopus database for screening English literature. After searching the TITLE-ABS-KEY “Shanghai Xintiandi”, there were 12 results found on 15 August 2021 in the Scopus database. The relevant publications were mainly related to subject areas such as social sciences, arts and humanities, engineering, or business, and management. Second, adding the determiner “conservation”, 5 of the 12 articles were further screened out. Obviously, compared with studies in the domestic academia in China that started in the late 1990s, it took a while to make the Xintiandi project recognised by international scholarship (Figure 6.8). The earliest article entitled “Property-led redevelopment in post-reform China: A case study of Xintiandi redevelopment project in Shanghai” was published in 2005, with a focus on land development and urban renewal. This paper is also the most cited one, even though the scope of discussion within has little to do with heritage conservation.

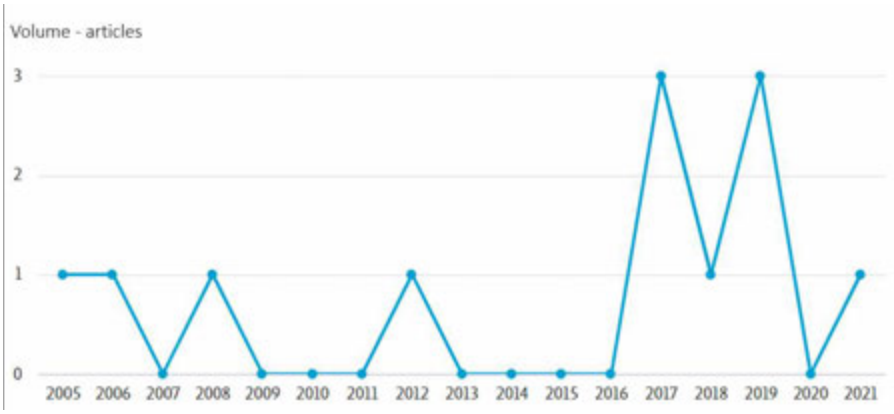


FIG. 6.8 The published article volume related to the keyword “Xintiandi” shown on the Scopus database website. Source: Scopus, accessed on 15 August 2021.

6.3.2 Literature analysis: within the context of heritage conservation

Considering the cited volumes and the chronological orders of publication, this thesis chooses 32 Chinese journal papers and 8 English ones for discussion in this section. This chapter first aims to explore scholars’ attitudes towards transformation conducted in Taipingqiao and the authors’ chronological diverse understandings of the Xintiandi project, through an analysis of terms, definitions, and interpretations that scholars have used over a span of twenty years. It further compares discourse that appeared in both Chinese and English literature, exploring the similarities and differences in general trends and research directions of studying matters of the Xintiandi project from the perspective of heritage conservation.

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Accordingly, most selected Chinese literature involves content related to heritage conservation, but the topics cover multiple subjects rather than heritage conservation only. In the early stage, taking all published journal papers into consideration, research of the Xintiandi project was mainly related to the design and planning, and construction of urban space. As the discussion grows, the research scope extended to issues including spatial politics, urban sociology, economics, and cultural studies (Zou 2012).

The early two articles "Xintiandi, One of the Mode of Urban Revitalisation" (cited 308 times) written by Xiaowei Luo (2001), and Tianwei Mo and Di Lu's (2000) article "Regeneration of Urban Form of Shanghai Lilong — Conservative Development of Xintiandi" (cited 80 times) were among the most cited ones.[127] From the perspective of urban heritage conservation, Mo and Lu (2000) described Xintiandi a "conservative development" when writing the paper during Xintiandi's transforming construction, and highly praised it as a new urban regeneration model, a reversal of the simple but mainstream urban development in the late 20th century. It was Shui On Group's business acumen that allowed them to explore an alternative way to achieve economic benefits. However, in scholarship, the rising heritage-related terms and justifications, such as "conservation" or "a redevelopment based on conservation in an urban environment scale" have thus been integrated into the discussion of Xintiandi (Mo and Lu 2000, 40). Coincidently, in 2001, Professor Luo addressed the conservation work conducted during the redevelopment in her article and expressed the three-legged relationship between conservation, renovation, and development. Luo particularly affirmed the conservation of urban and architectural styles and features of the historical *shikumen lilong* housing. She also analysed the plot paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks in Xintiandi by using Kevin Lynch's concept of the image of the city to further endorse the urban rationality of the "achievement" of this project in terms of human and cultural characteristics (Luo 2001, 24). She concluded by asking "Can the conservation of only one layer of the architectural façades in Xintiandi Square be equally counted as conservation of historic buildings?" Subsequently, this question has been repeatedly debated and discussed before and after the redevelopment of Xintiandi till today. By taking the echoing relationship between the revitalised urban imagery and the vibrant scenes of life in the 1920s into consideration, Professor Luo Xiaowei imparted a positive answer to her question and the approach applied to the Xintiandi project.

127 According to the custom of addressing people's names in Chinese — the surname comes before the first name — names of the three authors are Luo Xiaowei, Mo Tianwei, and Lu Di, respectively. In this section, I particularly apply the English custom to write down their names to demonstrate their roles as the authors of the two journal papers.

The three authors' voices could be more easily heard and opinions could be accepted for their credibility and recognition for the aura of their specialist background and social status. They are professors and researchers at Tongji University, which holds a high social reputation in Shanghai in the subject of architectural history and town planning. They also practically participated in the transformation of historical buildings in the Xintiandi project. Such recognition shares the same set of logic as that the national authorities acknowledged Liang Sicheng and his colleagues' contributions in the 1930s. These two largely cited papers, together with Professor Luo's (2002) book entitled *Shanghai Xintiandi: A study of the architectural history, human history and development mode of old district transformation*, have, in a sense, set the fundamental tone for the commentary on the subsequent similar redevelopment of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai, within the scope of areas rich in historical and cultural features.

The discussion about heritage conservation refers to various terms or phrases. Among them, "retaining buildings (*baoliu jianzhu*)" used by Mo and Lu (2000, 40) and "conservation of features (*fengmao baohu*)" used by Luo (2001, 24) and their lexical derivations were repeatedly used in many papers to describe strategies and approaches of intervention in the transformation of historic buildings and urban landscapes. This research analyses different scholars' use of heritage-related terms and vocabularies and categorising them according to the different conservation scales. It further finds that there are some customary-paired combinations of the heritage and conservation-related terms. The terms distinguish each other from architectural to urban scales, and from physical to spiritual dimensions.

For example, within the scale of architectural conservation, many scholars successively used the phrase "retaining (historic or old) buildings" in their publications, including Jiru Ye (2005), Baoxiang Yang (2005), Xin Li (2007), Le Chen (2008), Ping Yao and Ye Zhao (2009), Xuebin Liang (2009), Zhu Xiao and Jianfeng Miao (2016), and Yi Wang (2019). Furthermore, some others further classified and defined the subject of the retained architecture on the basis of this existing term. Authors including Yao and Zhao (2009) and Wang (2019), as well as Hao Li (2003), Jing Huang (2007), and Nan Zhang and Le Han (2015) argued what has been retained in the Xintiandi redevelopment was the "exterior appearance (*waiguan*)" of architecture. Apart from such classification, another group of authors, including Yang (2005), Zhang and Han (2015), as well as Guozhao Lv (2007), Hongxing Pei and Chenglin Yang (2011), and Hui Long (2018) considered that only the original "materials (*cailiao*)", such as bricks and tiles, were retained. Staying within an architectural scale for discussion, stakeholders' intervention was also defined as "maintaining the original features (*baochi yuanmao*)" (Li 2003, 20), "conserving the original objects and features (*baohu yuanwu yuanmao*)" (Xie and Lin, 29), or

"conservation of old buildings (*lao jianzhu baohu*)" (Long 2018, 41). Additionally, scholars Tao Jiang (2011) and, Dayou Gong and Lichao Sun (2014) embedded the architectural intervention of Xintiandi in the heritage discourse surrounding integrated conservation, and proposed the idea of "holistic conservation of (old) buildings".

Extending the focus to urban landscapes, on a larger scale, it notes that the phrase "conservation of features" appears frequently in the papers published around 2005 (Ye 2005; Peng 2005; Lv 2007). Subsequently, the heritage approach — adaptive reuse — included in the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China (ICOMOS China 2015), emerged in articles, referring to architectural renovation of historic buildings in Beili of Xintiandi (Li 2007; Gong and Sun 2014). In another numerously cited paper "Study on the Spatial Production of Urban Renewal in China: A Case of Shanghai Xintiandi Square" (cited 160 times), authors Jiang Wenjin et al. (2011) circumvented the issues related to architectural and urban conservation. Avoiding the tangle about the use of terms "retaining", "maintaining", or "preserving", Jiang et al. (2011) only employed the non-conservation-definitive term "urban renewal" to describe the Xintiandi redevelopment project.[128] Authors followed later published articles adopted the same logic in choosing terms and shaping their discourses (Tu 2011; Li, Wang and Cao 2015).

Another discussion dimension extends to intangible concerns. For example, Peng (2005) argued that the historic *shikumen* housing in Taipingqiao area embodies a full sense of vicissitudes and thickness of history. Many commented that architectural intervention contributed to the maintenance of the urban environment with historical richness, collective memory, and traces of times by altering the buildings into a cultural vehicle (Huang 2007; Pei and Yang 2011). Nonetheless, even if the content of these publications is logically self-consistent, they are still present in a subjective tone, naturally creating different voices in the scholarship. Yao and Zhao (2009) argued that commercial development erased the historical and cultural ambience attached to this area, in spite of "retaining buildings". Furthermore, as UNESCO adopted the new Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) in 2011, analysis related to assessing the historic environment and cityscape of Xintiandi has increased. Readers see the emphasis on Xintiandi's value in conserving the material forms and retaining the historical traces of Taipingqiao's urban landscape (Li 2013).

128 Jiang et al. translated the title of their paper as "Study on the Spatial Production of Urban Renewal in China: A Case of Shanghai Xintiandi Square". In this translation, the Chinese equivalent of "urban renewal" is "*gaizao*", which would be better translated as "transformation" according to the understanding of this thesis.

The ideas presented through the abovementioned articles have in a sense, been the dominating reviewing thoughts about Xintiandi, in the transformation of the specific historical Taipingqiao area. These ideas have influenced the formation and development of heritage discourses and Shanghai's heritage movement. In academia, scholars are used to the term "conservation" in the early 21st century. The tendency to place Xintiandi in a context related to the restoration and conservation of historical and cultural buildings has remained unchanged. The narrative that refers to the history and characteristics of historic *shikumen lilong* buildings often appeared in various academic papers to acknowledge the early professionals' efforts. By comparison, in English discourse, scholars' expression has been also shifting under the influence of intricate factors. There are challenges and critiques of the dominant discourse, yet there is a possibility for heritage discourse being homogenised as a result of the discursive hegemony. For example, González Martínez (2021, 1) agreed Qing Chang's (2017) idea and indicated that Xintiandi "embodies one of four major urban heritage conservation methods applied in the city". He pointed out the two big discourse holders, UNESCO and the World Bank, as the former criticised Xintiandi gentrification, while the latter praised the combination of conservations and entrepreneurialism. Indeed, the institutional favours and interests of these two bodies are their starting point for making completed different evaluations and judgements of heritage approaches. Scholars who are in the midst of the changeable discourse could be influenced, in his earlier publication, González Martíne (2019, 1) once posed that:

> "…used the traditional *lilong* housing typology not as an object of conservation but as a creative asset, both from the perspectives of 'historic re-creation' and 'abstract inheritance', contributing to the definition of Shanghai as a cosmopolitan global city."

In this respect, this thesis argues that in both the global and the Chinese context, heritage conservation is empirical. The theoretical explanations and justifications generated in every specific case entangled with each other and competed for being the most reasonable or authoritative. Therefore, in the modern heritage movement with booming and mixed vocabularies, although practitioners tried to emphasise the application of conservation in their projects, the subjective nature of terminology usage related to the numerous conservation principles has offered practitioners much room for manoeuvre and flexible interpretations, while being misleading.

Based on the above literature review, this thesis can raise many questions. For example, in terms of holistic conservation, it questions "whether the intervention of historic buildings at an architectural scale can be defined as an integrity heritage approach?" In addition, Xie (2004) claimed that conservation is a more dynamic

and open means to protect heritage. This thesis thus questions "Which term indeed refers to a more dynamic concept of approaches implemented in heritage practice to guide or restrain stakeholders' behaviour, conservation (*baohu*), retaining (*baoliu*), or preservation (*baocun*)?" Furthermore, it could ask "Do the peered terms in Chinese and English express the same dynamic nature in their respective contexts? How about in another language?" Synthetically, heritage discourse discussed in scholarship has its one-sidedness, as practices always occurred with uncertainty. Xintiandi which has had a sustained influence on urban development for over twenty years in Shanghai, is even more unique in its forward-looking and even futuristic attribute, requiring a real-time discourse analysis.

6.4 Urban transformation: from Taipingqiao to Xintiandi

The physical form of cultural heritage and relics is always the vehicle that contributes to sustaining social culture and history. In the Taipingqiao transformation, Shui On Group pointed to the American architect Benjamin Wood (from Wood + Zapata) and his Ben Wood studio (Shanghai) to decide the overall tone of the design, and hired Song Zhaoqing (宋照清) and his Nikken Sekkei (Singapore) team for ancillary work, and the Tongji Architectural Design for heritage conservation consultation. The design team defined Xintiandi redevelopment as an urban transformation that allows the past and the future to interweave in the present (Song 2001). However, according to the design, many historical features disappeared after the redevelopment. There are buildings with different functions and in different forms after transformation. Discussion about its relevance to heritage conservation requires a holistic consideration. From the lens of transformation orientations, the study subjects include the national CRPU under the management of the Cultural Relics Protection System, the commercial plaza for shopping and entertainment, and the *Wulixiang* Museum (also named as Open House Museum) which displays the historical look and lifestyle of *shikumen lilong* housing in the 1910s of Shanghai.[129]

129 "*Wulixiang*" is a typical Shanghai dialect word for the meaning "home".

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6.4.1 Physical changes

Physical changes include artificial intervention from multiple dimensions, from urban texture to architectural styles and features, and from exterior to interior. Before the urban revitalisation of the Taipingqiao area, plots 109 and 112 (Xintiandi Plaza) occupied a land area of fewer than 2 hectares, with 15 neighbourhoods and 30,000 square metres of old housing. Residences of plots 109 and 112 present distinct Sino-foreign architectural features. Buildings in this area were constructed with red and grey ganged brick walls, and decorated with curved pediments with apparently exotic attributes (Figure 6.9). The urban pattern was organised with typical hierarchically interconnected alleyways, paved with grey ground bricks.



FIG. 6.9 Different curved stone or cement plastering pediments on architectural facades of buildings in Xintiandi after transformation. Source: author, 2021.

6.4.1.1 Architectural features

Transformation of the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC was the first to start. The transformation can be recognised as one phase among its successive and long-term conservation practices for maintaining its architectural features as one of the most important national CRPUs. In the 1990s, the presented conditions of the Site were the results of a major restoration carried out in 1958. The heritage

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approach taken by Shui On Group was to consolidate the result of previous heritage conservation and set the stage for ongoing conservation measures. In history, after the conservation and repair work in 1958 and its designation in 1961, the Site was officially renamed as the well-known "Memorial Hall of the Site of the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China" in 1968, being open to the public.[130] In the 1950s, in order to reveal its revolutionary significance the most, professional practitioners consulted the involved delegates and indigenous residents related to the First National Congress of the CPC in 1921. The experts restored the authentic exterior colours, ornamental patterns and materials of facades, and interior furnishings and layout arrangements based on memories of witnesses in 1921. They thus also removed many architectural additions that were constructed between 1921 and 1958, to eliminate components with no revolutionary significance (Figure 6.10).[131]



FIG. 6.10 [Left] The site of the first national congress of the Chinese Communist Party after the first simple repair in 1952. [Right] The site after restoration and conservation to its 1921 appearance in 1958. According to memories of Li Shucheng's wife Xue Wenshu (薛文淑), and Dong Biwu, delegate to the First Congress, the façade along Xingye Road and decorations of the four shikumen pediments were restored to the original looks. Source: Centre for the Protection of Historic Buildings in Shanghai, available at https://www.sohu.com/a/474942957_260616, accessed on 10 August 2021.

130 The Site was named as "Preparatory Office of Shanghai Revolutionary History Memorial Hall" (上海革命历史纪念馆筹备处) before 1968 in the PRC period.

131 According to the content of the conservation principle Article 27, "later additions with no significance should be removed" issued by ICOMOS China (2015, 85) and approved by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, the after-congress changes with no relation to the Site's revolutionary value and added by the following residents, should be removed during restoration.

This museum-like memorial spot is in line with the national goal to propagate Chinese revolutionary achievements and patriotism through the protection of historical sites. Xintiandi project thus harvested government endorsement and emerged with the nationalism-oriented heritage approach to conserve the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC.

The local government and the developer both recognised the core significance of the Site to the overall economic-cultural value of the Xintiandi revitalisation project. Therefore, in 1998, before the ground-breaking construction of the whole district, the new extension to the west of the Site started and was completed in May 1999. The additional architecture was built with a similar exterior of *shikumen* residence style to that of the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC. According to the then-existing restored furniture and soft furnishings, a new exhibition was arranged for educating the public. To an extent, the 1998 construction related to cultural heritage was beyond the content of conservation measures but also an architectural extension. In particular, resulting Chinese figuration tradition to make a "grand" and "magnificent" expression of architecture, the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC has been always presenting the public with a fresh and splendid architectural appearance (Figure 6.11). Nevertheless, from the perspective of a holistic redevelopment, refurbishment of Xintiandi in terms of architectural extension contributed to adding one buffer zone to connect the old and new and reducing the visual impact of the emerging commercial environment, strengthening to maintain the Site in its entirety.



FIG. 6.11 Architectural façade of the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC, presented in an entirely new condition. Source: author, 2019.

In 2021, the government set a conservation principle to "not change the original state of the cultural heritage", restoring the building to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Communist Party of China. Through investigating a more informative and accurate history of the Site, professionals examined and analysed the original technical skills and raw architectural materials, and attempted to conserve the façades, roofs, doors, windows, and floors to their original state as far as possible. The 1998 interventional refurbishment through the creation of the buffer zone has bridged the achievement of the 1958 restoration and the further 2021 conservation measures. The Site and its surrounding urban environment with a historical atmosphere have been maintained in a promising condition as a national cultural heritage (Figure 6.12).

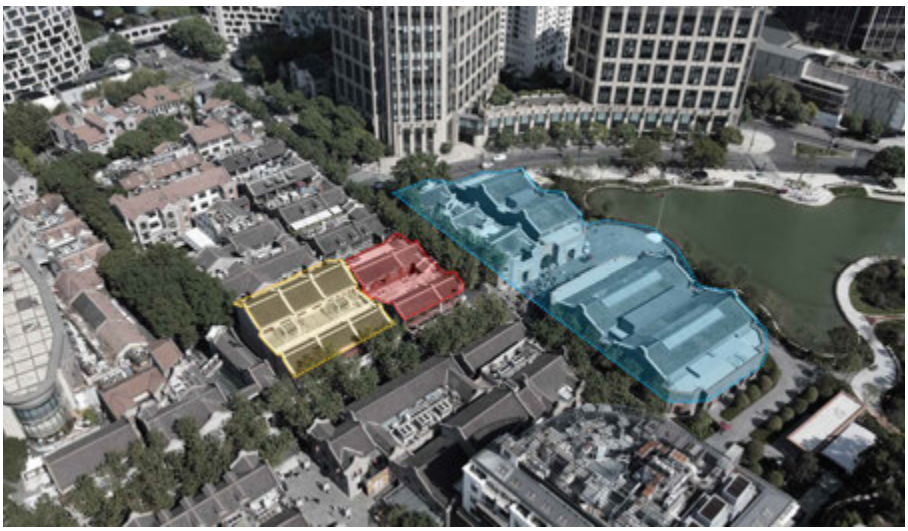


FIG. 6.12 After the restoration and conservation of the original Site (red) in 2021, the west hall expanded in 1999 (yellow) turned to be the souvenir shop. The government simultaneously built the new Memorial Hall of the Site of the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China (blue) to the east of the original one in 2021. Source: author, 2021.

In contrast, in addition to the Site, most other *shikumen* buildings were facing a general problem with dilapidated architectural conditions in the 1990s. The deteriorated living environment of the historical buildings has provided Shui On Group with justification for the design strategy of mass redevelopment and reconstruction. Considering the commercial (re)development of the Xintiandi Plaza, both domestic and foreign scholars have gradually avoided using terms to describe it as a conservation project in the midst of increasingly intense criticism. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that many appropriate conservation measures took place during the process of Xintiandi's architectural transformation. For adaptive reuse, the

existing *lilong* housing exceeded the capacity for carrying out a variety of modern functions and required paving for heavy equipment. In this respect, to retain partial historic building structure, exterior and materials for rebuilding with high similarity to the original styles and features (Figure 6.13–6.16), the experts from the team of consultants directed the implementation of conservation measures during the urban revitalisation.



FIG. 6.13 Conserved gate plank and changed new hardware door connecting shaft. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.14 Conserved pediment of the gate frame with obvious patina. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.15 Conserved gate frame made of original architectural materials. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.16 Conserved external brick walls with original architectural materials. Source: author, 2021.

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Shui On Group hired researchers from Tongji University in the second half of 2000 to survey the architectural and cultural history of the site under transformation, as a reference for design. Although this move was much later than the ground-breaking time of the whole project, it positively recognised the importance to have experts' surveys and appraisals. In addition, considering the vulnerable loose foundations, cracked walls, decaying floors, and fragile structure of the old buildings, many approaches and measures needed to be tested first for practical feasibility. Thus, designers, practitioners, and constructors created a sample house in the old Yongqingfang (永庆坊) and made repeated experimentation with different techniques to find the most suitable heritage approach for historical architecture (Figure 6.17). This step was much in line with Liang Sicheng's principle that requires "every step needs to be pre-tested and pre-inspect". In the process of building transformation, in order to increase the solidity and stability of external walls, the construction engineers used a special anti-corrosion and moisture-proofing agent in the brick joints to further strengthen the walls from the inside. The old roof tiles were also injected with the damp-proofing solution before being placed on top of two layers of waterproof insulating materials. Furthermore, replacing the incapable upper and lower sewerage systems and inserting new sanitary facilities in those historical buildings were also considered appropriate heritage approaches, improving the adaptation of the old buildings to contemporary life.

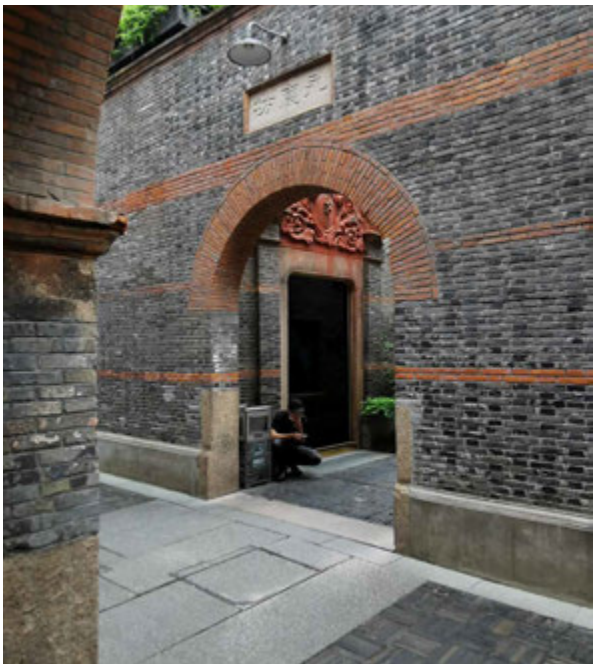


FIG. 6.17 The entrance arch for Yongqingfang lilong neighbourhood. Source: author, 2021.

Two other sites, *Wulixiang* Museum and Xintiandi One are often neglected in a holistic environment. From the perspective of architectural conservation, the creation of the museum and Xintiandi One which serves as a private mansion of Luo Kangrui (**罗康瑞**, also known as Vincent Lo) are also the results of careful conservation and restoration (Figure 6.18). For example, the museum aims to demonstrate the scenes of life in the early *shikumen lilong* neighbourhoods, through the display of old-time artefacts. From the outside, the transformation construction preserved the unique gate frame (*shiku*) for the entrance, the outwards extended balcony, as well as grey-brick walls and red-brick breastsummers and architraves built in a certain order. The timber-framed windows of the three-sided enclosure on the façade of the second layer are also visible from the Xingye Road (Figure 6.19). The conservation techniques used in the conservation of historic buildings of the Xintiandi Plaza project are also applied in the creation of the *Wulixiang* Museum. Inside the building, the museum was organised for one household for display, including a sitting room (Figure 6.20), a study room (Figure 6.21), an elderly people's room, a kitchen on the ground floor, one *tingzijian* on the 1.5 floor, and a master bedroom, a daughter's bedroom, and younger son's bedroom on the second floor.[132] From the arrangement of the display of furniture to the location of the different functional rooms, the elements inside and exterior aim to reclaim the life of an affluent family in the 1920s (Figure 6.22). Apart from the strong echo of the past, considering the practical use as a museum and the needs of modern life, the museum is also equipped with spotlights, glass shields, surveillance cameras, and firefighting apparatus. It is worth noting that the courtyard, usually the first space that users need to encounter after stepping through the front gate, is covered with a glass roof to create a sheltered space for the ticket office, but it runs counter to the spatial significance of the entry courtyard (Figure 6.23).

132 In Chinese naming convention, the ground floor in the English context is the first floor in Chinese, and correspondingly, the first floor in English is actually the second floor as the Chinese say.



FIG. 6.18 Façade apperarnce of Luo Kangrui's Xintiandi One. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.19 The front façade elements of the Open House Museum to present scenes from the life in shikumen wulixiang. From the balcony (left) and the gate frame (right), the features of the historical shikumen housing can be perceived by visitors. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.20 The setting room on the ground floor of a typical shikumen housing, connecting outside and other functional rooms for life and living. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.21 The study room on the right side of the housing on the ground floor. Source: author, 2021.

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FIG. 6.22 Display of furniture and furnishings that showcase the details of life. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.23 The entrance courtyard and the added glass top cover. Source: author, 2021.

6.4.1.2 Urban landscapes

Comparatively, even though this thesis expresses a positive tone to evaluate the multiple conservation measures of the transformation of each architectural site in plots 109 and 112, it sees little connection between the Xintiandi project and heritage conservation at an urban scale. The entire redevelopment rarely respects the urban fabric in a spatial dimension and the history in a temporal dimension. With the subsequent ground-breaking of plots 108 and 113, which were also part of the Xintiandi project, and the rise of rapid urban development in its surroundings, the association between Xintiandi, cultural heritage, and *lilong* neighbourhoods

has become increasingly weakened. In the 1997 design, although designers and the client needed to make a master design to meet the conservation planning, historical buildings within the "building control zone" do not make up a significant proportion of the overall redevelopment. In addition, from the perspective of urban development, functionality, and commercial interests, how to embed vitality into the old "shells" to meet the contemporary needs, was the stakeholders' key concern. In the master design, stakeholders decided to retain some *shikumen* architecture in the north and to build new buildings in the south according to the conservation plan. The two sites thus become Beili and Nanli today on each side of the Xingye Road, linked through a main pedestrian street (Figure 6.24).



FIG. 6.24 A distant view from south to north of the major connecting pedestrian (left), and a close view under the pedestrian in Beili (right). Source: author, 2021.

To compare the urban textures of the old and the new, some obvious differences can be distinguished. The spacious main pedestrian pavement and rhythmic plaza landscape nodes were designed for the modernity of Xintiandi, in line with mainstream contemporary urban design concepts, particularly those in the US conveyed by its leading designer Benjamin Wood. The emergence of Xintiandi has continued and even enhanced the global promotion of the *haipai* ethos that embraces different cultures imported from abroad. However, from the perspective of urban heritage conservation, the material carriers, hierarchically structured alleyways and housing within each *lilong* community that have shaped and sustained the unique *haipai* culture of Shanghai have disappeared (Figure 6.25). At the very beginning of the Xintiandi redevelopment, scholars argued that urban culture could be preserved only by conserving a certain area of the historical environment rather than a single building in the project (Mo and Lu 2000). However, stakeholders agreed on a complete yankeefied design experience, to replace the previous spatial layout and texture with heterogeneous characteristics (Figure 6.26).

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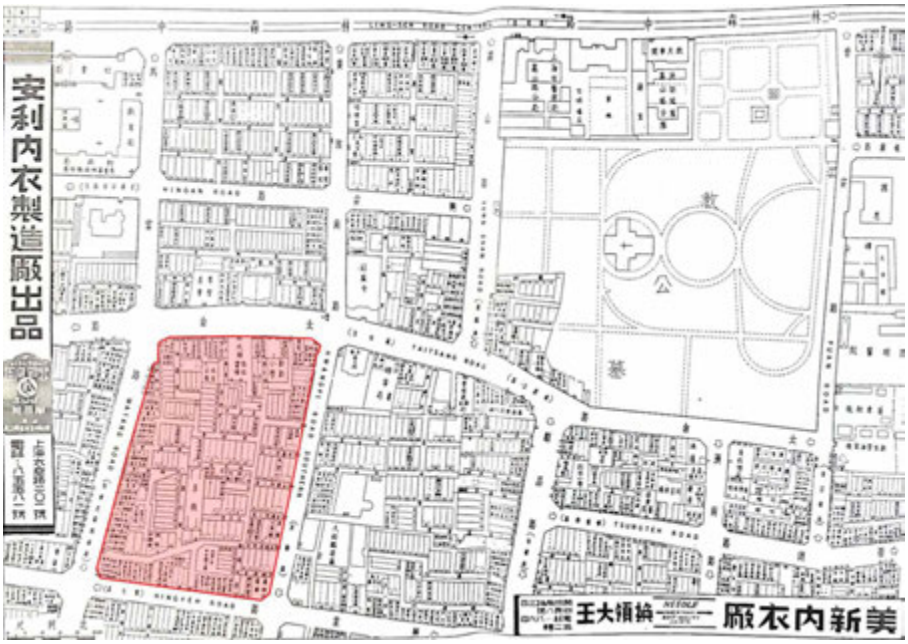


FIG. 6.25 The old urban texture of the historical Taipingqiao area (with Beili marked with red) in the 1940s. Many lilong communities that were organised with orderly road networks and a high density were transformed in the redevelopment. Source: Cheng and Wu 2016.



FIG. 6.26 Changed architectural and urban scale for commercial purpose in the Xintiandi Plaza area by investing international brand Lululemon. Source: author, 2021.

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In the name of conservation, stakeholders have sought to reconnect the historical sites of the previous foreign settlement with the then popular and worldwide influential foreign culture and mainstream aesthetics in urban construction.

Up to today, there are a certain number of historical *lilong* neighbourhoods around Xintiandi. The two divergent urban landscapes have dramatically drawn apart and increasingly appeared to be at odds with each other (Figure 6.27). Xintiandi, which was redeveloped and planned by proposing the idea to conserve historical urban features and excellent buildings in the 1990s, failed to deliver on its promises to a certain extent, for being not capable of integrating its neighbours for a sustainable future rich in history and culture. When Shui On started the Xintiandi project, both regulations and principles for the conservation of heritage sites in China were inadequate. Xintiandi was timed to coincide with the refinement of the cultural heritage protection system. In this awkward period, many practical problems were present, including the official approval process of urban (re)development, the order of conservation measures, and engineering monitoring from the perspective of heritage conservation.



FIG. 6.27 The historic lilong neighbourhoods Xichengli (西成里), South Puqingli (普庆里) and more to the southwest side of Xintiandi, across Madang Road and, surrounded by high-rises and other contemporary architecture for commercial interests. Source: author 2021.

6.4.2 Intangible changes of the historical Taipingqiao area

The historic area with the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC as its core is rich in an interweaving of different cultural spirits. The revolutionary culture, the *haipai* culture, the local residents' life imprints, and the shared memories have constituted the immaterial values of the area. The tripod situation of the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC, the *Wulixiang* Museum, and the commercial plaza for retail, catering, and other service industries, has been underutilised for public advocacy. The two museums were adapted for tourism purposes, while the creation of the Xintiandi Plaza has served the public. In a sense, the expression of the plaza is more influential in the public perception of what heritage conservation is. The making of a place is a time-consuming process. The changed urban texture has directly driven the disappearance of the habitual lifestyle of Shanghainese and community intimacy in the historical Taipingqiao area. Once the characteristic of mass living was excluded in the temporality of a dynamic development course, the possibility to re-emphasise other features became increasingly difficult. A widely known publicity campaign boasted that the middle-aged and elderly could find Xintiandi nostalgic, the young could see it fashionable, and the foreigners could meet the "old Shanghai" and *shikumen*, and the Chinese could encounter exotic charm. In academia, scholars use the wording "cultural innovation" to justify the vanishing communities and dismantling of urban fabric in urban redevelopment (Huang 2007; Xu and Chen 2011; Pei and Yang 2011; Gong and Sun 2014). Apparently, the ambitious commitment of the stakeholders aimed at promoting the iconography of Xintiandi. This thesis suggests that the stakeholders have unconsciously or consciously evaluated and seen the project from an elitist stance for economic benefits.

6.4.2.1 Adaptive improvement or elitist-oriented gentrification

In the planned "building control zones", the developer adopted the approach to adaptively reuse the historical *shikumen lilong* buildings, by altering them into a revolutionary museum, a folk museum, luxury stores, boutiques, and fine dining restaurants or salons. In the transitional period of establishing a local protection mechanism of urban legacies in Shanghai, both the Luwan District Government and the municipal government of Shanghai were the most active collaborators of Shui On in driving the project to fruition (He and Wu 2005). Thus, in the redevelopment process, regardless of the conservation planning, for the loose restriction of heritage-related regulations, guidelines, orders and recommendations from local

authorities, seizing maximum interests became the major subject throughout this specific "conservative development" project.[133]

Functional changes of the previous *lilong* residences are the most prominent heritage practice. The Xintiandi redevelopment and urban transformation is a gentrifying process of an old residential district. Furthermore, the integrated urban commercial upgrading has created an irreversible urban landscape and regional functional positioning. To establish a high-end commercial environment in this historical area, brands outside mainland China have become prime targets for Shui On Group to introduce. For example, till 2005, 85% of the merchants and brands are from countries and regions outside the mainland (Yang and Chen 2005). Starbucks, being a coffee chain merchant of international renown and symbolic meaning, landed in Xintiandi in 2001. It has occupied a promising location at the intersection of Xingye Road and Madang Road, the far north-west corner of Beili over twenty years.[134] Xintiandi, therefore, has become the very first urban place of assemblage, contenting with the symbolic bourgeois consumption in Shanghai.

In the Xintiandi commercial redevelopment, exclusion in the area included two steps: elimination of old living space, and the constant addition of optimised brands. This strategy aimed to make the Xintiandi with more fashionable and trendy characters, and international visibility. For example, in the last 20 years, even the landmark Starbucks was renovated four times to solidify its position in Xintiandi. The new Starbucks Reserve (with BAR MIXATO inside), a performance store for customer experience, just reopened in 2021 after an upgraded market positioning (Figure 6.28). In the asset directly opposite the east side of Starbucks, various brands have come and gone over the past 20 years, and I have noticed the different businesses on each visit from earlier times before this research. This constant eradication and reinvention of material and spiritual elements for the sake of "cultural innovation" and "fashion" is certainly not something that can be simply achieved through a two-year urban redevelopment. The relocation of residents, the gradual completed public amenities, the maturing commercial atmosphere, and media-led mass consumption are becoming a driving force to dissipate community cohesion and urban "nostalgia" while protecting a certain interest-related historical content.

133 In their paper, Mo and Lu (2000) use the term "conservative development" to describe the Xintiandi project, this thesis quotes this highly cited definition.

134 In 1999, Starbucks opened its first shop in mainland China at the China World Trade Centre in Beijing.



FIG. 6.28 The symbolic Starbucks since the completion of Xintiandi, and has been a prominent landmark in this district. Source: author, 2021.

For a long period, economic activities have largely been the reason that makes Xintiandi famous. Depending on national and regional development strategies at different times, the commercial content has overwhelmed the revolutionary heritage in external propaganda of Xintiandi. For the public, Xintiandi is equated with a commercial symbol, a pure shopping centre. It was not until June of 2021, just before the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC, that the name of an adjacent metro station was changed from "Xintiandi" to "Site of the First CPC National Congress". With the major restoration of this listed national CRPU and the completion of the newly built memorial hall nearby, the revolutionary significance has been re-emphasised in the 21st century. By comparison, the *Wulixiang* Museum, being one of the three pillars, combines both modern and historical features of the urban vernacular building. However, it was rarely recognised by stakeholders and visitors, although the museum contributed to the increase of passenger flow in the early years after the completion of the redevelopment, and positively affected the commercial circulation of Xintiandi (Li 2003). Undeniably, there is no absolute balance between the revolutionary, cultural, and economic significance of the

district. From the perspective of the historic urban landscape, this thesis suggests that Shui On Group, although it is not the only decision maker and responsible party, has gradually forgotten its ambition and foresight to preserve the historic *shikumen lilong* housing and perpetuate the culture of Shanghai alleyways in an increasingly aggressive expansion of its commercial footprint.

6.4.2.2 Changing daily users and urban environment

With the infiltration of capitalism, elitism, and consumerism, artificial intervention is certainly not limited to the investment attraction of boutique luxury shops and the creation of a commercial atmosphere. Some scholars consider that the urban revitalisation of Xintiandi is a way to protect life in the present and future, and suggest that the urban redevelopment and regeneration of living forms is a historical necessity (Mo and Lu 2000; Mo and Cen 2001; Zhu 2006). In response to the arguments of elitism, this thesis thus raises the questions "for which stakeholders conserve historic neighbourhoods?" and "who lives in the present and future of the transformed historic buildings and urban spaces?"

The developer and the government attempted to promote and portray Shanghai as an international metropolis through urban redevelopment. The local government showed great efficiency in arranging local residents' evacuation and relocation. Before Xintiandi, in the whole Taipingqiao area, there were 23 old districts and 193 *lilong* neighbourhoods, containing approximate seventy thousand people. Xintiandi project occupied about 3 hectares, with more than two thousand residents. With the collaborative efforts contributed by the Luwan district, the district-affiliated company took full responsibility for the demolition and relocation process. For example, in the adjacent Taipingqiao Park area (plot 111, and part of plots 110 and 127), stakeholders relocated 1950 households in less than six months; moreover, they furthermore took 43 days to relocate about 3,800 households and 156 working units, making room for a rapid construction (He and Wu 2005). Throughout the redeveloping process, local residents, the largest group involved, could not, or even did not, have the will to speak for themselves or express their demands, rights, and interests. They could not bargain in a capital-led and government-endorsed project.

The relocation strategy was welcomed by a significant proportion of residents, although such an approach has subsequently received criticism from multiple sides. Those evacuated inhabitants got advantageous compensation from the project. The relocated local residents gained ownership rights of new properties instead of having

living rights only.[135] They also got larger living areas and a healthier environment in their new residences. Multiple stakeholders, including the city and district governments, the developer, the relocation company and the residents themselves, were all accountable for the exclusion of local residents, a broadly mixed rather than elitist inhabitant group. Xintiandi relocation, being a precedent that justified residents' inaction, has consequently brought failure in mutual trust between the project managing group and local residents in the subsequent urban transformation projects of Shanghai. On the one hand, the government sees that residents in *lilong* communities who used to experience the traditional way of life no longer regarded *lilong* housing as a homeland but as a bargaining chip. On the other hand, dominant stakeholders, such as the district government and developers, have become less likely to listen to and discuss the aspirations of local residents, and simply assume that residents will align themselves with "money". In the process, stakeholders have gradually neglected that local residents are also indispensable involvers in improving internal conditions and external urban landscapes of historical areas for a sustainable environment.

With the relocation of local residents, the involvement of new "settlers" has further reshaped the spatial and social structure in Xintiandi. The historical Taipingqiao has become a stage-set style venue since the completion of Xintiandi in 2001 (Peng 2005; Li 2013; Xiao and Miao 2016). Luo Kangrui and his Shui On Group were dedicated to promoting and presenting to the world a so-called "old Shanghai" style that is often associated with the bustling cosmopolitan scene of Shanghai in the period between the 1910s and early 1930s.[136] However, things have gone contrary to the grandiose wishes. This thesis suggests that Xintiandi, being a fusion of Chinese and exotic, and old and new, can hardly be categorised by any group or cultural identity. Its plausible and visional historical image could hardly express any cultural or historical significance to the public, but provide a Disney-like scene for the illusory nostalgia that fulfils the fantasy of the elites.

According to the expanded conservation principles issued by China ICOMOS (2015), adaptive reuse of historic sites need to meet the requirements of appropriate use. Adopted heritage approaches in practice "must take into consideration its values,

135 Most *lilong* buildings are government-owned public properties, and this situation is already explained in Chapter 5.

136 The "old Shanghai" style has always been a popular cultural symbol in Hong Kong (Xiao and Miao 2016). The prestigious film and television productions, such as The Bund (上海滩), Eighteen Springs (半生缘), Love in a Fallen City (倾城之恋), Flowers of Shanghai (海上花), and In the Mood for Love (花样年华), are all stories related to the image of Shanghai.

attributes, state of conservation, and setting, as well as research and presentation, with emphasis on public benefits and sustainability" (China ICOMOS 2015, 57). Thereby, heritage approaches applied to historic buildings and sites need to benefit the public by sustaining the civilisation shaped in history. In the redevelopment, whether it was the restoration of the Site for the First National Congress of the CPC, or the redevelopment of the *Wulixiang* Museum and the commercial plaza, stakeholders agreed to ideally conserve every single building of the historical *lilong* neighbourhoods in the "building control zone" to their "origins". They attempted to regain a similar crowd which dominated social activities in the 1910s and the 1920s with wealth and social status. Foreign settlers, being tourists or consumers nowadays and the dominating residents in the previous French Concession, are also what stakeholders attempted to attract, for building the prestige of Xintiandi and expanding the global influence of Shanghai. When setting the target group as those with higher expenditure power and international character rather than numerous indecent or impecunious inhabitants that are relocated, the goal to serve "public benefits" through cultural heritage addressed in conservation principles is overlooked.

In addition, the ideal proposal to conserve the "original" features of each building is irreproachable, but practitioners need to be ever vigilant about the results. Stakeholders applied conservation techniques in protecting every single historic building but demolished and reconstructed a large proportion of the historic alleyways, disrupting the old spatial organisation and relationships. The most immediate and obvious problem caused by Xintiandi is the removal of imprints shaped between the 1930s and the 1990s under the guise of "heritage conservation". Although "reconstruction" and "a destroyed historic building" is also interpreted as adaptive means to present the significance of cultural heritage, the approach to destroying a historic urban landscape is not in line with the appropriate use of historic buildings and sites approved by ICOMOS China and the Administration of Cultural Heritage (2015, 101). Multiple factors mentioned above explain why Xintiandi could not be simply defined as a conservation project or not. To be precise, Xintiandi is a redevelopment project which includes both rigorous conservation measures to restore and renovate a group of historic *shikumen* housing in the "building control zones" and inappropriate heritage approaches in a commercially oriented redevelopment. This thesis argues that Shui On Group and the conservation consultant team have prudently adopted conservation measures in practices throughout the redevelopment, protecting a considerable proportion of physical features. Nevertheless, the great economic success of Xintiandi has caused various economy-led transformation projects of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods in the name of conservation.

Gentrification in Xintiandi is irreversible, accelerating the transition of the surrounding areas. Urban transformation in the name of conservation has produced continuous spatial segregation effects in an ever-expanding range. Social elites, bourgeoisie consumers, trendsetters of fashion, and tourists have become the daily users of Xintiandi as envisaged by Shui On Group. The successful gentrification of Xintiandi and exclusion of historical lifestyle has thus become an opportunity, a means to facilitate further capital encroachment. Apart from Beili and Nanli, Shui On Group also invested heavily in the Taipingqiao Park project. In return for the developer's contribution to restoring the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC, celebrating the 80th anniversary of the foundation of the CPC, the municipal government of Shanghai and Luwan District government offered Shui On priority for construction and policy-friendly conditions. Under such circumstances, Shui On has achieved a significant return on investment through access to the development of the upscale-commercial-district Lake Villa, Xintiandi Langham Hotels and others. Land and property prices have persistently and remarkably increased since the 21st century, allowing Shui On to draw huge dividends. Meanwhile, the district government of Luwan has approved more urban redevelopment to facilitate municipal construction by harnessing the success and convenience of Xintiandi. Xintiandi has subsequently become a catalyst for stimulating regional consumption and contributed to the rise of the luxury shopping mall K11, the flourishing Middle Huaihai Road, and the up-scaled listed CRPU *lilong* neighbourhood Shangxianfang (Figure 6.29–6.30). The glamorously redeveloped urban blocks and the declining old *lilong* neighbourhoods separated by Madang Road, with only a short distance apart, clash not only in materials but also in overall imagery and environment (Figure 6.31). The symbiosis of old and new has created an urban collage with dramatically polarised characteristics.



FIG. 6.29 Urban texture of the historical Taipingqiao area has been extremely changed in the last 20 years, by comparing it with the integrated urban texture of the adjoining areas built with lilong neighbourhoods. Nonetheless, the influence of Xintiandi has continued to grow. The tacit approval of the demolition of the listed CRPU Shangxianfang invariably increases the operability of the implementation of approaches in urban regeneration that run counter to the conservation of historic lilong neighbourhoods. Informed by the Shanghai Municipal Housing and Urban-Rural Construction Management Committee (**上海市住房和城乡建设管理委员会**) on 7 December 2021, local residents of plots 40, 67, and 68 will be relocated, and the three blocks are facing similar transformation to plots of the Xintiandi project. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.30 Shangxianfang, one of the first listed Cultural Relic Protection Units (CRPU) for being a post-treaty residential neighbourhood, is under construction and transformation to become a luxury hotel. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 6.31 An aerial view (left) and a scene from the inner alleyway (right) of a historic lilong neighbourhood on the opposite side of Xintiandi, across Madang Road. Source: author, 2021.

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6.5 Discourse analysis: perspectives of stakeholders

Voices of people are always different, presenting their own interests and standpoints. The Xintiandi redevelopment was labelled as a project aimed at protecting historical *shikumen lilong* housing in an early redeveloping phase. This labelling was an interpretation of heritage conservation in terms of commercial marketing and received different judgements and criticism, leading to constant debates for more than two decades. This thesis attempts to classify various participants' sayings into three discourse categories: (1) official and formal discourse included in laws, regulations, policy documents, and official publications, and (2) discourse of targeted groups, who experienced or participated in the transformation of the historical Taipingqiao area, and (3) popular and social discourse, appearing on digital and paper social media.

First, for the Shanghai and Luwan governments, the goal for regional development is naturally derived from different individual perspectives of the other non-governmental stakeholders. Before the implementation of the non-gratuitous land use right transferring policy in Shanghai, the city was one of the largest international cities in the Far East in the early 20th century (He and Wu 2005). Shanghai suffered extreme financial deficiency during and after the Cultural Revolution. Under such circumstances, many governmental measures and policies were issued for a better developing vision. The municipal authorities of Shanghai reformulated its urban development goals in the closing years of the 20th century, including obtaining sufficient financial support, accelerating the efficiency of urban renewal, renovating the old and run-down neighbourhoods, and redeveloping shacks and bungalows to facilitate upgrades of municipal construction. However, the financial investment for urban redevelopment and architectural renovation was largely beyond the government's capacity (Mo and Lu 2000; Zheng 2004). Making cultural heritage superior assets has become an effective path in governing urban land. Benefiting from the 1978 economic reform policy and the Cultural Relics Protection Law of the PRC (1982), the local government of Shanghai clearly revealed its objective to make various revolutionary relics as tourist attractions in a 1979 urban plan, stimulating tertiary sectors and regional tourism.[137] By designating eleven Protection Areas in

137 Office of Shanghai Chronicles. 2003. Historic and Cultural Features Protection Areas of City Centre. http://shtong.gov.cn/Newsite/node2/node2245/node64620/node64632/node64720/node64724/userobject1ai58541.html, accessed on 20 August 2021.

the 1984 urban planning strategy, Shanghai has attempted to consolidate cultural resources for economic development.

In this respect, the government has always held a positive heritage discourse when evaluating and inspecting Shui On's results in the historical Taipingqiao area. Beili and Nanli of Shanghai Xintiandi and the following Xintiandi Style, Xintiandi 88 (hotel development), or Lake Villa, brought about by Shui On are predictable real estate products that have received adequate recognition from the authorities. Until 2021, Shui On's projects in the Taipingqiao area have gained various honourable titles from different governmental agencies. Local authorities have acknowledged Shui On's contribution to spiritual civilisation, cultural industry, tourism and leisure entertainment, and city branding (Table 6.1). The multiple awarded aspects are not only in line with the city's developing goal in terms of economy and culture, but also consistent with the national economic reform policy after 1978. Xintiandi is one of the most successful real estate redevelopment projects in Shanghai, although criticism regarding its heritage approaches also exists. Accordingly, in the official discourse, authorities actively endorse the project. Stakeholders did conserve the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC, and furthermore, the unique *shikumen* architecture has become more recognisable by a wider public than other urban vernacular dwellings through their promotion. Even today, it is difficult for heritage-related professionals to simply equate measures of Xintiandi to "urban heritage conservation", the Xintiandi Beili and Nanli are still included in the spatial scope of the Heng-Fu (Hengshan Road and Fuxing Road) Protection Area. It apparently demonstrates a top-down affirmation of the integrated transformation of the first phase of redevelopment of Xintiandi.

TABLE 6.1 The awards of Xintiandi granted by the municipality of Shanghai. The information is available at https://www.shuionland.com/en-us/about/Awards, accessed September 10, 2021.

Year	Name of Award	Awarded Project	Sponsor
2016	Shanghai Famous Trademark	Shanghai Xintiandi	Shanghai Administration for Industry & Commerce
2008	Shanghai's Municipal Base of External Cultural Exchange (Shui On`s Translation)	Shanghai Xintiandi	Information Office of Shanghai Municipality
2008	Shanghai Brandname Area	Shanghai Xintiandi	City Brand Development Working Committee
2005	Shanghai's Best Leisure-Entertainment Area	Shanghai Xintiandi	Shanghai Municipal Tourism Administrative Commission
2005	A Model Enterprise of China's Cultural Industry	Shanghai Xintiandi	Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China
2005	A Model Area of Civilisation (Shui On`s Translation)	Shanghai Xintiandi	Spiritual Civilization Development Committee of Shanghai

Second, apart from governmental discourse, the developer Shui On, the urban and architectural designers, and many experts have also influenced to some extent the positioning and developing trajectory of the project. Among various stakeholders, the developer Shui On was undoubtedly the most vocal group with the right to decision-making in the development process. Luo Kangrui, chairman of the Hong Kong Shui On Group, expressed his idea to conserve the *shikumen lilong* housing which has embodied the *haipai* culture and lifestyle of Shanghai for being one of the most typical architectural typologies created in Shanghai's post-treaty era. However, in his further elaboration, the vision of Xintiandi was explicitly presented to create the most high-end and fashionable consumer destination, to build a variety of venues in the city centre and provide a gathering place for local and expatriate customers (quoted by Yang 2005, 33–34). This thesis argues that Luo fully understood the potential conflict of interests between heritage conservation and urban redevelopment. Luo's statement to emphasise the significance of historical buildings helped to increase competitiveness in the pursuit of investment and favourable conditions in the real estate market in mainland China. In particular, Shui On's positive stance to maintain and restore the "red" element in phase one of the Xintiandi project has gained leverage for more aggressive subsequent redevelopment. The emphasis attached to revolutionary monuments and sites in China's CRPS provides a promising highlight for narrating. In this respect, as Shui On protected the "red" Site, their strategic proposal to claim a "conservative development" could be more acceptable in the official examination and approval process. In the long term, the protection of "red" buildings and sites is consistent with China's national goal to enhance cultural advancement. The developer has discovered this trick and wrapped their redevelopment in the rhetoric of "conservation" with ease and aplomb.

In addition to developer Shui On Group and its chairman Luo Kangrui, the designer in chief, American architect Benjamin (Ben) Wood has also created his own heritage discourse. Through the Xintiandi project, Wood rapidly gained fame and reputation in China. His Shanghai studio has participated in various similar following projects, such as Wuhan Tiandi, Zhongshan Avenue, and Foshan Lingnan Tiandi. In the last two decades, Xintiandi won many awards in the design category (Table 6.2). Chronologically, in the field of heritage conservation, the Xintiandi project received its first design award — AIA (American Institute of Architects) Citation for "Heritage" in 2002 — acknowledging its contribution to the heritage design community as a commercial property-led project. Xintiandi won three awards in 2019 in terms of design and development in renovation and expansion, building refurbishment, and urban renewal respectively.

TABLE 6.2 The list of awards granted to Xintiandi, and the ones marked with blue colour are related to the urban design of its transformation. Source: Shui On Land, available at https://www.shuionland.com/zh-cn/about/Awards?year=, accessed on 10 September 2021

Year	Name of Award	Awarded Project	Sponsor
2021	Top 10 Classic Memory Awards for Urban Renewal in 2020	Shanghai Xintiandi	China Urban Regeneration Forum
2020	Top 10 New Landmarks in Shanghai	Shanghai Xintiandi	Architecture and Culture Society of China
2019	2019 Top 10 Green Projects—Green Transformation Projects (Renewal and Transformation Category)	Xintiandi PLAZA	The 21th China International Real Estate & Architectural Technology Fair
2019	WELL CERTIFIED™ SILVER	Xintiandi Community	International WELL Building Institute™ (IWBI™)
2019	Best Refurbished Building—Gold Award	Xintiandi PLAZA	2019 MIPIM Asia Awards
2019	the Design and Development in Renovation and Expansion Gold Award	Xintiandi PLAZA	ICSC China Shopping Mall and Retail Award
2006	China's Top 10 New Landmarks	Shanghai Xintiandi	Development and Environment Research Centre of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Global Landmark Association; Stadtkultur International ev.
2003	The ULI 2003 Award for Excellence	Shanghai Xintiandi (North Block)	Urban Land Institute
2002	The AIA Citation for "Heritage"	Shanghai Xintiandi	American Institute of Architects

The awards, being a product of a series of capital games and marketing, are not equal to the architect's contribution to a heritage design. Ben Wood has given various interviews to mainstream Chinese and foreign media since the completion of Xintiandi. By analysing his past discourse, this thesis finds it difficult to link the design spirit such as "respecting historic buildings" or "recognising the significance of old *shikumen* housing" to Ben Wood himself. From the perspective of heritage conservation, Wood has constantly emphasised his identity as an architect rather than a conservation designer. In the past interview, the sentence "I'm not a (historic) preservationist" frequently appeared in his opening remarks during interviews. This thesis argues that Ben Wood has gradually presented a decidedly more aggressive attitude and a tendency to disdain cultural heritage in the course of developing his discourse. For example, in 2007, interviewed by Bert de Muynck, his expression was published in the magazine *Commercial Real Estate in China* as:

"I'm not a preservationist, so it was easy for me to alter buildings…In the beginning, I also had to deceive the government, as they didn't want any new buildings. Like the Vidal Sassoon building, they never saw it on a drawing. They saw a different building. One day they asked, where did that one came from? I said I didn't know what happened, somebody must have switched the drawings (Bowens 2007, 35)."[138]

At the very beginning, it was Shui On Group and the Luwan government who first held the idea to protect *lilong* housing in the Taipingqiao area, and the 1996 "Shanghai Luwan District Taipingqiao Area Specific Plan" created by SOM adequately reflected this point. Ben Wood admitted the utilisation of a few tricks in order to conceal his most honest conception from the government in the project approval process. Wood was upfront about his position of not being willing to retain the old *lilong* residences. His "frankness" has made peers and administrative institutions recognise the urgency to improve the professional ethics of practitioners in China's heritage practice. However, considering stakeholders' worries about the negative influence brought by rising questions about his working ethic, similar narratives have never appeared again in Wood's following interviews. In the article published by MIT Technology Review, Catherine Caruso (2018) quotes Ben Wood's saying that:

"I'm not a historic preservationist, but I demonstrated to the rest of China that you could take some very ordinary buildings and through a very humane approach to architecture, you could create a cultural and entertainment destination."[139]

In 2016, Ben Wood presented the provocative exhibit "The City of Humans" at the "Trans-Design 2016 — Shanghai Art and Design" activity. The saying to justify his practices as a humane approach has been his self-promotion strategy (Flannery 2016).[140] Gradually, through the media outreach, the public has believed that it was Ben Wood's contribution that changed the market's attitude to old buildings in Shanghai's city centre. González Martínez (2019) indicates that it was

138 This passage is quoted by Guozhao Lv (2007) according to Bowens' publication. Lv, Guozhao, 2007. A Study on Taipingqiao Area and Xintiandi Based on Preservation Legislations. *Times + Architecture*, pp. 130–133

139 Catherine Caruso, Former fighter jet pilot is helping rethink Chinese cities, MIT Technology Review, December 19, 2018 Available at https://www.technologyreview.com/2018/12/19/138440/benjamin-wood-march-84, accessed on 10 September 2021.

140 Russell Flannery. 2016. Xintiandi Architect Ben Wood's Provocative Images of Future Cities. Forbes. Available at https://www.forbes.com/sites/russellflannery/2016/01/09/xintiandi-architect-ben-wood-unveils provocative-futuristic-urban-displays/?sh=385723705907, accessed on 10 September 2021.

Ben Wood who backed Shui On's resolution to conserve *lilong* housing, to gain the support from the local planning government. However, this thesis argues that there may be a cognitive error in the public's perception of the order of cause and effect in the Xintiandi project. Apparently, this result is attributed to the energetic marketing and media outreach, through which Ben Wood has been made into an American-heroic-like and mascot-style figure for Xintiandi and the cultural heritage of Shanghai. In addition, considering the segregation of people by Xintiandi mentioned above, this thesis rarely relates this project to what Ben Wood calls a "humane approach". A design that creates only decent or fascinating meeting places such as cafes and gourmet restaurants for elites and foreigners could not reflect a spirit of humanitarianism. By constantly promoting himself, in Wood's 2019 interview, the discourse realistically reflected his antipathy and disdain for historic buildings.

"I'm not a preservationist. I don't believe you should treat buildings like cadavers and embalm them so they never change … In Xintiandi, I used a free hand when it came to making bigger openings in the walls. I didn't change the central framework, because I thought that was the most important thing."[141]

When Ben Wood uses the term "cadavers" to describe historic buildings, it reveals that Wood has seen the old buildings as mere shells in his subconscious mind, ignoring their values of any attachment. This thesis thus argues that the protection of the history of Chinese civilian life in old *shikumen lilong* housing is contrary to what Ben Wood would like to quest and seize in China. His pursuit of creating a fashionable and promising commercial landmark is precisely the same as his seeking of fame and fortune. The distinctive personality feature is also reflected in his eagerness to be interviewed by influential social media for visibility, while consistently ignoring the most general public.[142] The meaning of "the central framework" in the context is unclear, but it would be meaningless to refer only to the physical shell of the historic buildings. Modern heritage discourse has evolved to the recognition of the intangible significance of legacies, Ben Wood's "cadaver" theory to describe cultural heritage is hardly valid. The iconic statement "I'm not a preservationist" is more like a self-justification for all his actions — for appropriate or inappropriate.

141 Hubbell, Diana. 2019. Meet the American architect changing China's cities. Property Guru Property Report Magazine. Available at https://www.asiapropertyawards.com/en/meet-the-american-architect-changing-chinas-cities, accessed 10 September 2021.

142 During this research, the author contacted both SOM and Ben Wood's studio in Shanghai for inquiring about their design related to the Xintiandi redevelopment. After the first contact in 2017, SOM immediately provided its 1996 Taipingqiao plan, while after the author's persistent contact over the past few years, Shanghai Architect Studio Ben Wood never gave any response.

In addition to Shui On and Ben Wood, another powerful group consists of experts and scholars with prestige. The above literature review in section 3 reveals that most Xintiandi-related papers focus on the analysis of city images and urban design which are fields of authors' expertise. Indeed, for the lack of a socio-cultural foundation, heritage conservation has not existed as an independent discipline for long. Even in the 21st century, few universities offer relevant courses. Furthermore, many heritage-related research institutes are managed by international organisations. Nevertheless, ideas included in several highly-cited academic articles have been the dominating reviewing thoughts about Xintiandi, influencing heritage discourse formation and movement in the 21st century. It largely and crucially influences the mainstream academic discourse, shaping stakeholders' basic judgements on and opinions of heritage approaches and conservation measures subliminally.

Among all the descriptions, the misuse of the term "*zheng jiu ru jiu*" (reintegrate the aged as the aged) is notable.[143] Many authors indicate that practitioners used the approach "*zheng jiu ru jiu*" and reintegrated the aged buildings as the aged in the Xintiandi project (Xie and Lin 2004; Yang and Cheng 2005; Li 2007; Chen 2008; Wang 2019). Indeed, the term "*zheng jiu ru jiu*" proposed by Liang Sicheng has been an eminently well-known concept and a favourite heritage approach to be mentioned in the Chinese context, from academia to the public. However, one of the most important criteria—retaining the "patina" of historical objects — is ignored in Xintiandi transforming process. The sense of vicissitudes, telling, watchfulness, and even the less glamorous shades of history that "patina" can express in architecture, especially in historical monuments, is considered to be the most important significance of the conserved "age". Patina, traces of ageing, is increasingly emphasised in the concept of modern heritage conservation. Respect for traces of wind, sun, and time is one of the most essential aspects that Liang Sicheng (1963) mentioned in his principles of heritage protection. The idea resonates and partially overlaps the implications in the Eurocentric concepts, such as Riegl's "age value", and Brandi's concept of "patina" (Lu 2017). However, the value of patina is marginalised in contemporary urban heritage practice. Maintenance and conservation of the listed CRPU, the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC, was similar to "stylistic restoration". Referring to this strategy, experts sought to restore the Site to its first historical appearance fact in 1921. In this respect, practitioners erased architectural characteristics of "ageing". This approach is not in line with Liang's definition of "zheng jiu ru jiu", which is thus not an appropriate term to describe the Xintiandi project.

143 This idea "*zheng jiu ru jiu*" proposed by Liang Sicheng is explained in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

The misuse is the result of academic indiscipline. Professor Shiwen Sun (2007) flagged against the popular scholarly idea to consider Xintiandi as a project in which stakeholders applied the approach to "reintegrate the aged as the aged" in his article "Embedding and Subversion of Urban Space Pattern: A Planning Review of 'Xin Tian Di' in Shanghai". Sun does not clarify what type of urban transformation Xintiandi exactly belongs to. He explicitly indicates that the Xintiandi project is a "third kind" of urban heritage transformation that is neither conservative nor radical. This thesis argues that Professor Sun's heritage-related argument reveals a basic academic quality of scholars and professionals when they use a specific unfamiliar or uncertain concept. Experts and professionals, who are usually the most knowledgeable group the public chooses to believe in, have a responsibility for not blurring professional boundaries, misleading other stakeholders, or misleading the general public.

Third, more participants have influenced the formation of the heritage discourse of Xintiandi after the physical accomplishment of its redevelopment. They are not the decision makers of the results, but are the most direct influencers on subsequent heritage practices in Shanghai for being users of the results. With the rise of internet media and the decrease of paper media, massive information exchanges occur in a flash, in the form of published blogs, vlogs, plogs, and other graphic and video content. The popular notes and remarks that received the most "likes" on major online social media platforms, more or less represent the public's thoughts on Xintiandi nowadays. Particularly, network information significantly reflects the young generation's view of and interests in different sites. Unlike academic articles, the publication of these notes or remarks happens instantaneously. They may not be serious, rigorous and modest, or even follow the trend, but are representative and present the ideas of the broadest group of net users who appreciate and would like to visit Xintiandi.

Since the middle of the 2010s, with the speedy emergence of smartphones and internet media, mobile apps (applications) such as Instagram, Facebook, Tiktok and Xiaohongshu (China), have rapidly taken up much more time in people's daily lives. By taking users' posts on Instagram and Xiaohongshu as examples, it is easy to see that the public, or precisely, active users rarely bother about urban legacies and monuments of Xintiandi. For example, on Xiaohongshu, if typing "**上海新天地** (Shanghai Xintiandi)" in the search bar (on 15 September 2021), there were more than 100,000 results. The most followed correlatives, in order, were gourmet, tips, shopping, photo shoots, shopping centres, store discovery, hotels, afternoon tea, bars, squares, coffee, night spots, street snap, fashion, and other aspects that have no connection to historic *lilong* housing, *shikumen*, *wulixiang*, or the listed Site. In addition, the results showed that there were more than 645 times the number of notes contributed to the topic "Shanghai Xintiandi store discovery" than to "Shanghai Xintiandi Shikumen". The attention of these Xiaohongshu users is mostly

drawn to consumer goods rather than cultural heritage. In the era where network flow can be converted into fame and fortune, "heritage" itself brings no commercial benefits, unless the old things can be utilised as effective tools that create internet celebrities or attract the network populace (Figure 6.32–6.33). For example, in one of the most liked posts "Free Spots for Internet Celebrities in Shanghai No.79 | Xintiandi - Shikumen", the user Kimi World posts many images of the historic *shikumen* buildings and introduces Xintiandi as a place where people can "experience the modern bustle of a global centre and the classical charm of the historical monuments". However, the information delivered to the public is actually about how to become an internet celebrity, regardless of reminding readers of the beauty of urban heritage and historic residences.



FIG. 6.32 By searching the keyword "**上海新天地**" (Shanghai Xintiandi) on the App of Xiaohongshu, the results for the comprehensive recommendation present multiple indicative consumptions. Orderly, the top tour results are about comprehensive information on Xintiandi (Xintiandi 2019), internet celebrity shooting spots in Shanghai (Kimi World 2021), Shanghai Xintiandi during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown (Allen Yuan 2020), and travelling in Shanghai (Henry_up 2021). Source: Xiaohongshu, the screenshot was accessed on 15 September 2021.

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FIG. 6.33 One image of Shikumen facades included in Kimi World post entitled "Free Spots for Internet Celebrities in Shanghai No.79 | Xintiandi - Shikumen" (Kimi World 2021). Source: Xiaohongshu, the screenshot was accessed in 15 September 2021.

Coincidentally, on Instagram, when searching for previous posts that are linked to the tag "Xintiandi" (on 15 September 2021), there were approximate 105 results. However, among the top 15 most popular posts, only the user "cassandraarmijo" mentioned architectural characteristics in Xintiandi and described them as "a combination of Chinese architecture with European architecture" (Figure 6.34). In addition, an anonymous interviewee who participated in my semi-open questionnaire research via Instagram gave her opinion about Xintiandi "It is a good way of preserving the heritage, helping the people in poverty and demonstrating new designs and arts".[144] All the facts reveal that Xintiandi has developed into what its developer and designers and other decision makers envisioned in the late 20th century. Commercial interests have become a key indicator that influences how visitors like or dislike a site with historical and cultural significance in the popular heritage discourse.

144 This semi-open questionnaire survey was conducted in 2020.



FIG. 6.34 As Shanghai Xintiandi is usually known as Xintiandi in a global context, by searching the keyword "Xintiandi" on Instagram, the top 15 results, only one post (in 15th position) from the user "cassandraarmijo", a Chilean blogger who lives in China, mentioned architecture in her release on 27 April 2021.

Different heritage discourses interact with each other. Shui On Group was the first developer who expressed their respect for historic buildings and willingness to discuss design options for the conservation of listed historic buildings in Shanghai's urban practices. Stakeholders made several attempts related to "conservation" in the redevelopment process of Beili and Nanli (1999–2001), pioneering the transformation of heritage buildings and conservation areas in Shanghai. Resulting of the not quite yet established discipline, the lagging nature of legislating, and the lack of public awareness regarding the protection of cultural heritage, there were different understandings of "what heritage conservation is" among Shanghai's authorities who were responsible for approving the implementation of Xintiandi. Stakeholders engaged in other undertakings are even more impressed by the dominant discourse, which is characterised by vagueness and uncertainty. Xiaowei Luo (2001) indicates that whether the integrated project of Xintiandi is a heritage conservation practice, has always been a point of contention in academia, and Zheng Guangfu (2004, 86) states that Xintiandi is a project through "development for conservation". This

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thesis suggests that a more prudent and comprehensive estimation is needed when evaluating the heritage approaches implemented in the Xintiandi practice. Up to today, repeatedly arguing whether Xintiandi is a conservative development or reconstructive damage does not make sense. After all, participators have and will continuously make efforts to justify their heritage approaches if their goal is to make Xintiandi and the term "conservation" relevant.

6.6 Conclusion

The birth of Xintiandi has emancipated the suppressed interest in the transformation of historical sites for economic interests. In the redevelopment of Xintiandi Nanli and Beili, the tripod situation of the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC, the *Shikumen Wulixiang* Museum, and the commercial plaza for retail and service industries has been underutilised for public advocacy as a whole. From the top to the bottom, stakeholders have hardly realised that the three components are complementary for creating a comprehensive portrayal of Xintiandi. In the integration, the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC is the precondition for the success of the project, marking the permanent "red" revolutionary value of the project; the commercial plaza represents the possibility of revitalising historic buildings for survival in the present, revealing the economic benefits of historical neighbourhoods. In addition, the *Wulixiang* Museum displays the life of ordinary residents in Shanghai, acknowledging the cultural values and traditions formed by the increasingly marginalised people of the inner city. In this respect, there are multiple heritage approaches for different transforming purposes in the Xintiandi project.

Stakeholders can always find suitable context-based interpretations of conservation to embellish, rationalise, or justify their behaviours for gaining recognition. In the name of conservation, local authorities and administrative institutions aim to highlight Shanghai's efforts in the protection of the listed cultural heritage with revolutionary significance, emphasising its contributions to educating the public through heritage related to patriotism and nationalism. By comparison, in the name of conservation, the developer and the designer in chief have strengthened the market recognition and popularity of their commercial interest-oriented redevelopment through empowering the cultural characteristics and identity of Xintiandi, enhancing their reputations as "guardians of urban history" in the field

of urban transformation. Furthermore, involved scholars draw upon their own experiences. Professor Luo Xiaowei, being a member of the conservation consulting team, endorsed the project for its significance in the field of conserving and restoring historic buildings, since she made conservation a serious concern. In the name of conservation, several associated persons are trying to keep up with the mainstream heritage discourse to demonstrate their concern for cultural heritage, whether or not they have actually argued for the validity of the adopted approaches in Xintiandi practice. In general, from the perspective of heritage conservation, Xintiandi is a successful commercial example while being filled with regrets and failures in terms of heritage conservation. Professor Ruan Yisan once spoke up for urban justice that

> "I confirm the success of Xintiandi, but I strongly oppose copying the Xintiandi procedure as a model. Conservation of historical buildings should be people-oriented. The houses on the Champs-Élysées in Paris are two or three hundred years old, and today, people are still living on them. Marx's dwelling is still inhabited by Marx's descendants."[145]

Through an urban imagery approach, the stakeholders have progressively reconstructed the symbolic meaning of Xintiandi. Stakeholders also negatively generated exploitation of intra-generational and inter-generational equities for the indigenous residents of the inner city (Yao and Zhao 2009; Li, Wang and Cao 2015). The measures leading to the Xintiandi model have been acknowledged and repeatedly emulated in the 21st century. In this respect, this thesis sees questions particularly regarding the insistently utilised justification "development for conservation" in countless scenarios and the detriments this over-utilised saying can cause to cultural heritage. For example, when viewing Xintiandi as a redevelopment project through partial conservation strategies, the developer's aim for economic efficiency should not be neglected. Furthermore, although included in the Heng-Fu Protection Area, Xintiandi is no longer a historic block after transformation, as it is not qualified in the integrity of features and styles, and authenticity of history and life (Li 2007,). The subsequent developers, such as Xufang Group of Jianyeli and New World Development (also based in Hong Kong) of Shangxianfang, are ludicrously fooling themselves if they continue to apply the same rhetoric that arose in a historical period of inadequate legislative rules and practical standards of heritage conservation.

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145 Zhang Ying, 2010. Planning Greater Shanghai: How many detours have been taken? (规划大上海 走了几多弯路？), Southern Weekly. Available at http://city.sina.com.cn/focus/t/2010-07-23/10516554.html, accessed on 25 August 2021.

Nonetheless, Xintiandi, being the earliest sample embedded in heritage conservation practices of Shanghai, facilitates comprehensive discussions for lasting research — for good and bad. Tianzifang, another landmark of Shanghai on par with Xintiandi in terms of popularity, is often compared with Xintiandi by various influencers. Sun Jiwei (孙继伟), an urban planner and official of the Luwan District Government, has participated in both the Xintiandi redevelopment and management of the Tianzifang area. He expressed in the interview (2010) that the government's unified management of the area in Taikang Road (Tianzifang) has made up for the vanishing *lilong* housing with the Xintiandi redevelopment.[146] However, based on the author's on-site surveys and interviews between 2017 and 2021, the reality is far more complicated. In the following chapter, the conflicting or consensual discourses of Tianzifang are analysed by applying a parallel research structure of the three cases.

146 Ibid.

7 Tianzifang

Retained Urban Tissues and Indeterminate Architectural Intervention

7.1 Introduction

Tianzifang, a name inspired by the Chinese masterpiece of history *Records of the Grand Historian* (Shiji, 史记), is given by artist Huang Yongyu. It is a hybrid product generated from urban globalisation. The introduction of the creative industry in Shanghai and the place positioning to attract foreign franchisees has become the economic catalyst for spatial change. Although the site does not seem as sophisticated and glamorous as Xintiandi, its emergence and transition are inextricably linked to globalisation and the increasing frequency of transnational exchanges and tourism.

In the field of heritage studies, its international reputation also emanates from being the earliest and one of the most prestigious bottom-up urban transformation projects in Shanghai. A group of forward-thinking artists who had the experience of sojourning abroad made their efforts and contributed to the creation of an early art quarter. For its reputation and popularity, as well as the strong sense of conflict created by the contrast with Xintiandi as a contemporaneous project, Tianzifang is often used for comparison. Its branding image for being a mode of urban conservation is deeply felt, whether the concept of conservation has been consistently valued throughout the transforming process or not.

By investigating Tianzifang, in particular examining its status quo in both tangible and intangible dimensions throughout the transformation, this thesis argues that its becoming as a listed protected neighbourhood is a reactive process. In

this respect, the author is confused by the standards and criteria regarding the behaviour of listing dominated by heritage authorities in Shanghai. Clearly, the success of Xintiandi and the early advocacy to designate protection areas rich in historical and cultural features like the Sinan Road area in Shanghai's urban planning largely depended on the revolutionary significance attached. Comparatively, as there were no such landmark-like cultural heritage sites in the Taikang Road area, it was impartible to assign outstanding values to the urban conservation of Tianzifang. In the process, influenced by the social environment, such as hosting the Expo 2010 and experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic, Tianzifang has experienced prosperity and depression, resulting in various and shifting practical approaches in line with heritage conservation.

Similar to the analytical steps structured in the last chapter, from the perspective of urban heritage conservation, it first examines the use of heritage-related terms and vocabularies in published Chinese and English journal papers. This suggests that although most authors identify the incongruities which occurred in the conservation and transformation of Tianzifang from various perspectives, they generally take a positive attitude toward inspecting the sustainability and authenticity of the historic urban landscape within. Second, it analyses the ever-shifting tangible and intangible changes in the area. The changes have mainly arisen from the adaptation of architectural functions, which have brought about changes in the density of users and the variety of the population. Third, using the actual stakeholders' and involvers' respective words as a fulcrum, the thesis further analyses their varied roles in the process of implementing urban heritage conservation, engagement to varying degrees, and attachment to historical and cultural buildings. Then, it poses the existing dilemma of Tianzifang, addressing the possible opportunities and challenges for sustainable area development.

7.2 The emergence of Tianzifang and the history of Taikang Road area

7.2.1 Historical background of Taikang Road area

Tianzifang is the result of integrated and progressive place-making. It is located on the north side of the historical Dapuqiao area. Dapuqiao, or Taiping Bridge, located in the Zhaojiabang area, is also a vulgar place name similar to Taipingqiao (Figure 7.1). Since the construction of Dapuqiao at the end of the Qing Dynasty, the bridge has been in a desolate and isolated area on the edge of Shanghai's prefecture, with cemeteries and rescue stations. It was not until the expansion of the French Concession in 1914, that Dapu Bridge, as one of the bridges between the then newly built French Concession and old Chinese settlement, gradually came into view of the public for its outstanding location (Ma 2019). In this context, the flow of people across and living over the bridge was increasing. The development of an open-air food and grocery market on the bridge led to the development of the surrounding districts. Taikang Road was built under such flouring conditions. Named after a French cruise ship, the then Cassini Rue (renamed Taikang Road in 1943) was constructed in 1926, to facilitate the increasing population and subsequently constructed residential buildings and factories. Since then, an urban block for multiple functions has gradually taken shape.

The geographically transitional characteristic has resulted in a hybrid urban structure and texture of the Taikang Road area. Developing from the countryside of the Jiangnan area to a settlement of mixed Chinese and foreign residents, the district has seen changes in society.[147] After the Japanese invasion of 1931–1932, a large number of people rushed into the French Concession in search of shelter that was not available in the Chinese and International Settlements. In the 1930s, for the convenient access to waterways and inland transport, industrial factories, in particular small-scale *longtang* factories, sprung up on Taikang Road. The former

147 The term "Jiangnan" is a fluid historical-geographical concept, and it encompasses four dimensions: physical, administrative, economic and cultural geography. In a broad sense, Jiangnan refers to the area south of the Yangtze River. The region has been known since ancient times for its economic development, the affluence living conditions, and the local residents' appreciation of cultural education.

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Yamei Chemical Co., Ltd, Yongming Bottler Caps Factory, and Dazhong Industrial Society were established during this time. Several were located in Zhichengfang (Lane 210 Taikang Road), where the first urban transformation took place. In the 1930s, there were 36 factories of varying scales (Figure 7.2–7.3). Around the factories, peripheral residential buildings have gradually developed and prospered, with diverse architectural features. In the urban form of *lilong* neighbourhood, there are both old and new styles *shikumen lilong* housing, baroque architecture, eclectic architecture, or Jiangnan folk residence style of traditional Chinese architecture (Figure 7.4–7.5). An urban landscape of a mix of population, functions, and architectural features has emerged, accompanied by coexisting factories and houses, as well as flourishing commerce and industry. Evolving into a diverse intermingled area, the difficulties of managing this ever-expanding area have consequently arisen.

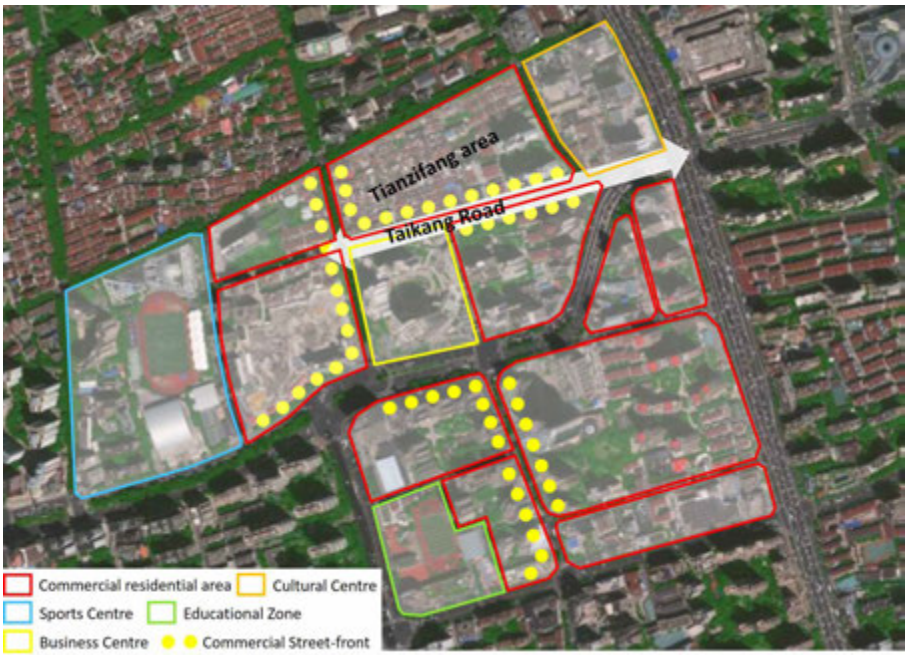


FIG. 7.1 Dapuqiao area and the relationship between the Taikang Road, Tianzifang area and the surroundings. Source: author, 2021.

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FIG. 7.2 The historic map of old Taikang Road. Source: Cheng and Wu 2016.



FIG. 7.3 Cassini Rue (known as Taikang Road today) in 1937. The photo shows that the area consisting mainly of lilong neighbourhoods was maturing at that time. Source: AGSL Digital Photo Archive Asia and Middle East, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.

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FIG. 7.4 A residence with Jiangnan folk architectural style in No. 274 Taikang Road. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 7.5 A residential square with shikumen lilong housing in No. 210 Taikang Road. Source: author, 2019.

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Furthermore, under the artillery fire of the invading Japanese army, the urban environment in the Dapuqiao area was largely damaged. Broken bricks and tiles left behind by the shelling of dwellings were used by the MCFCS to fill in the river under the Dapu Bridge which suffered severe pollution. Indiscriminate rubbish dumping from the influx of refugee boats and continuous discharge of sewage waste from factories together caused district squalor, chaos, and disturbance. In the torrent of social processes, especially after 1937, owing to the dramatic growth in population density, living conditions in *lilong* housing have deteriorated considerably from what it once was. Due to the forest of factories and dense population, street fairs have been gradually flourishing. After the establishment of the PRC, with a series of industrial transformations and social revolutions, Taikang Road has seen great changes in the economic and social structure.[148] During the socialist transformation, many old *longtang* factories have been successively merged and reorganised as state-owned enterprises or expropriated by an increasing quantity of residents. For example, the previous Dazhong Industrial Society was reformed into Shanghai Industrial Food Machinery Factory in 1958.

The acceleration of Shanghai's urban construction after China's economic opening up in 1978 has brought not only opportunities for the city but also obstacles for the area. With urban sprawl, Taikang Road and the entire former French Concession have become the centre of Shanghai, within the spatial range of the inner city. In this respect, industrial production has been no longer been adapting to the modern development and positioning of the Taikang Road area, gradually shutting down or moving out for better supporting facilities. In the 1990s, under the market economy and macro-control, the number of factories in the then Luwan District drastically decreased from 137 in 1993 to 15 (Zuo and An 2012). Many vacant premises have created a waste of land resources and a barrier to urban improvement. In the transition period, the local government thus considered the Taikang Road area as a dilapidated district and included it in the municipal building demolition plan (Zhu 2009). With the almost contemporaneous experience and regrets accumulated in the urban planning of the Taipingqiao area, the Luwan government saw a business opportunity in the idle factory buildings and took the lead in proposing no use of state investment, and encouraging an initiative renovation approach in the Dapuqiao area to start an experiment in transforming and adapting historical industrial buildings and sites.

148 Chapter 5 specifically explains the historical events that were related to *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai.

7.2.2 Legislative conditions: heritage-related characters of Tianzifang

The designation of the Tianzifang area and historic sites within came many years later than its formation. Compared with the other two cases, no single building or neighbourhood are prominent in Tianzifang and qualified to be listed as a Cultural Relic Protection Unit. In this respect, among the first 12 listed Protection Areas designated under the guide of the *Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on the Protection of the Areas with Historical Cultural Features and the Excellent Historical Buildings* issued in 2003, the area where Tianzifang is located was excluded, though immediately adjacent to the southern boundary (Jianguo Middle Road) of the Heng-Fu Protection Areas on the eastern half (Figure 7.6).

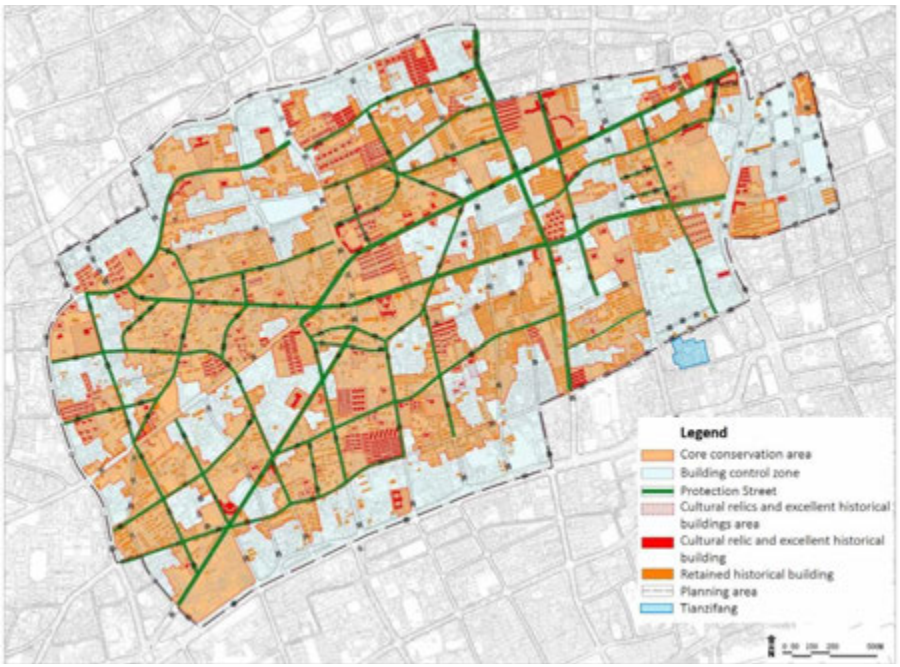


FIG. 7.6 The spatial range of Heng-Fu Protection Areas with Historical Cultural Features according to planning. Source: SPNRB, 2003.

It was not until 2016 that multiple management departments, such as the SPNRB, Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture Heritage, and the government of Huangpu district conducted heritage-related measures to affirm the value of Tianzifang and several industrial sites within. For the first time,

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Tianzifang and 118 other neighbourhoods were included in the list of Protection Neighbourhoods (*baohu jiefang*). Due to its architectural features and urban landscape styles, Tianzifang belongs to the neighbourhood type rich in *lilong* housing, one of seven designating categories. On the one hand, from the perspective of the historical and cultural city protection system, Tianzifang is considered to have outstanding architectural features and urban landscape integrity by the SPNRB. On the other hand, on the basis of the decision made by the national and local administration of cultural heritage in 2015, the local government approved to list 291 "cultural relic protection spots" in Huangpu District in 2016. Among the spots, six historical *longtang* factory buildings and one *lilong* neighbourhood Tianzifang were included (Table 7.1). Obviously, the government values more the functional roles and economic effects of the buildings that served as factory spaces either for national industrial mass production or for artists' galleries and studios with historical and cultural significance, rather than the aesthetic or architectural values in material dimensions. The existing historical residential buildings in Tianzifang could only be prominent when presented as a patchwork, at least in the legislative criteria.

TABLE 7.1 The listed Cultural Relic Protection Spots of Tianzifang area. Among the seven spots, only the former site of Zhichengfang functioned as a residential area, and the other six spots were factories serving light industry.

Batch	Time	Name	Location
1	2016	Former Site of the Yamei Cemical Co., Ltd	Lane 200 Taikang Road
1	2016	Former Site of the Zhichengfang in Tianzaifang	No. 18 – 23, Lane 210 Taikang Road
1	2016	Former Site of the Tianran Gourmet Powder Factory	No. 1 (Jia and Yi), Lane 210 Taikang Road
1	2016	Former Site of the Haihua Tannery	No. 2 (Jia), Lane 210 Taikang Road
1	2016	Former Site of Yongming Bottler Caps Factory	No. 2 (Yi), No. 6, and No. 7, Lane 210 Taikang Road
1	2016	Former site of the Kangfu Weaving Factory	No. 5, Lane 210 Taikang Road
1	2016	Former site of Jiuhua Silk Factory	No. 9, Lane 210 Taikang Road

Different from the case of Xintiandi, there were no former celebrity residents or revolution-related sites. In this respect, not a single historical building in Tianzifang was considered as significant when architectural alteration was encountered on Taikang Road. In addition, although people may marvel at the richness of the twenty or so architectural types in one area, considering the harmony of architectural colours and facades for coordinated development of urban landscape, the haphazardness brought about by the richness of architecture is precisely why it could not be positioned as a protected unit as Bugaoli. Between 1989 and 2016, although the local government addressed the importance of the designation of 20th-century

residential buildings, in the heritage movement of Shanghai, from the perspective of its physical characters, Tianzifang failed to distinguish itself from the others. From both dimensions of practice and legislation, it was the contribution from the bottom to add value to its becoming, contributing to the uniqueness of Tianzifang.

7.2.3 Turning point: creative industry for economic benefits

Comparatively, in this respect, there were no legislative regulation constraints for the development of the Taikang Road area since the late 1990s as well. Its transforming progress has gone through four stages: (1) the free growing stage before the completion of housing re-commercialisation (before 1998), (2) the initial stage for the development of the creative industry (1998–2003), (3) the conflict stage (2004–2008), and (4) the free transformation stage (after 2008). Prior to the 1990s, there were very few property developers outside mainland China who had a long-term vision like the Shui On Group, who took the lead in investing in commercial development in mainland cities. In the middle of the precipitating Asian Financial Crisis, the government-led redevelopment encountered bottlenecks. Under these circumstances, globalisation has brought novelty accompanied by uncertainty in the world. In the South Houston (SoHo) Industrial Area of New York, initiatively, many artists entered the previous industrial zone in the 1960s and legitimised their illegal occupation and reuse of many abandoned spacious premises through efforts in the 1970s. In the process, the approach to adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings and areas for art galleries with loft living in spacious spaces has gradually become known to the public and the world.

Like most global big cities, industrial production and relevant facilities of Shanghai have also undergone a process of relocation from the inner city to the outer city, to harbours that directly link to the sea for easy global trade. Under these circumstances, making appropriate and up-to-date use of the vast abundant factories has become a topical issue, and deserves long-term consideration. The emergence and development of Tianzifang are inseparable from the decision of the Dapuqiao Street Office, as well as the creative and innovative ideas of the avant-garde artists.[149] Indeed, from the perspective of administrative execution, Tianzifang is not entirely about bottom-up development, known and emphasised in the widely

149 A Street Office is the governing body of the streets in China's countryside administrative district, in a city, under the administration of the district-level government. With the approval of the people's government of Luwan District (at a higher level), Dapuqiao Street Office is a government dispatch.

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circulated discourse. Nevertheless, the first significant turning point in the area occurred in 1998 when artists represented by Chen Yifei agreed to open their studios in the renovated *longtang* factories in Lane 210 Taikang Road.

Considering the situation then, in the 1990s, Dapuqiao Street had the weakest financial strength in Luwan District (Zhu 2009).[150] Therefore, based on his understanding of Deng Xiaoping's 1992 South Tour Speeches, the chief director Zheng Rongfa (郑荣发) of Dapuqiao argued that the criteria for estimating the results of transformation needed to include a contribution to the prosperity of market and to the economic development of the streets, apart from to the improvement of residents' lives.[151] In this respect, Zheng decided to optimise the situation in the 1990s, when various hawkers occupied the Taikang Road and made it stink of fish and prawns. The Taikang Street Office led by Zheng Rongfa was the first governmental agency in Shanghai, which rented a vacant factory and altered it into an indoor food grocery market and sparked rethinking about the proper transformation of historical neighbourhoods of the area.

Meanwhile, the successful experience of SoHo and the creative industry has been recognised by Shanghainese. Urban planning and policy of the Luwan District Government have increased the attractiveness of the Dapuqiao area. In the 1990s, as a result of a series of efforts made by the Dapuqiao Street Office, the urban form of this area has been renewed with significantly improved infrastructure conditions, providing a progressively favourable investment environment. For the promising urban environment, several upscale residential quarters then, such as Haihua Garden (1994) and Tiantian Garden (1997) rose up. Middle-and-high income groups, in particular investors from Taiwan, have gradually become the dominant population with influence in this block. The Dapuqiao area became a stronghold for many Taiwanese immigrants in the 1990s, and coincidentally, the first completed cultural industrial site in Shanghai was created by Taiwanese architect Deng Kunyan (登琨艳) who altered and designed a historical grain depot with brick and timber structure in 1997 on the riverside of Suzhou Creek. In this respect, one prerequisite for the becoming of Tianzifang depended on a tremendous restructure of the regional demographics, laying a

150 There were four street jurisdictions divided by the district government, and they were Dapuqiao Street Jurisdiction, Middle Huaihai Lu Street Jurisdiction, Ruijin Er Lu Street Jurisdiction, and Wuliqiao Street Jurisdiction.

151 Deng Xiaoping's 1992 South Tour Speeches occurred from 18 January to 21 February 1992. Speeches in this tour were the manifesto for the emancipation of the mind that pushed China's economic reform, opening up, and modernisation into a new phase. It pointed out the direction for the creation of a socialist market economy system, leaving great and far-reaching significance for the whole cause of socialist modernisation in China.

certain foundation for the market development of the creative industry. Seeing the development potential of Dapuqiao and the low rents of the vacant *longtang* factories, a former clerk of the labour union of Luwan District and businessman Wu Meisen (吴梅森) who sojourned in Canada for more than five years and admired the burgeoning creative industry in North America, proposed the idea to create Shanghai's SoHo in Taikang Road area as an initiator and took actions (Shinohara 2009, Gu 2014). Wu thus signed a long-term leasing contract with the former Haihua Tannery that owned No. 2 (Jia), No. 210 Taikang Road and renovated it as an art studio, and invited the well-celebrated artist Chen Yifei (陈逸飞) to join in 1998, offering him a favourable condition of ten years rent exemption. Chen with his exceptional charisma has helped to bring in a number of artists in the early developing stage, including photographer Er Dongqiang (尔冬强), painter Wang Jieyin (王劼音), and ceramist Zheng Yi (郑祎).

The Lane 201 Taikang Road where the six vacant long-unused factory buildings are located, thus became Taikang Road Art Street, a creative strategy raised by Wu Meisen as well. The formation and establishment of the Art Street also received support from the then Luwan District Government. On 13 January 1999, the district government studied and determined the transforming strategy through an on-site meeting, and subsequently, established a management committee in March, consisting of 15 members from district administrations. When painter Huang Yongyu (黄永玉) visited this art cluster in 1999, he was inspired by the Chinese masterpiece of history *Records of the Grand Historian* and assigned the name "Tianzifang" to the area, homophonic to the earliest Chinese painter's name as recorded in the book, to imply Taikang Road area becoming a place for literary artists to gather (Zhu 2009a). Since then, Tianzifang has officially appeared in the public domain as an iconic urban spot, and the remaking of the place has consequently been processed through the entanglement between Luwan District Government, Dapuqiao Street Office, and individual initiator Wu Meisen, and involvers represented by Chen Yifei and the countless ones that followed.

The second turning point surfaced in 2004. Between 1998 and 2003, stakeholders' focus was still on the renovation of the historical factory buildings for making a creative and entrepreneurial district with a vibrant cultural and artistic scene. With the accumulation of population from Taiwan, in 2003, the Taiwanese enterprise ASE Technology Holding Co., Ltd founded a local real estate company in Shanghai and wanted to invest in the Sun Moon Light Centre (SMLC) on Taikang Road. In the original plan, not only Plot 55 where the present SMLC is located, was included in the redeveloping planning and design, but Plot 56 on the opposite side, where Tianzifang exists was also considered for inclusion in the SMLC urban renewal. Facing the impact of social-economic reform and urban development, the initiator and promoter Wu Meisen has noticed the obstacles to sustaining his aspiration to create China's creative industry park. In this respect, being aware of the necessity to expand the scale and social influence of Tianzifang for

its viability, Wu Meisen united the forces of the indigenous residents of Zhichengfang in Lane 210 as well, and involved Zhou Xinliang (周心良) as the pioneer among residents. In 2004, by involving experts and scholars in the seminar on the topic related to the development of Tianzifang, the original idea to develop Plot 56 was changed, creating opportunities for the "organic" urban transition on a continuous small scale.[152]

Tianzifang and the former *longtang* factories within were not listed until 2016. However, before this, heritage-related experts have already paid close attention to the heritage value of Tianzifang. Architectural historian and social activist Professor Ruan Yisan indicated in the discussion that the historical Taikang Road area has contained the most varied forms of architecture in Shanghai, and is a district of historical and cultural landscapes, reflecting the real life of Shanghai citizens (Yu 2011, 27). Inspired by and supported by the social forces involved, Zheng Rongfa re-recognised the significance of Tianzifang from multiple perspectives. The Dapuqiao Street Office has thus been dedicated to promoting the rationalisation and legitimisation of the adaptive reuse of the historical buildings in this area. With the endorsement of Ruan Yisan, the conservation of Tianzifang as an urban legacy and the development of the cultural industry have interacted with each other and advanced the situation in parallel. In addition, as the local residents and scholars have joined the entanglement, the area of Tianzifang has embarked on a phased expansion from east to west since 2004 (Figure 7.7).

The fourth phase of further and accelerated development started in 2008. It was not until this year, that proliferation of Tianzifang reached Lane 274, and Tianzifang has included the area covered by four main alleyways running north-south, and numerous interlocking branch alleyways running east-west. To orderly prepare for Expo 2010 Shanghai, the then Luwan District Government and Dapuqiao Street Office jointly established the Tianzifang Management Committee to manage the area with governmental measures and lead stakeholders into compliance with regulations when remodelling. As well as being assigned as a window-like reception site, Tianzifang was also one of the five Expo-themed practice areas of Luwan District, and received a total of 155 groups of internationally important guests and 1.95 million visitors during the Expo 2010.[153] Attracted by a series of favourable conditions and enhancement measures conducted by the government, the number of participants and investors coming to Tianzifang steadily increased in and around 2010.

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152 The seminar included professors Ruan Yisan and Zheng Shiling (郑时龄) of Tongji University, economist Li Wuwei (厉无畏), and governmental officer Chen Xiejun (陈燮君) working on cultural heritage protection.

153 The statistics are collected from the Office of Shanghai Chronicles, available at http://www.shtong.gov.cn/dfz_web/DFZ/Info?idnode=293322&tableName=userobject1a&id=555119, accessed on 23 September 2021.

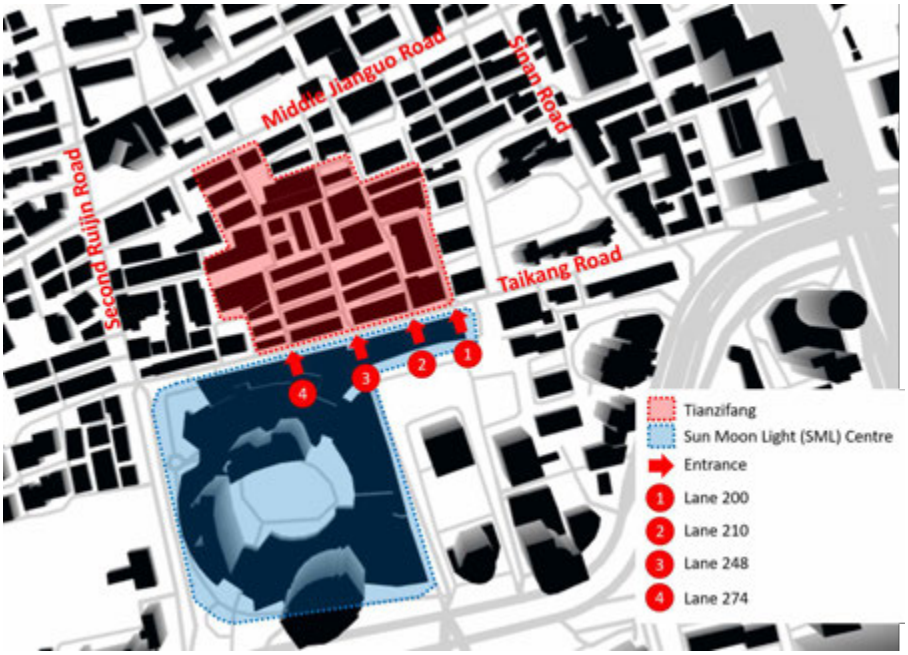


FIG. 7.7 The range of Tianzifang is adapted according to the search result of "Tianzifang" on China's Baidu Map, accessed on 22 September 2021. Source: author, 2021.

Learning from experience and lessons from Xintiandi, the district government has always held the development rights for the overall urban planning, functional positioning, commercial activities adjustment, environmental improvement, and traffic construction. In his 2010 interview, Sun Jiwei stated that

"Unlike Xintiandi, as the government, artists, citizens, residents and indigenes are all involved in the construction of the neighbourhoods, Tianzifang is not simply a commercial area; it has design studios for artists, craft shops, as well as restaurants, bookstores and cafes, while indigenes living in the houses, where there is daily life. The dynamic mechanism of its transformation and the model of extensive participation of indigenous residents is worth studying."[154]

154 Zhang Ying, 2010. Planning Greater Shanghai: How many detours have been taken? (规划大上海 走了几多弯路？), Southern Weekly, http://city.sina.com.cn/focus/t/2010-07-23/10516554.html, accessed on August 25, 2021.

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Sun described vibrant and vivid street and neighbourhood scenes in Tianzifang, and the seemingly equal involvement of stakeholders from multiple sectors. Indeed, in 2010, when the ratio of commercial to residential was essentially the same, the daily life of residents and commercial activities could happen in parallel. However, building on the momentum of the Expo and its AAA status as a tourist attraction after 2010, there has been an increasing number of non-cultural businesses since 2008. The trend has seriously impacted the incubation and revitalisation of the originally planned creative industries. Furthermore, the demographic, economic, and management structures of the area have been shifting and influenced the dynamic industrial structure, triggering a hidden danger for the sustainable transformation of Tianzifang. To be precise, this thesis suggests that Tianzifang has entered another changing phase as the lockdown strategy to prevent the COVID-19 pandemic was implemented at the beginning of 2020. Actually, the decline of this area was evident even before the pandemic.

In this respect, this thesis aims to figure out the diverse heritage measures taken by retailers with different goals when they started their businesses or causes in this area. On the one hand, it analyses the chronological changes of facilitating improvement and a holistic environment in this area to make possible the conservation of historical buildings. On the other hand, it needs to point out the possible problems that may, or have, damaged the physical features and intangible atmosphere of the historical urban landscape of Taikang Road in the process of successive small-scale renovation or adaption till 2021.

7.3 Academic discourse: Movement of “conservation” related interpretations

7.3.1 Database analysis and discourse classification

For a comparative study, a statistic analysis of the Chinese literature database was also conducted on 12 August 2021. To obtain an overview of Tianzifang-related research in the urban transformation process of the historical Taikang Road area and its rising relevance to heritage conservation in development, the keyword and subject search in the database is divided into two steps. In the Cnki database for Chinese literature, first, by searching the keyword and subject “田子坊” only,

there were 426 results in total.[155] Among all, 213 journal articles across more than 20 different subjects and categories appear as search results, mainly about subjects including building science and engineering, culture, cultural economy, macroeconomic management and sustainable development, tourism, or service economy. Limiting specialities covered to the above-mentioned categories, as well as trade economy and geography, the number of discipline-related journal papers decreased to 162. Under the above searching conditions, setting the starting point of the publication volume curve at 1996 as well, the diagram of relevant publications was shown in Figure 7.8. The first relevant paper was published in 2003, the end of the second developing phase with the involvement of the initiator Wu Meisen. Around the Expo 2010 Shanghai, there was a quantitative rise. Between 2007 and 2013, there was a year-on-year increase in the number of papers published. After 2015, when the publication volume reached a peak, the research enthusiasm for studying Tianzifang gradually faded, immediately before the designation of the area and sporadic sites within as cultural heritage in 2016. Among the basis of the selected 162 Tianzifang-related papers, the topic of "urban regeneration" has gained the most citations.

Secondly, after adding the determiner "保护 (baohu)" and narrowing the categories to building science and engineering and culture, 55 of the 162 articles were further screened out (Figure 7.9). This thesis investigates whether to add the determiner "保护" or not, research with relevance to urban regeneration appeared the most, except for the descriptive qualifier keywords. In the changed keywords co-occurrence network, the frequency of occurrence of the keyword "Taikang Road" decreased from 39 times to 12, and the frequency of "*shikumen*" dropped from 31 times to 12, the keyword "urban regeneration" being co-occurrent for 14 times, was the most frequently referred keyword in the study of conservation in and of Tianzifang. The terms "historical features" and "historic buildings" are usually applied in studies of conservation of heritage as indicators followed closely after the phrase "urban regeneration". Nonetheless, a significant portion was still split into topics related to regeneration on a neighbourhood scale. In addition, different from the "one-size-fits-all" strategy that planned to remove and relocate all residents in Xintiandi redevelopment, "indigenous residents" are also an important study subject in the conservative transition of Tianzifang, to analyse the intangible value within. One unmarked keyword in the diagram is "Xintiandi" which actually enjoyed the same level of attention of research as "indigenous residents". Obviously, for their similar topicality, historical background, and geographical proximity to the previous French Concession in Shanghai, the two have spontaneously led to comparative studies in academia.

155 The keyword "田子坊" is the Chinese name of Tianzifang.

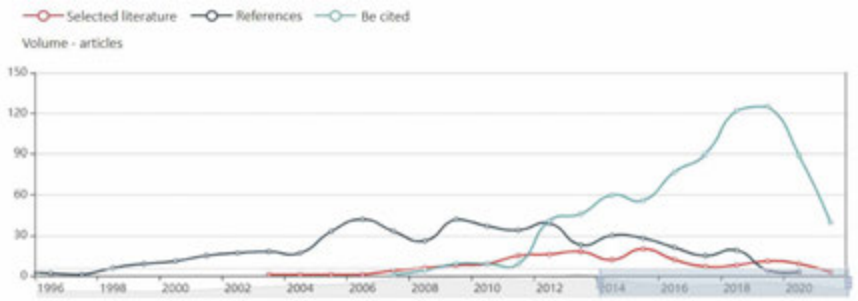


FIG. 7.8 This thesis sets the starting point of the publication volume curve at 1996, a same year to the birth the specific plan of Taipingqiao area. Although, the publication closely linked to Bugaoli is not sufficient, the research has been citied frequently since 2010, contributing to more studies on architectural and urban conservation and renovation models. Source: Cnki, accessed on 12 August 2021.

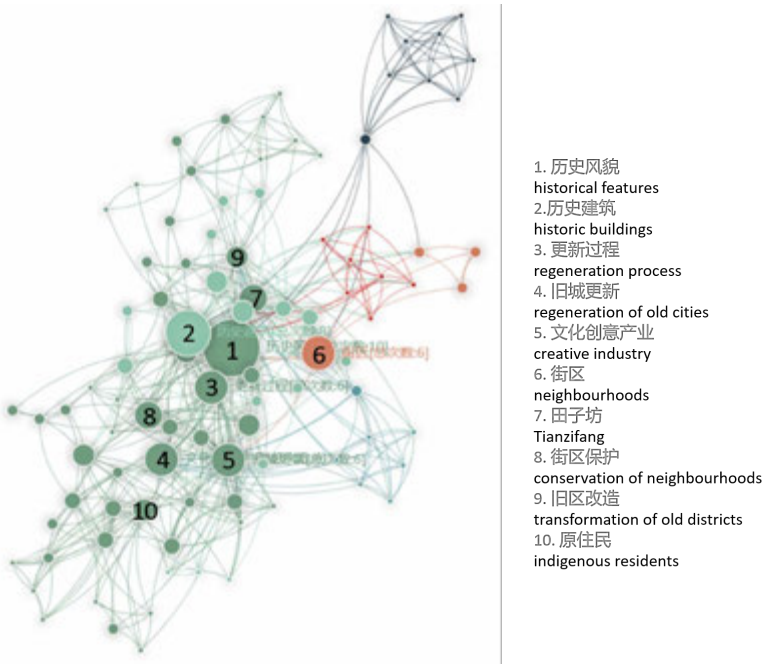


FIG. 7.9 The keywords co-occurrence network of the 55 journal papers screened from determiners "**田子坊** (Tianzifang)" and "**保护** (baohu)", excluding the keywords "**城市更新** (urban regeneration)" and "**石库门** (shikumen)" and "**泰康路** (Taikang Road)". Source: Cnki, accessed on 12 August 2021.

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This thesis suggests that professionals' endorsement of their academic and social influence on the architectural diversity, social-cultural values and community maintenance, frankly, is not efficient in practice, although they can raise the visibility of Tianzifang among the public. Governmental administrative implementations and promulgated regulations and orders have the practical effectiveness to dominate people's behaviours, influencing the mainstream of academic discussion and the direction of research. The concept of conservation has been a few involvers' ideal goals, but urban regeneration or transformation, being a more neutral narrative without predicting the outcome of every measure, appeared frequently in journal papers in the form of keywords as a matter of course.

In parallel, in the Scopus database, after searching the TITLE-ABS-KEY "Tianzifang" on 15 August 2021, there were 12 results. English literature is mainly related to subject areas such as social sciences, engineering, arts and humanities, business, and management. Then, by adding the determiner "conservation", 2 articles could be screened out, including the latest one published in 2020 regarding the participation of the community. The earliest publication related to the keyword "Tianzifang" in the database appeared in 2014. Although the first attempt to renovate the old *longtang* factory occurred in 1998, the site took a longer time to attract international attention in academia to work on it. Different from the statistics shown in the Chinese Cnki database, research on Tianzifang is trending upwards after 2015 when the hotspot in Chinese contexts is fading (Figure 7.10). Even extending the search for journal articles beyond this database, the earlier papers that could be found in English were published in 2009.[156]

Within the scope of Scopus, the earliest article entitled "Sustainable development and the rehabilitation of a historic urban district - social sustainability in the case of Tianzifang in Shanghai" was published in 2014 and is a paper which focuses on the "conservation of historic buildings and streets through rehabilitation" (Yung, Chan and Xu 2014a, 95). Coincidentally, it is also the most cited paper, although the scope of discussion included has little to do with heritage conservation. Another factor worth noting is that there is a diversity and relative balance in proportion composition of affiliations to which the authors belong (Figure 7.11). Different from the situation of Xintiandi (Figure 7.12), as researchers represented by Professor Luo

156 In the 4th International Conference of the International Forum on Urbanism (IFoU) held in 2009 in Amsterdam and Delft, two papers in the session "The New Urban Questions — Urbanism beyond Neo-Liberalism" are about Tianzifang, including "Mutation of Tianzifang, Taikang Road, Shanghai" (Shinohara 2009) and "Preservation and Regeneration via Hai Pai Cultural Renaissance – A Case Study of Tianzifang Creative Quarter in Shanghai" (Wang, Yao and March 2009).

Xiaowei of Tongji University and the Tongji Architectural Design were commissioned by the government and the developer to undertake a site survey of the historical Taipingqiao area in the 1990s. Most authors focusing on the study of Xintiandi are from a single affiliation (namely Tongji), and they could not only access to rich informative materials but also inadvertently gain the support of capital and authorities. This thesis suggests that the great difference in institutional composition is determined by the varied attributes of the two projects, as Xintiandi acts as a political mission for dedication while Tianzifang is a progressive transition conducted by self-organisation.

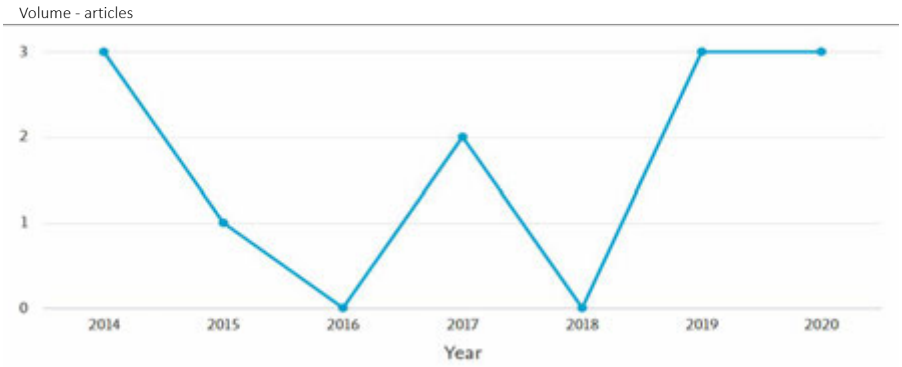


FIG. 7.10 The published article volume related to the keyword “Tianzifang” is shown on the Scopus database website. Source: Scopus, accessed on 15 August 2021.

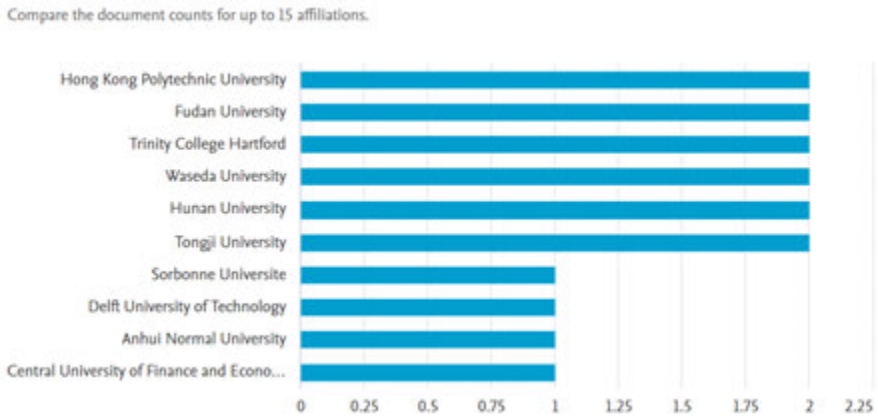


FIG. 7.11 Related to the subject of Tianzifang, a comparison of the published paper counts for different affiliations. Source: Scopus, accessed on 15 August 2021.

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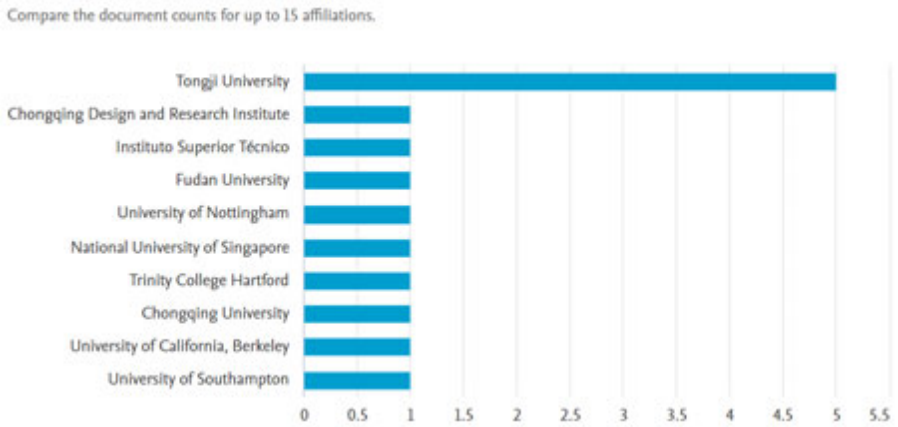


FIG. 7.12 Related to the subject of Xintiandi, a comparison of the published paper counts for different affiliations. Source: Scopus, accessed on 15 August 2021.

7.3.2 Literature analysis: within the context of heritage conservation

Considering the cited volumes and chronological orders of publication, this thesis chooses 30 Chinese journal papers and 8 English ones for study and discussion in this section. Chronologically, it first aims to explore scholars' attitudes towards transformation conducted in the Taikang Road area. Especially, this thesis explores how and to what extent people tie Tianzifang into the discussion discourse of urban heritage conservation in scholarship, through an analysis of terms that the authors use in their papers to interpret the heritage approaches in transformation. In addition, it further compares research focus and discourse application in Chinese and English literature, to investigate the similarities and differences in general trends of studying heritage conservation relevant issues in the Tianzifang area.

Among the Chinese literature, there are no prominently weighty opinions in the publications that could lead to much debate and discussion. Scholars generally present their academic views or offer visions from different perspectives. Surrounding heritage conservation, the studies of Tianzifang were on various aspects, including the transformation of urban vernacular residences, the adaption of historical factories, the historical and cultural features, urban regeneration and renewal of Tianzifang, and its cultural and social characteristics. Focusing on transforming matters on an architectural scale, there were many different verbal methods of describing the transformation of historic buildings in Tianzifang, such as "restoring", "conserving", "retaining", and "maintaining". Some authors held very positive

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attitudes about approaches taken by the involved participants and praised them for applying conservation (*baohu*) and restoration (*xiushan*) methods in practice (He and Wu and Zhang 2009; Chen 2012). Chen (2012) made the point that restoration of historical buildings in Tianzifang became the main approach in the second developing phase, after the first phase with the city's objective of embracing the Expo 2010 had been completed. Changqing Chen (2012) noted that the "restoration" approach has brought about a fusion of dwelling and industry in Tianzifang through conserving the *haipai* culture, the lifestyle, and the features of the historic *lilong* buildings in the historical Taikang Road area. Several articles expressed a similar viewpoint. Authors used the term "*baohu* (conservation)" to describe the transformation of the historical residences (Chen 2008; Sun and Zhou 2015; Yu and Zou 2015; Zheng, Yan and Yang 2018). Nonetheless, in their articles, the authors further addressed the stakeholders' method to make functional reuse of historical buildings through conservation (Chen 2008; Sun and Zhou 2015). Among all the Tianzifang-related publications, Shiwen Sun and Yu Zhou's (2015) journal article "A Study on the Regeneration Mechanism in Tianzifang Area, Shanghai" (cited 129 times) was the most cited, representing an authoritative statement in the academic community in Shanghai.[157] Apart from identifying approaches to the old-styled *shikumen lilong* housing as conservation, Yu and Zou (2015, 63) also argued that intervention conducted by different stakeholders in Tianzifang "retained (*baoliu*)" the architectural history and culture and the diversity of the historical neighbourhood, and noted it as an attempt to put into practice in Shanghai the idea "*baohu xing gaizao* (conservation conversion)" that was well established in SOHO projects overseas. Some authors described approaches taken by stakeholders in Tianzifang as "retaining (*baoliu*)" historical (*shikumen*) *lilong* housing (Kang 2013; Wu and Hang 2015; Huang and Qi 2015; Xu 2019, Shan and Zhang 2021). The authors further argued that it was the awakening of the community's awareness of "conservation (*baohu*)" that enabled the historical buildings and the neighbourhoods of Tianzifang to be "retained (*baoliu*)" intact (Wang and Hu and Liu 2016). It is not clear for readers to differentiate the terms. In Ruiqi Shan and Song Zhang's depiction (2021), "retaining" is more of a specific approach through which architectural exteriors, the material attributes, still exist after transformation. Although Shan and Zhang (2021) also used this term to describe the act of making the original dwelling function persistent. In addition to architecture for living purposes, historic factories are likewise a major attraction in Tianzifang, promoting its transformation into a creative industrial cluster. Concerning this issue, scholars refer to the large number of historic factory buildings in the historical Taikang Road area that were abandoned and left unused in the late 1990s,

157 The author Sun Shiwen is a professor at Tongji University in Shanghai, and Zhou Yu was his doctoral student in 2015.

in the context of the adjustment of industry and economy (Chen 2008; Li 2011; Mao 2010; Huang and Qi 2015). While Chen (2008) and Huang and Qi (2015) named this practice "transformation (*gaizao*)", avoiding the terms associated with *baohu*. Huang and Qi (2015) mentioned the shift in strategy that in 2004 stakeholders "retained (*baoliu*)" the *lilong* factories in Tianzaifang from demolition planned by the local government in 2002.

From the perspective of a holistic approach to the conservation of historic neighbourhoods, "*gengxin*" was the most used term in the titles of the articles addressing issues of the urban dimension (Guan and Guo 2011; Huang, Xu and Hu 2011; Yu 2011; Jiang 2012; Li 2013; Yu, Zhong and Chen 2013; Zhou 2014; Sun and Zhou 2015; Zhu and Huang 2015; Shan and Zhang 2021). In their translation, however, some authors used the term "regeneration" while others used "renewal". Urban regeneration (renewal) refers to bolder measures beyond urban heritage conservation, not clearly identified in the Chinese context. Nonetheless, surrounding the objective of protecting historic buildings and sites, the historical and cultural features, and the physical forms of neighbourhoods in the historical Taikang Road area, became a core of discussion. In these discussions, Wei Jiang (2012) noted that the enclosed communities of *lilong* houses have formed the basic urban fabric of Shanghai's city centre and provide different levels of interaction for the various classes of residents living there, creating the distinctive *longtang* culture; Jiang (2012, 34) further recognised Tianzifang as a case "on purpose of urban context-protection and revitalization".[158] Yan Zuo (2013, 26) argued that despite the lack of maintenance and repair of many individual buildings, the Tianzifang area has continued to exhibit a diversity of spatial forms and "integrity (*wanzhengxing*) of urban styles and features (*fengmao*)" in the process of transformation, presenting the veritable value of a hybrid community (Yu and Zou 2015, Wang 2011). However, the overdevelopment has led to a bottleneck in Tianzifang, which is caught in a dilemma between history and its future development, although stakeholders made efforts to "protect (*baohu*)" the area and "retain (*baoliu*)" the sense of enclosure of the old alleyway space (Zheng and Yan and Yang 2018). This argument reveals the challenges posed to sustainable development by the oversaturated tourism and the surplus of creative cultural industries in the late 2010s in Tianzifang.

Considering a few valid English papers resulting from the keyword searches, this thesis extends literature analysis to a larger scope, including conference papers and those included in the Web of Science. Comparatively, considering Tianzifang

158 The quoted English text is directly translated by the author Wei Jiang, and included in the English abstract of Jiang's Chinese journal paper.

"a change of strategy from demolition to conservation" (Wang 2011, 376), from the perspective of protecting the diverse tangible features in Tianzifang, scholars in academia generally agree that every approach that has been done to ensure the persistence of old buildings when no demolition is taking place is a form of heritage conservation. In particular, in the English context, it seems that when scholars started to study on Tianzifang, they tacitly affirmed the character of this project being the conservation of urban sites and historic buildings. For example, with the explicit suggestion that Tianzifang is a way of urban conservation, Wang (2011) further categorises the heritage approaches within as adaptive reuse. In Yung and Chan and Xu's two journal papers published in 2014, they acknowledge the significance of Tianzifang by conserving historical buildings through rehabilitation (2014a) and assert the success of the adaptive reuse approach for sustainable urban regeneration as well (2014b). Nevertheless, from the perspective of intangible values, a point of contention is the progressive gentrification of the entire Taikang Road area and its impact on local residents' daily life. In global big cities, gentrification seems to be a phenomenon with a high probability in a market-oriented urban regeneration. Since the 2010s, scholars have constantly questioned and criticised China's bottom-up mechanism in urban conservation. Wang (2011) indicates that the community initiative in Tianzifang is a politicised issue that has been embedded into the scheme of large-scale urban regeneration by the government. Wang (2011, 378) further indicates that the conservation, or precisely, the rehabilitation of historic neighbourhoods in Tianzifang has undergone a reshaping process for a new "aesthetic appeal and cultural distinction", while the function for being housing and industry was vanishing. A section of scholars considers the Chinese approach to achieving urban redevelopment and community prosperity over the conservation of historic buildings as an unorthodox process from a Eurocentric lens, although they simultaneously acknowledge the specificity of the Chinese contextual features (Verdini et al. 2017; Li et al. 2020). Nevertheless, a comprehensive discussion on the relationship between heritage conservation and gentrification is missing. The uniformly preconceived argument to consider its attribute as a process of "conservation" has imperceptibly compressed the academic scope for discussion and debate of conservation practices in Tianzifang. This has led to the negligence of many potential problems that could trigger the decay of buildings and areas when assessing the conservation-related appropriateness and adequacy of each measure.

Some scholars point out that systematic research to investigate how community participation can effectively engage with cultural heritage conservation is still insufficient (Kostka and Mol 2013; Fan 2014). By reviewing the existing literature mentioned above, this thesis suggests that community participation in Tianzifang will and needs to become a research focus in the 2020s, as the conflict between dwelling and commerce is growing. Being adjoined to Heng-Fu Protection Area and listed

in 2016, the public sees the government's visible advocacy of Tianzifang as a cultural heritage site. However, for long, although the criticism of gentrification of historical neighbourhoods is increasing, there has been a weak reflection to address the interaction or reciprocal inhibition between gentrification and the proper measures of conservation of cultural heritage. Indeed, a common problem implied in the previous discussion is that the developing routine and prospect for Tianzifang as a Protection Neighbourhood for its historical and cultural values is still uncertain. As the gentrification in Tianzifang did not happen overnight like the entire redevelopment of Xintiandi, it is worth noting the process and management deficiencies in its becoming. Yung and Chan and Xu (2014a) optimistically evaluate and predict the sustainability of its social development and even advocate approaches adopted in Tianzifang through which eviction of low-income residents can be avoided for retaining a stable and equitable social structure, even under the situation where the trend towards commodification and gentrification is inevitable resulting from the demand for regional economic development. However, this over-optimistic assessment has not been verified by subsequent development.

Undeniably, in most cases, the perspectives and methods of well-educated and professionally trained scholars are logical and scientific, but not down to earth. This thesis thus challenges here "Whose community will the historic neighbourhoods belongs to in the process of resident change?" and questions "How and to what extent community participation can contribute to the conservation of intangible values of the historic Taikang Road area in a situation where cultural heritage is being eroded by gradually penetrative gentrification?" In this respect, how people from different groups in the community understand the concept of conservation, and engage their activities in heritage transformation in the name of conservation is worth noticing and investigating. On the one hand, in addition to non-demolition, there were no rules before 2016 to constrain the widely recognised "conservation" of Tianzifang, generating uneven standards in conservation measures applied by each stakeholder, for being appropriate and inappropriate according to the conservation principles. A certain number of participants, particular those who have acceded to the transformation before 2008 have had awareness of the significance of the historic buildings in Tianzifang based on the 2004 charrette. Nonetheless, the fact that stakeholders are usually motivated by profit has also been a general rule, generating neglect of heritage conservation. On the other hand, in addition to investigating the varied heritage approaches, it is equally important to understand the reasons behind each behaviour. In this respect, a profound discourse analysis of involvers from different sectors needs to be confronted. On the basis of viewpoints from different perspectives, the author can obtain a more detailed and explicit argumentation with critical thinking.

7.4 Urban transformation: from Taikang Road to Tianzifang

Tianzifang has seen rich diversity in its transformation. It is different from the Xintiandi project, in which the developer, designer in chief, and the government were in charge of identifying the heritage attributes of each historical building and deciding the scenario to situate the specificity of its "conservative" (re)development. In Tianzifang, even in the phase when Luwan District Government intervened, there were no harmonised standards to guide individual approaches and conservation measures. In fact, as of 2016, the historical buildings that could be rented out, have undergone physical alterations of varying degrees, and the area has been shaped with little possibility of further expansion. Presented as integrity, each retailer's design taste, preference, perception and attitude towards heritage are embodied in the adapted historical buildings. In general, the discussions of adaptive reuse in Tianzifang is about two dimensions in the classification of architectural typologies: industrial factories and residential dwellings.

7.4.1 Physical changes of the historical Taipingqiao area

7.4.1.1 Architectural features

The diversity of architectural typologies has not been the reason for diverse transformations. The demands of stakeholders, in particular those in charge of investment, determine the direction of each conversion. In practice for the past approximate 20 years, the physical changes that occurred in the historical Taikang Road area generally include three categories: (1) creative renovation, (2) transformation for functional purposes, and (3) infrastructure improvements.

The cultural creative industry has raised in the late 1990s when urban globalisation penetrated Shanghai. Historical *longtang* factories Lane 210 Taikang Road with spacious room, apply to the function of carrying artistic creations and exhibitions. Painter Chen Yifei and photographer Er Dongqiang rented relatively larger factory spaces around 2000 successively due to their own social and literary influence and financial strength. Wu Meisen, being the initiator and sponsor, took the lead in the

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alteration and signed a long-term leasing contract with the former Haihua Tannery located in No. 2 (Jia), No. 210 Taikang Road that acted as Chen's Yifei since 1998. Chen Yifei died in 2005, after which year his previous studio has been preserved to commemorate his contribution to Tianzifang. Today, it still presents an authentic form that dates back to its appearance after adaptive renovation. In this renovation, the roof shape and the quilted structure of the factory are shown in their entirety with the original timer and steel materials (Figure 7.13). Er Dongqiang applied the same principles and concepts of conservation in his gallery that is next door to Chen's studio before leaving in 2012 (Figure 7.14). With the artists' dedicative creation, this thesis suggests that approaches applied in the process are in line with the concept of "stylistic restoration", through which predecessor Eugène Viollet-le-Duc created an unprecedented image of the restored piece to achieve a unity of form (Jokilehto, 2002; Glendinning, 2013; Chen 2016). Yet the crudeness of industrial and residential heritage is no match for the aesthetics of the magnificent religious architecture.

Apart from a few studios with special rooms and advantageous locations along the alleyway, many others are crammed into cubicles with no design highlights (Figure 7.15). This method of approach has less relation to conservation or restoration, in addition to the maintenance of the existing industrial building itself. Furthermore, the economic downturn makes the promotion of consumption the first priority of Tianzifang at this stage of development (Figure 7.16). In this respect, we see the opening of a newly altered food court on the site where the cultural creation industry existed (Figure 7.17–7.18). This phenomenon reflects a less address of transferring and carrying forward historical, cultural, and social information through the protection of materials, processes, design and its environment from a side view. Practicality prominently outweighs other values.

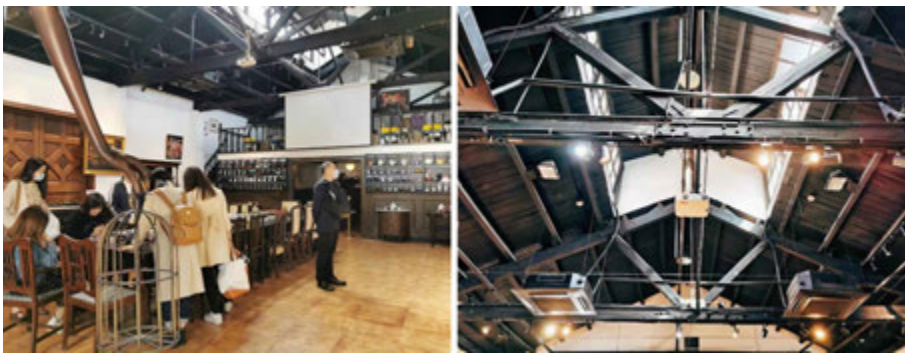


FIG. 7.13 The entrance hall of Chen Yifei's studio (left) and the ceiling structure of the factory (right). Source: author, 2021.

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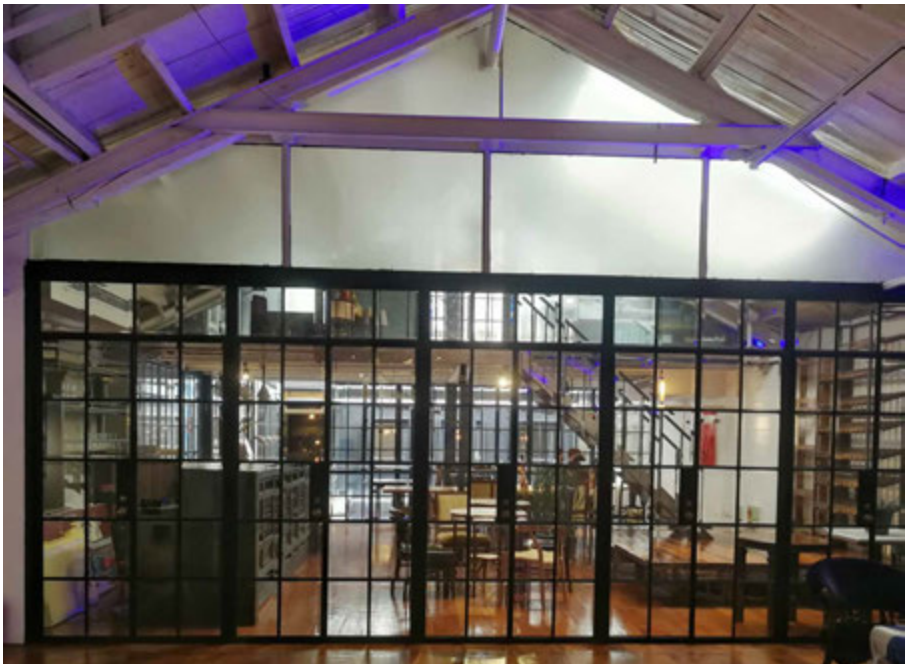


FIG. 7.14 A well-renovated cafe inside of the previous Er Dongqiang photography gallery. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 7.15 Office-building-like art gallery of Tianzifang, including more than a dozen painters' studios in the same form. Source: author, 2021.

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FIG. 7.16 One artist's studio has lost its vitality and is awaiting subletting opportunities. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 7.17 Downstairs the previous Er Dongqiang photography gallery becomes a food court and the previous gallery space was altered into a storage room. Source: author, 2021.

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FIG. 7.18 Inside of the food court. Source: 2021.

In addition to the alteration and adaptive reuse of the old *longtang* factories, the market has also targeted the residences in Tianzifang. The organised residential complex, representing the unique *lilong* culture of Shanghainese, is maintained with larger available stock than factories. Appropriate or inappropriate approaches thus happen in parallel. On the one hand, some retailers have a certain aesthetic sensibility and a desire for beauty in the decoration of their stores. For example, in practice, this group of retailers usually presents an interior scene in keeping with the Chinese-style aesthetic (Figure 7.19), or either preserves and incorporates the typical architectural elements into renovation (Figure 7.20). Visitors thus can see the *shikumen* stone gate frames and pediments, windows, or brick walls when wandering around Tianzifang. On the other hand, architectural form following function is a primary consideration of stakeholders. Many alterations neither respected the original architectural features, nor created culturally distinctive exteriors and interiors for a beautified neighbourhood appearance. One retailer told the author in an interview: "Regarding conservation, I think the government is doing a pretty good job. Persons in charge always come and inspect the stores every time after alteration before opening."[159] Despite her rhetoric, she was unable to convey the criteria that the retailers need to observe in practice.

159 This interview was conducted in 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Tianzifang.



FIG. 7.19 Interior of a store especially selling ameliorated hanfu and cheongsam, designed with Chinese architectural elements such as the round wall opening, stone hitching post, and timber or bamboo materials. Source: author, 2019.



FIG. 7.20 A well-preserved shikumen gate on the façade of an adapted B&B homestay. Source: author, 2021.

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FIG. 7.21 Because of the demand for openness to the public, this handmade soap store opened one extra opening front door in the brick wall and consequently panned the original left window of the ground floor. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 7.22 The faked red brick wall with an additional layering of new tiles. Source: author, 2021.

Indeed, for the actual demands of stakeholders, they may take actions such as changing positions of window-and-door openings (Figure 7.21), extending original space for larger business areas, or using new but disharmonious recognisable new materials. In addition, because of the natural weathering of the walls, people often use red-brick-like tile veneer on the surface of the damaged walls, creating an illusion that the wall is still intact (Figure 7.22).

The discussions above are mostly about conditions of architectural fragments that are leased out to new users. Nevertheless, the spaces and architectural characteristics, which are in use by local residents, are facing similar problems with limited advantage for conservation. Facades not facing the commercial interfaces relatively maintain in an ideal state with outstanding architectural characteristics, such as the iron balcony handrails, stained glasses, plastered walls, red or grey bricks, gable firewalls, and architectural form with front courtyards (Figure 7.23). It is worth noticing that many elements are still suffering deterioration (Figure 7.24). This condition is a result of chronic negligence on the part of users and authorities, being a problem that needs more serious concern. In addition, for their own living demands, many local residents built additions on the existing structure (Figure 7.25). Resulting from the diversity of participants and flexibility of measure execution in Tianzifang transition, the authorial and subjective nature of the transforming practice is in full display — in line with conservation principles or not.



FIG. 7.23 A view of the second and third layers of the lilong houses. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 7.24 A decaying timber window frame and stained and rusted window grilles on the façade of a lilong residence. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 7.25 Additional layer of a glass room on the top of the original brick house. Source: author, 2019.

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After the establishment of the Tianzifang Management Committee, a top-down operational mechanism thoroughly penetrated the transformation of Tianzifang. In order to improve the holistic community environment of Tianzifang, Luwan District Government funded 10 million Chinese Yuan to refurbish and maintain both publicly-owned and privately-owned old dwellings within. Tianzifang Management Committee took the responsibility of funding the improvements to fire-fighting and sanitation equipment and facilities (He 2009; Chen 2012). In the process, the government-affiliated department arranged the re-installation and repair of the communal facilities of Tianzifang, such as sewerage, septic tanks, landscape, and architectural features (Figure 7.26). In addition, government funding was also used to provide flush toilets for those households, as nearly half of the 1500 households were living in *shikumen lilong* housing with no lavatories. However, these transformations have not solved the problem of the dilapidated state of these historic residences. The minor alteration has neither satisfied the local population nor exposed some of the physical potential safety hazards that can be discerned by the naked eye. For example, one local resident of Lane No. 274 expressed that "I am very worried about fires in this area that is particularly vulnerable to fires. I feel that our lives and property of us, the indigenous residents, are not well protected."[160] Indeed, although from literature and media coverage, the district government's contribution has been acknowledged, the results seemed widely divergent according to my site visits in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021. Electric wires are obviously haphazard and entwined above the heads of pedestrians, with many air-conditioning units around (Figure 7.27). For commercial purposes, the quantity demanded by newly established retailers in Tianzifang for air conditioners and electric capacity is much larger than civilian use for everyday living (Figure 7.28). The new tourism-dominated industry has largely damaged the external features of many historical buildings, resulting from the "mega" additional elements that are necessary for those newly accepted industries in the block, in particular the catering services. The facility installation is not about the conservation of historic buildings in Tianzifang apart from a portion of the actions for maintenance, even though the results were unsatisfactory and undesirable.

160 This interview was conducted on 23 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Tianzifang.



FIG. 7.26 Tianzifang under construction of re-paving (left) and undergrounding pipes (right) in 2009 before the EXPO. Source: Shanghai Shikumen Cultural Research Centre, 2009.



FIG. 7.27 The one-storey high wire network, antipathetic iron-sheet exhaust chimneys, and air conditioning units stacked one on top of the other in Tianzifang. Source: author, 2019.

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FIG. 7.28 Numerous air conditioning units cover almost the entire wall of the original façade, which is partially coated by brick-like veneer tiles. Source: author, 2019.

The transformed results in different dimensions representatively reveal the predicament of the conservation of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods. In the entanglement of the concepts of heritage conservation and creative industry, involved stakeholders applied various approaches in the transformation of spaces that were adaptable for emerging functions, such as art studios, galleries, toggeries, souvenir stores, or restaurants and canteens. However, there was an absence of technical guidelines for restoration and identification guidelines for the conservation of architectural features and styles. In this respect, the governmental heritage management sectors have not been empowered to regulate the behaviour of various participants for the expert-certified heritage significance of Tianzifang. These drawbacks in the practice of Tianzifang are caused by the obvious and redundant layering and classification of management systems. The various operational departments work in the fields of community sanitary environment, property of land use, artists' activities, and protection of intellectual property rights, but

none of the official or non-governmental organisations takes care of specific material approaches that are essential for the conservation of an integrated authenticity of Tianzifang. This negligence and omission could be excused. This research sees it as the result of the radical heritage listing designation of many historical neighbourhoods, sites and streets in one fell swoop in the 2010s. However, in the following case, Bugaoli reveals that the existence and countless occurrences of inappropriate approaches do not only occur with unprotected or newly protected cultural heritage under designation.

7.4.1.2 Urban landscapes

In the overlook urban landscapes visible by the naked eye, there has been little change in the physical attributes of Tianzifang in terms of urban texture and morph. However, unauthorised constructions and structures abound as a result of the diverse requirements and objectives of different participants, such as entrepreneurs, retailers, and temporary or permanent residents, in building alterations or extensions. According to the 2019 amended Regulations on the Protection, the indicators included, such as the edge line, width, interface, and scale of roads, and spatial historical characteristics, also encountered varying degrees of human manipulation in the urban transformation of Tianzifang. The absence of official and professional monitoring and control is the original sin under such conditions. From Xintiandi to Tianzifang, professionals' concern has shifted from the conservation of a single listed national CRPU and its surroundings to a holistic means to protect an integrated urban tissue that has grown from native soil and sustained a vernacular urban culture of Shanghai's history. Meanwhile, because of the focus on the whole rather than the individual building, rife unauthorised structures have created a mottled and chaotic graphic pattern of the original urban base (Figure 7.29). Wandering around the neighbourhood, I saw an increasing number of changes that occurred and encroached on the integrity and authenticity of the historic block, representing an aggressive tendency. For example, one building of Lane No. 248 was under reconstruction with a brand-new architectural form, as well as materials and construction techniques (Figure 7.30). It does not fit with the historical surroundings, but instead, unconsciously creates an unattractive and negative space that visitors' movement could rarely reach. In this respect, if the meaning of "conservation" in the context of Tianzifang merely equals "no demolition", the protection of such a residence for everyday living is pointless. The distinction of a listed residential heritage thus does not exist from a commercial compound.



FIG. 7.29 An overall aerial view of Tianzifang. Source: author, 2021.

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FIG. 7.30 Reconstruction of a new building built with a new architectural form and materials, the opposite of a shikumen residence. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 7.31 Usually, the alleyways of historic lilong neighbourhoods are narrow, in particular the diversions. In this photo taken by the author in 2017, we can see that the left half of the alleyway was occupied by low-cost small-ware (a sign to show "ten Chinese Yuan" in the photo), while many bar stools were arranged on the other side of the alleyway. Source: author, 2017.

The flexible and soft changes in physical spaces have been taking place randomly in the block and forcibly influenced the spatial form in daytime life. On a small scale, some displays extend from the front of the house to the outside (Figure 7.31), occupying the original space for pedestrians and repose. Nevertheless, the physical intervention and obstruction on the alleyway for displaying goods are limited in terms of occupation of public space, and the most influential business format is brought by catering (Figure 7.32–7.33). If commercial catering activities such as bars and restaurants are present, there is the potential for the inner streets and public squares to become a private domain, causing unequal distribution of the original shared semi-public space of Tianzifang.



FIG. 7.32 The street view of No. 42, Lane 248 in 2004. Source: Shanghai Shikumen Cultural Research Centre, 2004.



FIG. 7.33 The street view of No. 42, Lane 248 in 2014. Source: Shanghai Shikumen Cultural Research Centre, 2014.

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FIG. 7.34 Extended new one-floor architectural structure built outside of the gable wall of one shikumen housing, breaking original urban interface and alleyway organisation order. Source: author, 2021.

In addition to the soft changes that can be easily removed and only appear during business hours, another addition at the junction of two *lilong* neighbourhoods completely changed the internal road structure and interface (Figure 7.34).

The changes mentioned above interfere with the integrity of human perception of the neighbourhood. As mentioned in previous chapters, *lilong* neighbourhoods are usually structured with a gradual reduced public space and narrowed streets from outside inwards, emphasising the transition from publicness, to semi-publicness, and privacy of a gated neighbourhood, in order to maintain the pattern of life and social cohesion built by a typical network within a community. Since 1998, the urban fabric seemingly appears to have remained largely unchanged to a limited extent. However, one cannot say the physical urban features have been well preserved in the transformation, as the diverse commercial activities have prominently damaged the range and scale of uses available in the original everyday lifestyle. The wholeness and intactness of a property in a dynamic and increasingly variable international heritage discourse still gain unparalleled attention in different internationally

recognised literature.[161] In this respect, this thesis argues that when Tianzifang was designated as a Protection Neighbourhood in 2016, the blunt intervention has already caused depletion of physical attributes and collapse of intangible spirit and feeling. The damage is unjustifiable from the perspectives of both the 2019 amended Regulations on the Protection as in international conservation principles.

7.4.2 Intangible changes of the historical Taikang Road area

The initial ambitions of the early stakeholders to transform the Taikang Road area into a creative industry cluster have been endorsed and praised by multiple stakeholders in the 2000s. Even though whether it is a successful story remains an open question in the 2020s. Since the mid-2010s, the marginalisation of residential communities of the historical Taikang Road area and gradually vanishing creativity in the promoted Tianzifang have occurred almost simultaneously. After 2004, when indigenous residents successively participated in this profit-seeking game and enjoyed the premium derived from China's household registration system, the proportion of rental housing increased. Rooms on the second and third layers that are without a commercially favourable attribute are also popular among merchant tenants, for less commuting time because of the proximity to stores.

Since its birth, Tianzifang is famous for being a national known cutting-edge creative industry cluster. The idea to find a remedy for abandoned buildings for economic growth became mainstream. However, with the influx of artists and entrepreneurs in Tianzifang and a growing supportive external policy environment, there is no evidence to show that the booming cluster is driven by creative industries (O'Connor and Gu 2014; Shan 2014). Indeed, when the proportion of creative industries rose to 297, accounting for 69.7% of all businesses within Tianzifang in 2012, both the proportion and quantity of businesses in the cultural sector dropped in the following years. In 2015, the proportion of businesses in the art and culture category dropped to 8.3% (Zheng, Yan and Yang 2018). With Er's exit in 2012 and Chen's death, the spiritual core of Taikang Art Street is vanishing, and none of the latecomers has had an equal social and cultural impact, and economic drive to match. Seemingly to confirm this argument, the Huangpu District release in 2018 indicates the drop

161 See paragraphs 87 to 95 in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention approved by the World Heritage Committee.

in cultural offering qualities and merchandise sales.[162] In stark contrast, catering service has emerged as mainstream in the 2010s. With less than 20% of local residents living in their own homes, the catering sector reached as much as 33.74% in 2015, while apparel businesses accounted for 34.46% of the total (Zhong 2016).

In the transformation, the problem not only unfolded the homogenised commercial activities, but also the successive decline in the quality of activities in the same industrial category. In the field of cultural industry, the cultural creative scene and atmosphere in the area are gradually weakening. The wholesale fast moving consumer goods, retail commodities and featureless saviours that are easily accessed in Yiwu Market have begun to pervade Tianzifang (Figure 7.35).[163]



FIG. 7.35 A wide range of small commodities from retail store to store in Lane No 274. Source: author, 2021.

162 99 Morning News, 2018. The popularity of Tianzifang sees merchandise sales dip [Tianzifang renqi wangsheng shangpin xiaoliang xiahua], Shanghai Huangpu District Government. Available at https://www.shhuangpu.gov.cn/xw/001009/20180226/ca77e04c-d6bf-4acf-b55a-57f115f79450.html, accessed on 15 December 2021.

163 Yiwu Market is the largest distribution centre for small commodities in the world and received recognition from the United Nations, the World Bank and other international institutes.

These goods are lacklustre and plentiful in any commercialised tourist attraction in China with merchandise streets to visit. Coincidentally, despite the increase in food and beverage businesses, the overall quality has not improved. Restaurants, cafes and bars fitted and furnished in exquisite taste are vanishing (Figure 7.36), but food stations and barbecue stalls supersede (Figure 7.37). This change has caused dirty road surfaces and obscured historical attributes. In a political and economic environment to underscore "*yan-huo-qi*" in the transformation of historic neighbourhoods, I am thus confused about the definition of this emerging idea, through which more content that generates "smoke (*yan*)" and "fire (*huo*)" in a flow of production is introduced. It seems that stakeholders believe that a bustling vendor economy in a crowded space can forge the so-called pyrotechnic exuberance.

Avoiding gentrification does not mean overseeing urban decay with a loose rein. The above-mentioned phenomenon is an expression of pauperism, but not nativism. It is not to stigmatise or reject mass consumption, but to raise the question "What is the purpose of conserving historic districts?" According to the Recommendation on the Protection of Historic Urban Landscape, conservation has and needs to be "a strategy to achieve a balance between urban growth and quality of life on a sustainable basis" (UNESCO 2015).[164] In this respect, experts and scholars appeal to the approach towards integrity for not only convenient heritage management and visual aesthetic but also to convey the intangible significance of heritage property through conserved materials attributes (Wang and Gu 2020; Ashrafi, Kloos and Neugebauer 2020). Although it is not easy to draw a conclusion regarding the question "What needs to be conserved in a listed heritage site?" Development at the expense of damage to the local landscape and customs is definitely undesirable. A fortiori, Tianzifang is a recognised heritage site in terms of the cultural heritage regulations of Shanghai, and not an ordinary historical settlement.

164 The Recommendation was first issued in 2011, available at http://ossomo.fluxus.org/charm-https-whc.unesco.org/en/hul/, accessed on 23 September 2021.



FIG. 7.36 A popular bistro Rambler Garden, located in Lane No 155 Middle Jianguo Road, the extended stretch of Lane No 274 of Taikang Road in Tianzifang. Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 7.37 A food station to sell hot dogs. Source: author, 2021.

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FIG. 7.38 A standing sign with the reminder saying "Residential Area. Please Keep Quiet. Do not Disturb." Source: author, 2021.



FIG. 7.39 The back entrance of a shikumen lilong residence in Zhichengfang, Tianzifang. Source: author, 2021.

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From the perspective of local residents, the impacts on community become more acute. One investigation demonstrates that the neighbourly relationships of Tianzifang are deteriorating and conflicts are intensifying (Chen 2012; Yao, Pang and Wang 2012). In Lane No 248, which has a high concentration of restaurants, residents are often at odds with business operators. It is common for the police to come. For example, whenever customers stay later than 10 pm, an old female resident would go to the alleyway with a portable toilet and a spittoon, in order to drive away customers with the stench. Nevertheless, local residents' daily life continues to be affected by visitors. On the one hand, it is the incessant noise and unbidden guests' butting in (Figure 7.38). On the other hand, residents' shared internal living spaces are congested with goods and bicycles or motor-cycles, in a situation where a community-parking plots become spaces for visitors to stroll around (Figure 7.39). In this respect, overwhelmed by the distractions of life, over ninety percent of the local registered residents demanded that the local government to demolish Tianzifang and relocate them into new commercial housing (Yao, Pang and Wang 2012). It seems that experts in Shanghai over-estimated the evolution trajectory of Tianzifang, and their agreement upon protecting Tianzifang in 2004 have had a somehow counterproductive effect. By this means and path, the interaction of stakeholders has and will lead to a greater segregated and less sustainable community of Tianzifang.

7.5 Discourse Analysis: Perspectives of Stakeholders and Problems

Stakeholders' attitudes and discourses have shifted along with the development of Tianzifang. Before 2016, the conservation of historical buildings was not a mandatory indicator of the regional development of Taikang Road area. Even if the place had not been dismantled, practical approaches were not completely in line with the principles of the conservation of historical sites. Being promoted as a creative industry cluster rather than a heritage site for a long, one could make a different assessment according to the transient nature of scene presentation of space when observing the diverse and unpredictable changes in Tianzifang. Different from Xintiandi, there is no explicit and decisive stakeholder who determines the evolving direction of Tianzifang. Involvers with different perspectives have laid down the applicable strategy during architectural renovation and restoration. In the entanglement of various viewpoints, every single building has experienced

several phases of architectural presentations, creating an integrated affected on the conservation of the area. In this respect, this thesis suggests classifying various participants' discourses into four categories: (1) discourse of authorities, through which Tianzifang could be finally maintained and listed in 2016 for further conservation, (2) discourse of professional elites and the cultural power they represent, in particular, the stakeholders through whose efforts the historical and cultural values of Tianzifang are emphasised, (3) discourse of those with consciousness to reinforce the cultural identity of Tianzifang by making advantageous use of historic buildings, and (4) discourse of the other involving participants.

First, it is undeniable that the market acumen of the authorities is far behind that of practitioners, and grassroots management institutions. The development of historical districts holds the dualities that result from the conflicting values based on whether to pursue a long-term value or a short-term gain. The tenure system with a limited number of years and the performance-driven policy inherent in Chinese authority at the present stage dictates that the municipality of Shanghai will not invest too much in the conservation of a micro-transforming project with little yield in the short-term. Directly, among all the honorary titles granted to Tianzifang, none of which are related to its significance for being an outstanding historic site with architectural diversity and population representativeness (Table 7.2). In 2016, although Huangpu District Government issued the Interim Measures for Integrated Management of the Tianzifang Area in Huangpu District (Huangpu Qu Tianzifang Diqu Zonghe Guanli Zanxing Banfa, **黄浦区田子坊地区综合管理暂行办法**), immediately following the municipal administration's release of the 119 listed Protection Neighbourhoods and 23 Protection Streets, the content of heritage conservation is not included in the Interim Measures for introducing a comprehensive local governing policies. Stakeholders need to meet the requirements regarding fire protection, community security, property management, municipal construction, environmental sanitation and greening, and the placement of lights and billboards. In addition, Article 13 also requests that stakeholders in Tianzifang shall submit to planning management and ensure that their relevant construction works conform to planning requirements. In this respect, Article 13 indicates that penalties will be imposed in accordance with the Shanghai Urban and Rural Planning Regulations (Shanghai Shi Cheng Xiang Guihua Tiaoli, **上海市城乡规划条例**) when stakeholders make new constructions, alterations or expansions of buildings or structures with non-compliance with planning conditions, but do not take into account the legal effects of the cultural heritage related laws and regulations. The fact unfolds that heritage values stand for less important significance among all indicators in authoritative decision-making of the government for the management of the mass ordinary residential legacies even those that are designated as heritage sites.

TABLE 7.2 Huangpu Government especially refers to the honours of Tianzifang in the news release on its official website. Data source: available online, https://www.shhuangpu.gov.cn/qq/004004/004004012/subpageSingle .html, accessed 5 October 2021.

Year	Honoured Title
2005	Shanghai's First Batch of Creative Industries Cluster
2006	Best Creative Industrial Park in China
2006	Shanghai's Top 10 Fashion Landmarks
2006 - 2008	Shanghai Outstanding Creative Industrial Park
2007	Most Influential Brand in Luwan
2009	Shanghai Cultural Industry Park
2010	National AAA Grade Tourist Attraction

Second, professionals' preferences and suggestions are rarely heard in the later radical progress when the government intervened, of its nature as a bottom-up program. In 2004, the grass-root government utilised the heritage discourse of the academic elites to save Tianzifang from demolition (Yu, Zhong and Chen 2013). Indeed, only a few experts and scholars can make themselves be heard by district, municipal and state government officers, not only for their virtuous social reputation, but also for the position and discourse power of their students in relevant government departments.[165] Whether government officers are willing to respect experts' opinions and follow their advice is highly linked to the actual economic benefits. It seems that the attitude of heritage conservation experts represented by Professor Ruan Yisan has changed and lost faith in consistent conservation of Tianzifang.[166] Professor Ruan indicates that:

"It is all about making money in Shanghai now. For example, they vacated East Siwenli many years ago and were ready to dismantle it. With my effort, the area has been temporarily retained vacant, but the proposal for conservation and regeneration has been delayed. The government wants to set up shopping malls in it, wants people to live in it, and also wants to make money meanwhile, but only fails to consider what comes first is the culture protection."[167]

Third, this thesis tentatively suggests that the stakeholders, who were involved in the early stage before the government entirely took over the transformation management of Tianzifang, hold a stronger responsibility for the maintenance and protection of

165 This interview was conducted in 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Professor Ruan Yisan's office in Shanghai.

166 Ibid.

167 Ibid.

the buildings and attached distinctive elements and characteristics. For example, Wu Meisen, the initiator and chief producer of the Taikang Road Art Street, invited Chen Yifei and many other artists to engage in Tianzifang complying with his own strategy and screening mechanism to select the incoming retailers and artists for community creation. When the influence of his creative cluster permeated the residential area, Wu showed great interest and support and demonstrated this in a newspaper report in 2019:

"(The idea is) to maintain the original outlook and environment, and the household names, and structure of each house remain unchanged, and in fact, people only borrow the physical space of each house for usage …I just want to preserve this unique alleyway culture, and in fact, conservation is for a better development."[168]

Wu explicitly illustrated the relationship between conservation and development from his perspective and especially pointed out the main thrust to prioritise conservation over development. This thesis could not tell from the actual presentation if this rationale has been communicated effectively in the case of Tianzifang. In this respect, the author also interviewed artist and photographer Er Dongqiang, and the bottom-up initiator, local resident of Tianzifang, Zhou Xinliang in 2018, to explore diverse attitudes about people's intervention as occurred in Tianzifang in the name of conservation. The author met artist Er Dongqiang in his bookstore Hanyuanhui (Old China Hand Style) which is located in No. 374 South Shaanxi Road, not far from the other case Bugaoli. Mr Er created this art space after he departed from Tianzifang to express his enthusiasm for history and historic objects. In Hanyuanhui, he collected historical books, paintings, photography works, as well as old Shanghai Art Deco pieces that illustrate the sweeping trend of architectural and furniture style in the 1930s for display. According to his opinion, it was not difficult to see that he is a person who has a strong respect for history with in-depth studies of topics that interest him. When asked about his experience in Tianzifang, he replied that:

"To be honest, from the perspective of the government and institutes, their greater consideration is the commercial value of Tianzifang, with a careful appraisal of real estate as the starting point. This is naturally different from the transformation cases in Europe with heritage conservation as a starting point."[169]

168 Ye, Wei. 2019. ""Longtang Jishi" Bian Wenhua Dibiao, "Tianzifang" Zhanxian Shanghai Shikumen Wenhua ["Alleyway bazaar" Turns into the Cultural Landmark, "Tianzifang" to display Shanghai's Shikumen Culture]." Xinmin Evening News. Available at: https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1623443315846693438&wfr=spider&for=pc, accessed 15 December 2021.

169 This interview was conducted on 3 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Hanyuanhui.

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From the perspective of heritage conservation, Mr Er highly recognised the uniqueness of Tianzifang and its scarcity in the future urban scenario of Shanghai:

"The community diversity and delicate spatial sequence presented through the hybrid cityscape made of *shikumen* housing, detached villas, gardens, factories and warehouses appeal to us … In my opinion, the achievement of Tianzifang around 2010 was largely due to the obliteration of many similar historic districts during Shanghai's massive urban renewal. Historic *lilong* neighbourhoods have seen their plebification in the city's transition, being the dominant living space in Shanghai before the 1990s. As this type of space has gradually faded away, the space that remains becomes particularly valuable. These leftover *lilong* spaces, especially those like No.2 of Lane 210 of Taikang Road that has been repackaged and reinvented by us artists, have and will emerge as a hugely pleasant surprise to the entire former citizens who used to live in Shanghai."[170]

Mr Er further expressed his opinion as being both a local Shanghainese and a practitioner in heritage practice:

"Some of the local citizens cannot imagine why a small change could convert the cramped space he/she has lived in all his/her life to a completely new outlook with vitality …Nevertheless, this form definitely carries a common memory of the local Shanghainese for their public good. Many residents, especially the older generations of Shanghainese, would like to go back to the places where they lived, as children to find memories of their childhood, but most of the places have become shopping malls or commercial gated communities. They cannot find the historic *lilong* homes of their memory, but people can see a similar dwelling space and conjure up a familiar scenario in Tianzifang when meandering in the narrow *longtang* spaces."[171]

Nevertheless, Er Dongqiang argued that it was not the government's effort to enable a splash with the socio-cultural and heritage significance of Tianzifang-like neighbourhoods. Straightforwardly, he pointed out the implausibility of the "myth" that the Dapuqiao Street Office took the leading role in the conservation of Tianzifang and turned the tide by themselves as disseminated by the media. "Zheng Rongfa and the Street Office have neither the decision-making power on demolition nor the power on protection."[172] Er pointed to a pragmatic issue in the conservation

170 Ibid.

171 Ibid.

172 Ibid.

practice: the competence of each governmental functionary. Historic residences usually fall under the management of the SPNRB, SHAB, and SMACH which operate in parallel. These functionaries belong to a unified category of stakeholders as government, but also act in decision-making for different political appeals. He particularly emphasised the contribution of artists who participated in the bottom-up conservative renovation of buildings in Tianzifang as the earliest stakeholders involved. He negated the direct relationship between the Tianzifang transformation and protection. Through the dissection of self-motivation, Er argued that the price level of rents largely determines whether the artists remain, if not taking into account the overall creative atmosphere and artistic context. He points out that:

"We artists are of course looking for places with cheap rents to use as studios. When Chen Yifei and I decided to move to Taikang Road, this place was chaotic and nasty. However, it is still a fascinating place with divertingness …Government came to support the transformation when seeing the accumulated celebrity effects. They are not able to create Tianzifang, but making a flourishing space created by artists profitable. My photography studio was there for ten years. When the contract of the first phase came to its expiry date, the owner asked me for one million RMB annual rent for the next ten years. I rejected the outrageous price hike."[173]

In Shanghai's large-scale urban regeneration, many historic blocks have encountered different forms of transformation in the name of urban conservation, during which process not only the registered local residents but also many practitioners with a mindset to conserve historic sites have suffered gradually aggressive exclusion dominated by capitalism from the inner city. Er Dongqiang closed his Hanyuan bookstore and Huanyuanhui in Huangpu District successively in 2017 and 2020, and moved his studio to Qingpu District for further oral and documentary history studies (Figure 7.40). This evacuation and relocation of Er Dongqiang's studio marked a failure of artists' participation in the conservation of Tianzifang. This also explained the reasons for the decline of cultural and creative industries, and although the name Taikang Road Art Street remains, the real connotation is vanishing.

Coincidently, local initiator Zhou Xinliang drew the author's attention to an indiscriminate price rise in the rental housing market of Tianzifang. This speculation was created by a considerable proportion of greedy tenants. They usually choose to sign long-term contracts with the local residents with low prices, and have free re-pricing rights after becoming owners of property using rights. The phenomenon has significantly disrupted

173 Ibid.

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the internal pricing system and market order in Tianzifang. He expressed his regret and helplessness in the interview, for Er's leaving was caused by the striking force led by capitalism on the market and other stakeholders' actions. He said:


Preserving history through financial account books

FIG. 7.40 Er Dongqiang continued his study of history and organised exhibitions in Qingpu District, far from his previous working galleries and bookstores in Huangpu District. The newspaper Shanghai Daily published this news on 12 February 2022.

"I prefer a stable and long-term leasing relationship, and adjust the rent according to actual business situation of my tenant to ease the burden of these entrepreneurs …When Mr Er left Tianzifang, the local newspaper of Shanghai published an article entitled 'Tianzifang Drives Mr Er Away'. I do not agree with this saying. Tianzifang certainly desires and needs Mr Er to stay. Indeed, it was the state-owned enterprise Shanghai Shuzi Group that drove away Mr Er with an outrageous leasing price. In my opinion, the state-owned enterprises with sole proprietorship should behave responsibly with a long-term vision rather than a concern about money only."[174]

174 This interview was conducted on 21 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Tianzifang.

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The initial idea of stakeholders who participated in the transformation of Tianzifang in an early stage was to preserve the neighbourhood through cultural creation. Both Professor Ruan and Er Dongqiang emphasised its special character of including diverse architectural typologies and irreplaceable function for being a representative vehicle that carries shared memories of Shanghainese. Participants took a prudent and devout attitude when transforming. Local resident Zhou Xinliang and his neighbours who joined in the same transition round exactly held a procedure manner of the historic buildings in Tianzifang before the local government officially determined the value of Tianzifang as a heritage site. A small group of local residents represented by Mr Zhou, who was watching the happening of gentrification in Lane No. 210, decided to participate in the game for the definite attraction by the huge financial benefits in 2004. In the interview, he expressed that:

"When I returned Shanghai in 1994 after working in Xinjiang for 30 years as one of the sent educated youth, my monthly retirement salary was only 115 *yuan*, which was extremely low to support my life in Shanghai, a high-spending city. I could only pick up floating jobs immediately after retirement to earn extra money to supplement my family…Seeing the cultural and economic prosperity driven by Chen Yifei and Er Dongqiang, I started to consider the potential of my house for a similar business before Wu Meisen contacting me."[175]

Nevertheless, the market-led interest has not crashed against Mr Zhou's appreciation of the built heritage within. Mr Zhou specially narrated the torment and reluctance of moving out of the old house, but "life always comes first" as he said. He fully presented the desire and necessity to improve the life of his family in the interview. Nevertheless, his idea presented the group of local residents who are holding strong attachment to the historic dwelling and neighbourhood where he was born and raised.

"Many historic elements in the neighbourhood are meaningless for most tourists but are treasures for local residents of my age. Like the small wooden benches that are exhibited here, they are not valuable and precious for the most, but mine is a gift that my parents bought for me in my childhood, carrying our blood affection and my emotional memories of the old *lilong* housing (Figure 7.41)."[176]

175 Ibid.

176 Ibid.

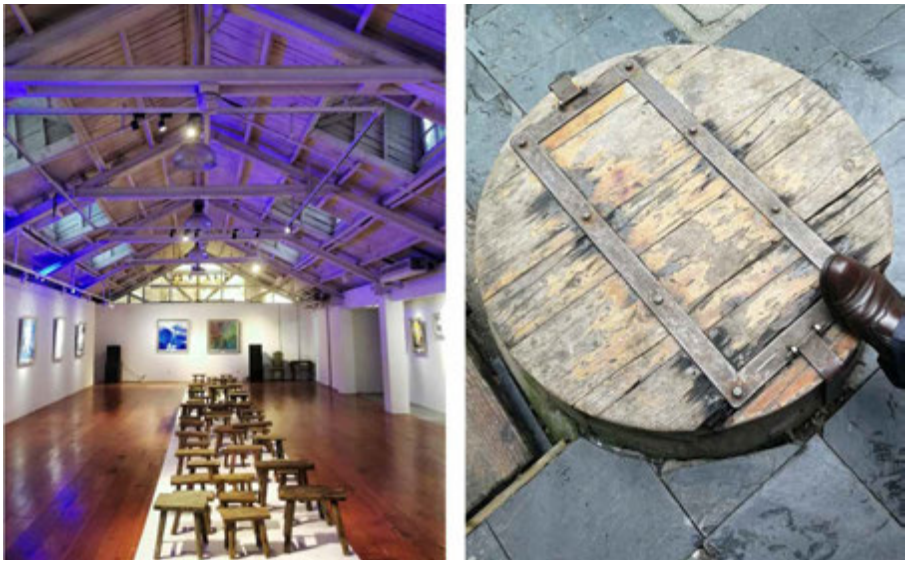


FIG. 7.41 Exhibition of wooden benches or stools collected from residents of the Dapuqiao community in the previous Er Dongqiang photography gallery where I interviewed Zhou Xinliang (left); Mr Zhou showed me around Tianzifang and the well in front of his home (right). Source: author, 2018.

Nevertheless, not every stakeholder can empathise with Wu Meisen or Zhou Xinliang. There are opposite opinions regarding heritage conservation. For example, the owner of unit No.16 said, "I do not think it is necessary to conserve Tianzifang. I recognise the importance of the Forbidden City and the Great Wall as heritage, but I could not see the historical value of Tianzifang." An increasing number of involvers from the bottom, including artists, local residents, retailers and other merchants, have not contributed to an improvement in heritage approaches and conservation measures, but caused a gradual malformation and congestion of Tianzifang. From 1949 to 2021, the population of Shanghai has risen from 5 million to 25 million, few of which can appreciate the socio-cultural value that *lilong* housing contains. Particularly, represented by foreign visitors and domestic tourists from other cities in China, have less attachment to the neighbourhood, and appreciate the joy of seeking novelty rather than the neighbourhood itself (Figure 7.42).



FIG. 7.42 One alleyway in Tianzifang, is full of foreign visitors. Source: Shanghai Shikumen Cultural Research Centre, 2008.

It is hard to identify what the visitor is exactly looking for in Tianzifang while the author sees the influx of retailers and investors without artistic and creative pursuits. When searching the keyword "田子坊" in the Chinese social media Xiaohongshu on 15 September 2021, there were about 30,000 results, less than half of the results by searching "步高里 (Bugaoli)" and "上海新天地 (Shanghai Xintiandi)". Among all the highly liked posts (4 posts in total till 31 December 2021) that received over 3000 "likes" in the past, one post entitled "Once a Shanghainese sets foot in Tianzifang, he or she will be expelled from the Shanghai household (Shanghai ren yidan tajin Tianzifang, jiu hui bei chaichu Shanghai huji)" caught the author's attention (Figure 7.43). This post delivers information about a general disagreement between the measures taken and business presented to the public in Tianzifang today. On Instagram, while searching for previous posts tagged with "Tianzifang", there were about 50 thousand results on September 15, 2021. From the highly liked posts, the idea to get lost in Tianzifang seems to be the most popular answer, and many users illustrated their appreciation of such an intricate environment and disorder (Figure 7.44–7.45). It is meaningless to define whether Xintiandi or Tianzifang can better present Shanghai amid a wealth of information. On mass media, there is little discussion about the relationship between these sites and heritage conservation from the perspective of bloggers or vloggers. Nonetheless,

although an individual's post could not fully represent the opinions of all, the mainstreaming posts reveal different attitudes in Chinese and English contexts on internet media. The historic district of Tianzifang retains a high level of popularity in English-led posts as an integrated site with a well-preserved urban fabric. However, Chinese tourists, represented by the young net users on Xiaohongshu, refused to see and appreciate Tianzifang as a heritage site with authentic features and characters that convey the typical and traditional lifestyle of Shanghai and the culture of *lilong*. The sharp, disillusionary but veritable fact presented in a Chinese context is a far cry from what was hoped in 2004 when the stakeholders and professionals painstakingly persuaded the local government and the developer to abandon the redevelopment of the Tianzifang area.



FIG. 7.43 The post on the left receiving 3246 likes is the one entitled "Once a Shanghainese sets foot in Tianzifang, he or she will be expelled from the Shanghai household", posted by "G僧东" on 8 October 2021.

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FIG. 7.44 The user "somestylest" highly recommended Tianzifang in her post, and expressed her enjoyment "to get lost in the alleyways". Source: somestylest, 2021.



FIG. 7.45 The user "cassandraarmijo" whose post this thesis shows in the case of Xintiandi, also posted a photo of Tianzifang on April 7, 2021, taking a similar camera angle as "somestylest" with many paper lanterns in the background. Source: cassandraarmijo, 2021.

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The above analysis unfolds images of a group of figures from various perspectives and their entanglement in one project maintained in the name of conservation. Like local government caring more about the focus on land values and tax benefits, and Professor Ruan Yisan's concerns with site retention, each individual has a different standpoint on the transformation of a historic site. Participants and stakeholders take approaches based on the information and judgement shaped by their experiences. This thesis emphasises the ambiguous nature of the imported concept of "heritage conservation" throughout the text. In this respect, it is perfectly reasonable if stakeholders of Tianzifang do not recognise the necessity to protect the old residences in their familiar community. With the absence of a series of specific criteria, the government usually invites committee members of a fixed group of specialists to appraise technical issues such as whether a project belongs to "heritage conservation", and whether architectural and urban adjustments can be added to conform to conservation principles. Nonetheless, this situation only happens when the project is under an overall transformation with the investment from the market. The mechanism for committee decision-making does not apply to Tianzifang, nor does it apply to the vast majority of cases in China. Indeed, heritage conservation is neither a popularised concept among the public, nor a regulated procedure for practitioners in practice.

In recent years, governments and developers have seen economic development as the standard for everything. In the 2020s, an increasing number of lands in which the listed historic neighbourhoods are located have been released to the market for redevelopment. For their historical and cultural characteristics, these lands have attracted many investors, in particular those from Hong Kong such as Shui On Group who led the redevelopment of the historical Taipingqiao area. With the recent success of Shankangli and Fengshengli, more blocks of *lilong* neighbourhoods are in the process of accessing Xintiandi-like projects. A combination of bottom-up and top-down heritage approach failed in Tianzifang for the protection of both the tangible and intangible characters within. The evacuation of artists and vacancy of sublet street-front rooms show the government and the public a sideways glimpse of the failure of a gradually-processed urban transformation with public participation. The depressing scene is in contrast to the flourishing scenario of Xintiandi. Sun Jiwei's vision to create a vibrant and vivid street and community life in Tianzifang thus failed in reality (see footnote 145). The conspicuous result introduces a hidden threat to the future growth of Tianzifang, through which the government sees a distinct decay of the listed site and the cultural heritage within. Where it is not proven in the short term that a bottom-up approach can effectively balance urban economic development and heritage conservation synchronously, the government's heritage strategy may easily shift; by then, Xintiandi would be the most suitable model to learn from and emulate. Indeed, it is actually happening at the moment. The present homogenisation phenomenon in Tianzifang is still reversible by

setting reasonable guidance on the proportion of entering industries, or restricting unregulated commercial activities such as outrageous sub-letting prices. However, when the rapid and radical redevelopment mode compresses Tianzifang, a Xintiandi-like homogenised redevelopment could happen. This homogenisation could not be reversed in the event of the demise of the physical entity of the historic areas, and the future of Tianzifang might become another story irrelevant to heritage conservation.

7.6 Conclusion

In general, although Tianzifang has been prominent among the other neighbourhoods for the bottom-up proactive attempts by artists and local residents, it has not evolved as conservationists and architectural historians had expected since the government stepped in to manage it in 2008. Whether it is the gradually vandalised architectural façades beyond recognition, the gradual deteriorating architectural structure and interior, the moving-out of local inhabitants in succession, or the compression of living space, these are all concrete signs of the participants' and stakeholders' inadequate heritage approaches and conservation measures. With one's own strength, any single party of the stakeholders could not cause the transition results of Tianzifang at different stages. As Professor Ruan Yisan said, all his efforts could only ensure that government and capital did not flatten the historical Taikang Road area thoroughly at once, but he could not influence the specific behaviour of thousands of participants for more than a decade.[177] Zhou Xinliang sublet his room for better income, and Er Dongqiang left Tianzifang for exorbitant rent, participants' arrival and evacuation are all about money. The case of Tianzifang unfolds a bloody truth that heritage conservation, or specifically and precisely, conservation of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods in Shanghai has no wide popular base and recognition from the bottom.

A bottom-up heritage approach is interesting for becoming a debatable topic in society, attracting countless visitors from China and abroad. Today, Tianzifang is still a popular inner city attraction for experiential tourism of historical alleyways. Yet it is not a convincing model for heritage practitioners to learn from. In Shanghai's "Thirteenth Five-Year Plan", the municipal government proposed to apply the new

177 This interview was conducted on 29 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Professor Ruan Yisan's office in Shanghai.

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strategy of managing steps “maintenance-conversion-demolition” to replace the “demolition-conversion-maintenance” procedure in heritage practice, to encourage and safeguard the conservation of historic urban landscapes of Shanghai (Xu, 2019). In most interpretations, this change is seen as a positive strategic and political change. Nevertheless, according to the over twenty years of experience of Xintiandi and Tianzifang, the procedure “maintenance-conversion-demolition” also delivers the message that if the means of maintenance does not work effectively, the approach of conversion, or consequently accepted demolition, is feasible.

Therefore, national and local heritage governance and policies are the main instruments for regulating the urban landscapes and features and determining the direction and form of development in the historic inner city. In 2007, the Ministry of National Construction launched the concept of a shift from “functional” to “cultural” urban development in Chinese cities (Huang and Xu and Hu 2011). Under the national strategy “Fourteenth Five-Year Plan” for housing development, the government of Shanghai targets to fully complete the regeneration of about 1.1 million square metres of *lilong* housing below the second level by the end of 2022, which especially refers to the housing constructed with no kitchens and toilets. The dwellings of Tianzifang and Bugaoli all belong to the “second level” category. Most of the listed *lilong* neighbourhoods among the 250 Protection Neighbourhoods are encountering problems brought by the development strategy. Whether to conserve the historical and cultural significance of the *lilong* neighbourhoods under legislative protection, or to utilise the concept of conservation to redevelop these historic sites for cultural enhancement in the city branding of Shanghai is about choice. Nevertheless, this thesis argues that practitioners and academics need to be vigilant about the blurry or speculatively misinterpreted justification of this choice when dealing with those listed *lilong* historic neighbourhoods, even if the decisive stakeholders describe the redevelopment approach as “heritage conservation” in a single tone.

According to the analysis of cases Xintiandi and Tianzifang, less optimistically, this thesis notices the disregard of conservation from both bottom-up approaches and top-down decisions. From the perspective of decision-making and investment, this thesis elaborates sufficiently on the prominent motivation from the top to drive economic development through transforming culture and history to ability and competitiveness to make profits. In addition, why registered local residents prefer to sublet their rooms to merchants rather than take the initiative to conduct heritage conservation actions to sustain the cultural value and collective memory inherited in the unique urban vernacular where they live, needs more analysis. In the next chapter, by investigating the case of Bugaoli, the focus of research lies on the participation and attitudes of local residents regarding the conservation of a municipal-level CRPU of Shanghai, as well as the socio-cultural effects it might bring to urban heritage practice.

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8 Bugaoli (Cité Bourgogne)

Maintenance for Display under the Cultural Relic Protection System

A large part of the content are taken from the journal article "Temporalities and the Conservation of Cultural Relic Protection Units: Legislative, Economic and Citizen Times of the Bugaoli Community in Globalising Shanghai" (2020) published in *Built Heritage*, and co-authored by Kaiyi Zhu (the author of this thesis) and Carola Hein.

8.1 Introduction

Bugaoli, also known as Cité Bourgogne according to the curved French name on the archway of each entrance of this *lilong* neighbourhood (Figure 8.1), is one of the earliest listed residence groups in Shanghai. After being listed by the municipal government as a CRPU in 1989, physical change that may damage the distinguishing historic features of Bugaoli is unwarrantable in terms of legislation. However, the ageing indigenous residents, the sufficient expenditure on heritage conservation afforded by the government, the deteriorating community environment and housing quality, and the compression of surrounding high-end businesses have interacted and accelerated the exposure of neighbourhood problems for being a cultural heritage.



FIG. 8.1 Facing the West Jianguo Road, the French name "Cité Bourgogne" is clearly visible on the arch gate. Source: author, 2018.

Academic publications related to Bugaoli are scarce. Similar to the analytical steps structured in the last chapter, from the perspective of urban heritage conservation, it first crawls the use of heritage-related terms and vocabularies in published Chinese and English papers and books. Existing literature confirms the historical and cultural significance of Bugaoli, to emphasise its heritage nature. Second, it analyses the tangible and intangible changes of Bugaoli, and points the hollowing out of Bugaoli caused by the uneven development inside and outside of the listed sites. Third, by considering the discourse of different individuals in a holistic manner, this thesis argues that it is necessary to retrospect the post-colonialism history of Shanghai, which is the starting point of the origins of *lilong* housing. This thesis argues that Shanghai's stakeholders from the top have intentionally marginalised or beautified this history in a narrating mechanism when mentioning the shifting history of *lilong* neighbourhoods after 1949. More conceptual attributes, such as revolutionary heritage, industrial heritage, vernacular heritage, and historic areas are endowed with *lilong* architecture and neighbourhoods, but the challenges and questions from the "bottom" remain unresolved. It suggests that debates about

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such controversial heritage will continue, and it is irresponsible to conduct urban transformation without facing Shanghai's history of post-colonialism. Then, it poses the dilemma of Bugaoli, to address the possible opportunities and challenges to increase stakeholders' awareness of heritage conservation and engage the forces of local residents in practice.

8.2 Background and History of Bugaoli

8.2.1 Historical background of "Cité Bourgogne"

The name Bugaoli is derived from the pronunciation of its French name "Cité Bourgogne", and means "a step up" in Chinese with beautiful symbolism. Bugaoli was built around 1930 (Figure 8.2) during the third expansion of the previous French Concession. It was located at the junction of the old Avenue du Roi Albert (now South Shaanxi Road) and Route J. Frelupt (now West Jianguo Road).[178] The MCFCS made the construction of the historical Avenue du Roi Albert in 1911, a turning point of China's regime change. The Avenue du Roi Albert crossed with the previous Avenue Joffre (Middle Huaihai Road), which was the road extension segment of the rue du Consulat (also known as rue Principale, now East Jinling Road) to the west, had become one of the most important and fashionable streets of the French Concession in the 1920s and 1930s (Figure 8.3). In this respect, with the prominent effect brought about by the increasingly flourishing Avenue Joffre, buildings for entertainment and education had risen on the Avenue du Roi Albert (Figure 8.4), facilitating the settlement of foreign immigrants and the landing of upscale neighbourhoods and private homes. Many famous buildings, such as the Moller Villa, the King Albert Apartments, and the Verdun Terraces (also known as Changle Village) were all built during the period of French Concession expansion. The *lilong* neighbourhood Bugaoli emerged under such a social environment and was built with a grander scale for community life.

178 This neighbourhood is well recognised to be established in 1930 according to the mark of the entrance archway, but referring to the advertisements of Bugaoli and Jianyeli published on *Shen Bao*, 1930 could be the date when the project was just launched or designed (Zhu and Zhu 2010b).



FIG. 8.2 Facing the South Shaanxi Road, the date "1930", as well as the French name "Cité Bourgogne" and the Chinese name "**步高里**" were carved on the archway of the main entrance. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.3 Crossroad of the Avenue Joffre and the Avenue du Roi Albert taken by photographer Malcolm Rosholt in 1937. Source: Photograph by Malcolm Rosholt. Image courtesy of 2012 Mei-Fei Elrick and Tess Johnston, Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol Library (www.hpcbristol.net).

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FIG. 8.4 The Canidrome on the old Avenue du Roi Albert was built in 1928, presenting the popular sports activities at the time. Source: Institut d'Asie Orientale, https://www.virtualshanghai.net/Photos/Images?ID=38, accessed on 14 October 2021.

Bugaoli was built within the trend of improving municipal road construction and mature commercial property development in Shanghai's Concession time. Its developer, International Saving Society, which absorbed a large amount of capital from the lower and middle classes through the "Saving Society Voucher", had become a company with an excellent investment capability. In 1920, the International Saving Society established its subsidiary corporation China Jianye Real Estate Company for specialised real estate development. The company developed many projects and expanded rapidly in the 1930s. It was not until 1933, that it became the largest French real estate company in Shanghai and seized a capital sum of 2.8 million U.S. dollars. Bugaoli and Jianyeli were built in parallel during the process, with virtually identical architectural features for being the products of the same period.

Bugaoli, being located at the southern fringe of the French Concession, occupied an urban space of 7,000 square meters and a gross floor area of 10,069 square meters. It consisted of 79 units designed with a typical *lilong* urban texture, featuring hierarchically organised alleyways (Figure 8.5). Unlike the diverse residential architecture in the Taikang Road area of Tianzifang, the dwellings of Bugaoli are present in the same way. It integrated traditional Chinese archways, red bricks,

structural timbers and European-style terrace buildings (Figure 8.6), resulting in a unique combination of Chinese and foreign features. Although the residences were built in the 1930s, the construction techniques and design largely followed an unmodern approach. In this respect, in terms of exterior appearance, in both Bugaoli and Jianyeli construction, the developer built the Chinese traditional architecture element *matouqiang*.[179] However, according to the recollection of the local resident Mr Yang, the *matouqiang* of Bugaoli was demolished after the establishment of the PRC in the circa the 1950s or 1960s, as the head tiles of the gable walls fell and injured passersby.[180] The reasons why it was demolished vary, authors Zhu Donghai and Zhu Xiaoming (2010b) confirm the previous existence of *matouqiang* through a historical photo taken before 1949. Today, people can no longer find traces of the historical *matouqiang* element on the buildings of Bugaoli (Figure 8.7).



FIG. 8.5 This historical map shows that compared with its surroundings, Bugaoli involves a large scale of building with a highly organised urban texture. Source: Cheng and Wu 2016.

179 The architectural element *matouqiang* stands for the top above the gable wall with a horse-head-like shape, higher than the architectural rood ridge, protecting the main body of a building from both fire and wind.

180 I got this information during my site visit to Bugaoli on 28 August 2018.

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FIG. 8.6 The organized terraced buildings in Bugaoli, constructed with red bricks, timber window frames, and door panels on the architectural façades. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.7 The corner of Bugaoli at the crossroad of the South Shaanxi Road and the West Jianguo Road is built with cement-encrusted two-slope gable walls today, the stepped gables (matouqiang) are nowhere in sight today. Source: author, 2018.

Initially, the neighbourhood was undoubtedly built for high-income middle and upper classes in the 1930s, as the monthly rental fee for one unit was 35 *yuan*, and 80 *yuan* for two units, while the average income of general labour was 15 *yuan* (Figure 8.8). Nonetheless, in terms of the interior design, the dwellings of Bugaoli are compact, being an economical and efficient product for the developer. In general, being constructed with a masonry-timber structure, most living units were planned with a standard module width of 3.6 metres and an average internal floor area of 94 square metres for one household. Each unit in this form was designed into two parts divided by the stairwell: the front side with two floors and a courtyard, and the rear side with three floors plus a roof terrace. Some units for large households were designed with a width of 7.2 metres. For a functional and spatial improvement inside of the community on the basis of the analogous residential products in the market, China Jianye Real Estate Company created in-community commercial spaces in units from No. 1 to No. 9 and also made a square enclosed on three sides, close to the main entrance to the block (Figure 8.9). It is worth noting that sanitary equipment and kitchen fittings were still absent in the construction of Bugaoli, even if new installations of this kind were already introduced in Shanghai's real estate market.



FIG. 8.8 An advertisement posed on the first edition of the supplement to the newspaper Shenbao, 1931.

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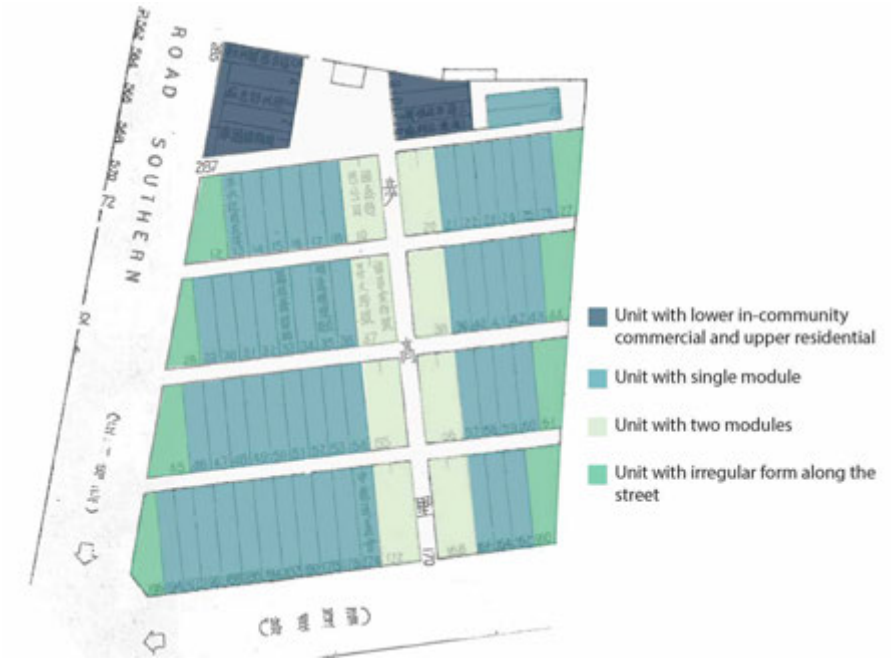


FIG. 8.9 Different unit forms of Bugaoli. One "module" refers to one home space designed with an opening of 3.6 meters in width. Drawn by author, 2021.

In terms of urban tissue, in addition to the open plaza, there is one north-south main alleyway with 4 meters and four east-west diversions, among which the northernmost is 3.5 metres and the others are 3 metres. This established *lilong* neighbourhood in a late-developing stage is more capacious than the earlier (1910s) ones in terms of street scale. Building density has been subsequently improved as well. Space creation of Bugaoli was therefore delightful, benefiting a favourable integrated urban environment. The construction was situated at the boundary between the Chinese settlement and the French Concession and also decorated with the typical *matouqiang* gable walls of the traditional *Jiangnan* architecture. This thesis thus suggests that the developer's target customers at the time were Chinese inhabitants with a certain social status and considerable income. Bugaoli indeed attracted many Chinese celebrity tenants to settle as expected. Chinese famous writer Bajin (巴金) once lived in No. 52 of Bugaoli and novelette *Dreams of the Sea: A Garden for Repose* (海的梦：憩园). Other famous Chinese people such as English educator Professor Ping Hailan (平海澜), revolutionary and generalist Hu Huaichen (胡怀琛), and sculptor Zhang Chenbo (张辰伯) used to live in Bugaoli before Shanghai's liberation. Although similar to other *lilong* neighbourhoods, Bugaoli has suffered rising density and deterioration in the past decades, its original identity

of being an elite Chinese community is definite. In recognition of the historical, scientific and artistic values of its architecture and the cultural value of its social influence on residents within the community, in 1989 the government of Shanghai included Bugaoli among the 59 listed modern heritage for the first time.

8.2.2 Legislative conditions: a listed cultural relic protection unit[181]

Long influenced by international exchanges, scholars and local government officials in Shanghai have been aware of the global discourse on heritage conservation. In line with international trends that emerged in the 1970s, they have demonstrated increasing concern for the conservation of "community" and larger sites (Waterton and Smith 2010). In Shanghai, the movement in heritage studies has affected the formulation of urban regulation and policy. The cultural heritage census in Shanghai has always existed since the establishment of the PRC. However, before the Chinese Cultural Revolution, investigation of immovable cultural heritage remained in the realm of monuments, archaeological sites, and traditional architecture, apart from revolutionary legacies. It was not until 1985 that architects and architectural historians based in Shanghai, proposed to protect the historic buildings built between the mid-19th and the mid-20th century during Shanghai's modern history, for research and appreciation of their historical, cultural and scientific significance.

In 1989, as mentioned in Chapter 5, the government of Shanghai nominated 59 outstanding buildings that were created in Shanghai's modern history and declared to the central government as cultural relics of national importance. This action made Shanghai the first city in China to treat residences built during the unequal treaty period as part of modern heritage in China's cultural relic framework. Herein, according to the chronology and definition made by the national Ministry of Construction (建设部) and Ministry of Culture (文化部) in the *Notice on Focused Investigation and Conservation of Outstanding Modern Buildings* (关于重点调查保护优秀近代建筑物的通知) issued in 1988, "modern heritage" specifically

181 Part of the content in the following two sections "8.2.1 Legislative conditions: a listed cultural relic protection unit" and "8.2.2 Turning point: a progressive decline" is taken from the journal article co-authored by Kaiyi Zhu (the author of this thesis) and Carola Hein (2020, 7–9). Zhu, K., Hein, C.M. Temporalities and the conservation of cultural relic protection units: legislative, economic and citizen times of the Bugaoli community in globalising Shanghai. Built Heritage 4, 11 (2020). https://doi.org/10.1186/s43238-020-00012-8

refers to the significant historic buildings built between 1840 and 1949.[182] Built heritage constructed between 1911 and 1945 is among the highlights. Under these circumstances, Bugaoli was finally designated as a CRPU at a municipal level. Among the first listed seven historical *lilong* neighbourhoods, Bugaoli and Shangxianfang are the two composed of *shikumen* housing with a similar urban scale and texture, with four principal rows of terrace houses (Table 8.1).

TABLE 8.1 The seven residential areas or buildings were all listed in 1989. Among these nominations, Shangxianfang has the longest history of existing, Bugaoli follows close behind.

Batch	Time	Name	Construction Time	District
5	1989	Shangxianfang	1921[183]	Huangpu
5	1989	Bugaoli (Cité Bourgogne)	1930	Huangpu
5	1989	Cosmopolitan Apartments	1934	Jing`an
5	1989	Bubbling Well Lane	1936	Jing`an
5	1989	Yuhua New Village	1941	Jing`an
5	1989	Xinkang Garden	1933	Xuhui
5	1989	Lane 115, Tai`an Road	1948	Changning

8.2.3 Turning point: a progressive decline

It is hard to tell when the turning point of Bugaoli was. Different from the project of Xintiandi and Tianzifang, of which there are time nodes of a major urban transformation, whether for commercial redevelopment or creative industry. A remarkable transformation has never occurred in Bugaoli after the designation. In this respect, it seems that 1989 is the year that changed the destiny of Bugaoli, and the municipal engineering initiatives in this neighbourhood for the Expo2010 were merely an attaching result. Compared with dynamic economic trends, inhabitants' actions in the area have been restrained by heritage-related regulations, and cannot keep up with the rapidly changing urban environment of the 21st century. The 2010 Shanghai Expo even accelerated efforts to beautify and promote a capitalised market and globalised urban landscape. Residents in heritage areas are often left to fend for themselves, caught between legislative time constraints, economic time pressures and a lifestyle that emphasises community awareness and a collective spirit (Champion 2019). In this respect, instead of its material features, residents of Bugaoli are indeed the most affected group. Although compared with Xintiandi and Tianzifang, local residents of Bugaoli are holding a certain proportion and influence, the atmosphere of the community has been largely diluted.

182 The Ministry of Construction of the People's Republic of China was renamed as Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development in the 2008 Institutional Reform Plan. The Ministry of Culture was repealed at the Thirteenth National People's Congress in 2018.

183 According to the information from the Office of Shanghai Chronicles, another view considers that Shangxianfang was built in 1924. Available at http://www.shtong.gov.cn/Newsite/node2/node4/node2249/node85092/node85129/node85608/index.html (last accessed on 20 April 2021).

8.3 Academic discourse: Movement of "conservation" related interpretations

8.3.1 Database analysis and discourse classification

Compared with the famous Xintiandi and Tianzifang projects, scholarly attention to Bugaoli has not been much. For the first step, in the Chinese Cnki database, I searched the keyword "步高里 (Bugaoli)" only, to equip myself with a basic understanding of the Bugaoli-relevant literature. Limiting the search results to published journal papers, there were only 9 results in total. In addition to the major related subject "building science and engineering", the study also refers to specific fields, such as macroeconomic management and sustainable development, tourism, and geography. Second, after adding the determiner "保护 (*baohu*)", seven of the nine articles were further screened out. In addition to those which mainly analyse Bugaoli as the subject of study, there is also a paper focusing on the discussion about changes in Shanghai's political strategy regarding urban heritage transformation.[184]

As of 12 August 2021, in the Cnki database, searching by keyword and subject "步高里", the relevant results were generally shown in Figure 8.10. The screened 9 Chinese journal articles related to Bugaoli were mainly published between 2005 and 2017, and the publication volume reached its peak in 2010 when the Shanghai Expo was launched. In the diagram of keywords co-occurrence network (Figure 8.11). In addition to the phrase "*shikumen*", the unique architectural typology to describe residential buildings in Bugaoli, in the context of heritage conservation studies, the keywords are "urban regeneration (城市更新)", "urban heritage (城市遗产)", "historical and cultural features (历史文化风貌)", "architectural heritage (建筑遗产)", and "historic buildings (历史建筑)"; thereunto, the terminology

184 Xu, Xuan. 2019. "Cong 'Chai, Gai, Liu' dao 'Liu, Gai, Chai' — Xin Shiji Yilai de Shanghai Jiuqu Gaizao yu Chengshi Lishi Fengmao Baohu." [From 'Demolishing, Transforming, and Maintaining' to 'Maintaining, Transforming, and Demolishing'— The Transformation of Shanghai's Old Districts and the Preservation of the City's Historic Landscape since the New Century.] *Shanghai Party History and Party Construction*, 2019 (02): 34–38.

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“urban regeneration” is discussed in the selected journal papers the most frequently, and the other keywords share the same occurrence frequency.

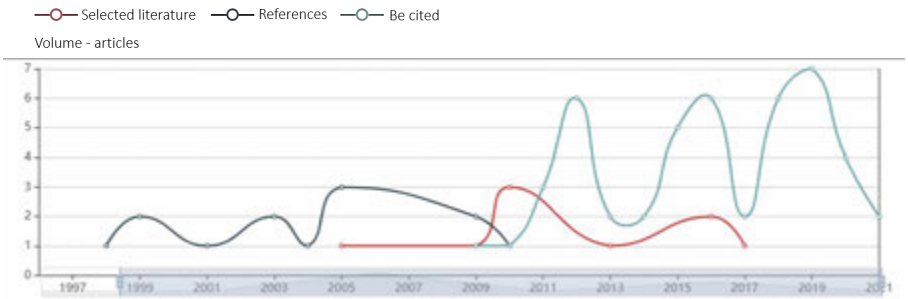


FIG. 8.10 This thesis sets the starting point of the publication volume curve in 1996, the same year as the birth of the specific plan for the Taipingqiao area. Although the publication closely linked to Bugaoli is not sufficient, the research has been cited frequently since 2010, contributing to more studies on architectural and urban conservation and renovation models.

After adding another determiner “保护”, the keywords co-occurrence network subsequently changed (Figure 8.11). Within the scope of the 7 screened journal papers, two phrases “historic buildings” and “historic and cultural features” became prominent. According to the results, this thesis suggests that in general, urban regeneration is in line with the developing directions and needs of the listed historic neighbourhood, yet protection and maintenance of the buildings are the mandatory requirements formulated by laws and regulations. From the perspective of heritage conservation of Bugaoli, the few studies focus on historical and cultural features of built heritage, and historic buildings themselves.



FIG. 8.11 The left diagram is a co-occurrence network generated by searching for the keyword "步高里 (Bugaoli)", while the diagram on the right is generated by searching "步高里" and "保护 (baohu)". Each dot in the diagrams represents a keyword. Respectively, the number "1" represents "urban regeneration (城市更新)", "2" is "urban heritage (城市遗产)", "3" is "historical and cultural features (历史文化风貌)", "4" is "architectural heritage (建筑遗产)", and "5" is "historic buildings (历史建筑)".

In parallel, in the Scopus database, after searching the TITLE-ABS-KEY "Bugaoli" on 15 August 2021, the only shown result is Xiaohua Zhong and Xiangming Chen's (2017) paper mentioned in Chapter 5. The other English paper entitled "Temporalities and the Conservation of Cultural Relic Protection Units: Legislative, Economic and Citizen Times of the Bugaoli Community in Globalising Shanghai" is co-written by the author of this thesis (Zhu and Hein 2020). Obviously, in an English-speaking research environment, Bugaoli is not seen as an interesting case for in-depth research. It is neither not with topicality as Xintiandi and Tianzifang as a *lilong* neighbourhood, nor as significant and as the listed architecture like the Site of the First National Congress of the CPC.

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8.3.2 Literature analysis: within the context of heritage conservation

Among the Chinese literature, compared with an abundant research focused on Xintiandi and Tianzifang, literature regarding Bugaoli is rare. Among all the screened 9 papers, three of which are relevant to heritage conservation from the perspective of case comparison. However, following the argument of the highly cited paper of Qing Chang (2009), authors from Chinese academia compare the cases of Xintiandi, Tianzifang, Bugaoli and other various different *lilong* neighbourhoods without proposing different ideas to challenge the mainstream heritage discourse created by Professor Chang (Zhu and Gu 2010, Duan 2013, Zhou and San 2016). Although, the term "organic conservation" has been added to describe the status of Bugaoli by Yi Duan (2013). Taking Bugaoli as a specific case for study, Qian Yingying and Huang Yanwen (2017) indicate that the neighbourhood is experiencing both conservation and urban regeneration, and offer suggestions on the conservation of the integrated urban landscape and architectural features of the neighbourhood from the perspective of economy.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to correlate the other papers with the character of Bugaoli as a cultural heritage. Apart from the articles, the only specific book about Bugaoli is *Cité Bourgogne: A historical Picture of Living Space in Shanghai Old Alley* written by Professor Zhu Xiaoming and Zhu Donghai (2012).[185] However, this publication is not about the heritage approaches and conservation measures of Bugaoli. The book narrates the impact of the thriving real estate market on the urban landscape of Bugaoli and its surrounding areas in the changing spatial structure of Shanghai by retrospecting the historical scenario of the 1930s. Based on the investigation, the authors also published two relevant journal papers in 2010 before the completion of their treatise, one about the real estate development of Bugaoli and one about the life space evolution of local resident Zhang Yuejuan (Zhu and Zhu 2010a, Zhu and Zhu 2010b). In short, the history of Bugaoli and its architectural conditions are more attractive to scholars (Li and Lu 2005; Chen 2009; Song and Wang 2016).

Among the English literature, Zhong and Chen's (2017, 88) paper argues that the improvement of Bugaoli led by the Luwan Government in 2008 was in line with a theme of "livelihood", which foreshadows a stage of "strong preservation through urban regeneration" of historic neighbourhoods. Zhong and Chen see the ongoing conflicts in the arena-like *lilong* neighbourhood caused by the middle class and foreign immigrants who prefer to take control of the inner city of Shanghai.

185 This English title is shown on the cover of this book. The book is written in Chinese, and its Chinese title is "Bogendi Zhi Cheng: Shanghai Lao Longtang Shenghuo Kongjian Tujing".

However, they overestimate the positive impact of urban regeneration policies on the conservation of urban heritage. Although the Implementation Measures of Shanghai Urban Regeneration issued by the Shanghai Municipal Housing Bureau in 2015 has already pointed out that the primary focus of urban regeneration is to increase the quality and efficiency of land use for maximum benefits (Zhong and Chen, 2017). This thesis could not see a bright prospect for Bugaoli if stakeholders respect the maintenance status of this neighbourhood quo continues, either could not trust the "strong preservation through urban regeneration" in name only. Carola Hein and I (2020) argue the existence of temporalities in the transformation and conservation of cultural heritage. In the case of Bugaoli, the deteriorating architecture and the "frozen" display of a CRPU, the ageing residents and constant influx of young immigrants, the skyrocketing land and housing prices in the surrounding areas and the extremely low monthly rents stuck in the mechanisms of a welfare housing society, and all the conflicting key factors with different evolving rhymes could or have caused problems for the effective and continuous conservation of Bugaoli for its continuity from material to spiritual content.

8.4 Urban transformation of a listed neighbourhood: a gentle process

Indeed, it is understandable why there is little literature on the heritage conservation of Bugaoli. This site has not stirred up the water in a social setting after its listing in 1989. The case presents a moderate example, which has neither broken the rules and regulations, nor created economic value or "social media influencer" effects for the area. It, unsurprisingly, did not catch much attention from the public. Through the in-site observation and survey and the interviews of local residents and other involvers, no indication has been found to demonstrate careful maintenance of Bugaoli.

8.4.1 Physical changes[186]

Result of its legislative status as a listed municipal-level CRPU, the neighbourhood of Bugaoli, in particular, the inner urban and architectural features have not met major changes. According to the memory of an elder local resident, since the designation, the only obvious intervention for the entire space from humankind he has seen was the "Toilet Project" and "Bright Project", and the contemporaneous washing of architectural façades regarding the protection of historic buildings of Bugaoli. For certain, in addition to the holistic intervention, there are also approaches taken by individuals of each household separately in the last few decades, for the improvement of livelihood or other purposes.

8.4.1.1 Architectural features

As a listed cultural relic owned by the government, Bugaoli is one of Shanghai's most significant public legacies and an emblem of the old city centre in the former French Concession. Its unique value is clear in terms of the city's long-term economic and planning strategy. The city wants to freeze the neighbourhood's appearance for the benefit of the city's tourist industry. It aims to guarantee that the neighbourhood supports the city's economic goals, most notably through tourism. However, unfortunately, tourism has not brought economic benefits to this area, for the absence of spots with carrying capacity for economic activities. In general, without close observation, Bugaoli is preserved in its "original" appearance. For being a semi-public community with unobstructed accessibility, it has thus become a scene for shooting documentaries, TV series and films, or the rapidly rising vlogs in recent years. During my site visit in 2018, a young filming and production team was making scenery shots in one of the diversion alleyways, recording some authentic scenes of life in the community (Figure 8.12). Regardless of the maintained features, changes in the architectural features of Bugaoli mainly include two aspects: (1) facilities installation and improvement, and (2) renovation and adaption catering to various interests of different stakeholders.

186 Part of the content in "8.4.1 Physical Changes" is taken from "Economic time: urban transformation and touristic heritage approaches in Shanghai", the journal article co-authored by Kaiyi Zhu (the author of this thesis) and Carola Hein (2020, 9–12). Zhu, K., Hein, C.M. Temporalities and the conservation of cultural relic protection units: legislative, economic and citizen times of the Bugaoli community in globalising Shanghai. Built Heritage 4, 11 (2020). https://doi.org/10.1186/s43238-020-00012-8



FIG. 8.12 On-site work of the shooting group in Bugaoli. Source: author, 2018.

First, for the residents' livelihood and the city's branding, the government of Shanghai wants to make sure that the neighbourhood conforms to contemporary safety and security standards. Two major comprehensive improvement projects conducted by the municipality and district government agencies had an impact on Bugaoli. For the 2010 Shanghai Expo, a considerable number of historic *lilong* neighbourhoods were developed as tourist attractions. With authentic architectural features and a community that has survived since the 1930s, Bugaoli was promoted as an example of the Expo slogan "better city better life". The 2010 Shanghai Expo thus provided an opportunity for an upgrade of Bugaoli. The improvement focused on six aspects and started in 2007 (Zhu and Zhu, 2012). The local government took over responsibility from the actual "users" in the "Toilet Project" and "Bright Project", which focused on the improvement of internal and underground facilities.

The "Toilet Project" aimed at the installation and indoor repair of each household, to avoid property ownership and rights disputes that might have resulted from changes in the building layout or land rearrangements. In each single *lilong* apartment, construction permits were only approved for the household heads of each family. This action minimised conflicts between multiple families occupying a single unit.

The goal was to improve the quality of residents' living conditions and to repair old facilities both inside and outside, upgrading kitchen equipment and consoles (Figure 8.13), re-laying pipelines for water and gas, and installing fire sprinklers and sewage outlets (Figure 8.14). Another city-wide intervention, the 'Bright Project' was part of Shanghai's municipal engineering initiatives and also affected Bugaoli. From 2014 to 2017, this three-year project involved a large number of old residential areas. It benefited more than 6,500 communities and 3 million families in Shanghai. The 'Bright Project' came to Bugaoli in 2016 and improved the capacity configuration standard of energy meters, eliminating safety hazards (Figure 8.15). However, the two projects led by the local municipality only responded to immediate needs in the historic neighbourhoods. According to Xintiandi conservation and redevelopment, construction workers often need to dig deep into the ground up to nine metres to carry out a complete refurbishment construction (Yang and Chen 2005). The nine-metre deep space is enough for laying new and long-lasting underground sewerage system and, burying underground water, electricity and gas pipes, communication cables, fire-fighting systems, and other infrastructure in line with modern architectural standards for a comfortable living condition. The build-in limits made it impossible for such an engineering project to work, in particular, if the residents were living in their places during the construction in Bugaoli.



FIG. 8.13 The kitchen of No. 35, Lane 287, South Shaanxi Road in Bugaoli. After more than 10 years, the white cabinets and consoles, which were equipped in 2007, are still in a relative modern status, compared with the original timber staircases in the room. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.14 The newly added elements on the façades, such as equipment for fire safety and the white sewage outlets. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.15 The newly installed energy meters for each household in Bugaoli with improved capacity and functions. Source: author, 2018.

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FIG. 8.16 The view of street-fronts of Bugaoli from South Shaanxi Road from the south, the advertising light box and signage in azure blue and pink for stores are conspicuous, but incompatible with the surroundings. Source: author, 2019.

Second, stakeholders' demands can be generally divided into two categories: business needs, and personal life. Nevertheless, both appropriate adaption and radical illegal construction occurred, causing grotesque and divergent manifestations. Bugaoli is located in the most prosperous area of Shanghai, for being a promising place for small-scale businesses. However, from the north to the south, the South Shaanxi Road sees a distribution logic of consumption downgrading of commercial sectors on this street. From the luxury brand flagships of the high-end Iapm Shopping Mall in the north, to boutiques with petit bourgeoisie sentiments in the middle section, buildings along the street of Bugaoli on the South Shaanxi Road are most used for cost-effective businesses, such as toggeries, copy shops, pharmacies, hardware shops, or convenience market stores (Figure 8.16), so as those on the West Jianguo Road. In the absence of a specified management mechanism and code of heritage practical approaches, characteristics of architectural facades are facing obscuration and destruction to different degrees. For example, the typical styled gate frame and its pediments may not only be advertising light box but also painted with coating or covered with other materials with diverse colours (Figure 8.17). In addition to the storefronts, and architectural elements, small retailers have made numerous incongruous changes to windows and doors on the logistics side inside of the neighbourhood as well. Some retailers painted the traditional rusty-red iron window fences that echo the red bricks of the facades in a non-traditional light green colour (Figure 8.18).



FIG. 8.17 The façade of Bugaoli facing the South Shaanxi Road, presents no physical protection of this historic environment, its original components or its aesthetic values. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.18 The renovated window frame is painted light green, while the one immediately adjacent to it appears rusty-red in colour, weathered from the original features. Source: author, 2019.

Apart from the small businesses that occupy rooms of the street front buildings of Bugaoli, similar to Tianzifang, few households or involved stakeholders have participated in the sharing economy. With the advent of the commercial housing era, a growing number of Bugaoli residents purchased new properties in recent decades and moved out of Bugaoli. They either renovated their living space or sublet it for such B&B conversions. Although Bugaoli itself is not a representation of exquisite consumption, its location in the core areas of the previous French Concession guarantees its tonality in line with the petty bourgeoisie taste. Following the rise of trendy fashion boutiques and hotspots in the adjacent Middle Huaihai Road and the north part of the South Shaanxi Road, Bugaoli for being a listed cultural heritage also matches young people and foreign visitors' curiosity to seek novelty. With the steady increase in Shanghai's international fame and a marketing image enhanced by local governmental policies, an increasing number of tourists prefer to stay in renovated *lilong* apartments to monotonous chain hotels. This is facilitated by the internet and online platforms such as the international brands Airbnb and HomeAway, and Chinese XIAOZHU and Tujia. According to the search result on Airbnb on 8 October 2021, there are four housing resources on the platform. In general, compared with an obsolete and corrupt situation in shared spaces (corridors and staircases in particular) and even family living spaces of one unit (Figure 8.19–8.20), the renovated interior presented a much better condition from the photos (Figure 8.21–8.22), in line with modern aspirations for a bright and clean living environment. In spite of this, according to the comments online, this thesis notices some common repined problems that might arise from the construction or structural characteristics of the *shikumen lilong* housing. The problems are respectively poor sound insulation, damp air easily for breeding of mites and moulds, or narrow and steep stairwells.[187]

187 The problems are summarised from the comments left by users who once booked one of the four housing resources on the Airbnb online platform. Available online: https://www.airbnb.cn, accessed on 8 October 2021.



FIG. 8.19 The decayed staircase inside of a building in Bugaoli Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.20 The simple and scratchy interior that can be glimpsed of a vacant household living space. Source: author, 2018.

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Entrance of the B&B site



Renovated courtyard for kitchen



Interior design



A view from inside the house towards the entrance

FIG. 8.21 An Airbnb housing resource located on the ground floor of Bugaoli No. 25. Source: Lanyouyou (懒悠悠), https://www.airbnb.cn/rooms/plus/23506954?source_impression_id=p3_16425 83936_Lfv7Lh4CWlCRyrPd&scroll_to_review=763916953, accessed on 8 October 2021.



FIG. 8.22 An Airbnb housing resource located on the 2.5 layer of a house, usually the location of a tingzijian. Through the window, visitors can clearly see architectural features of the neighbourhood. Source: Pinweirensheng (品味人生), https://www.airbnb.cn/rooms/41601950?previous_page_section_name=1000, accessed on 8 October 2021.

In terms of the improvement of personal life in each household, local residents who do not have the financial capacity adopt the strategy to "dwell in narrowness", while some residents adapt their living to personal preferences. In the transformation of their own living spaces, many residents added window grilles or anti-theft doors in stainless steel for safety reasons (Figure 8.23). However, the materials they applied in practice are vastly different from the original façade in both colour and form. Furthermore, residents who are using the top floor of the residences also erected additions to the roof for larger living space (Figure 8.24). To enlarge their indoor living space, almost all residents added transparent or solid roofs over the courtyards to create a sheltered place like the one of the Xintiandi *wulixiang* museum, to enlarge their indoor activity space (Figure 8.25–8.26). These various actions are all individual behaviour, obviously, without professional guidance. Among the findings, many modifications that I cannot guess the purpose of which are worthy of attention as well. For example, the built rounded arch has been squared, and the part underneath has been filled in with a subsequently changed gate, at odds with the orderly arches on the façades that surround it (Figure 8.27). Apart from this, I also found fake red brick wall coverings on the corner of a building (Figure 8.28). Even though this change is minor, this method could be recognised as a conservation-related heritage practice, showing no respect for the principle of restoration authenticity.



FIG. 8.23 The added stainless-steel window grilles and air conditioning mainframes on the façade of the historic building. Source: author, 2019.

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FIG. 8.24 The added stainless-steel anti-theft door on the outside of the original black timber gate of Bugaoli No. 59. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.25 The added transparent roof in the original courtyard place of Bugaoli No. 59, for cloth washing and cooking. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.26 The additional one floor on the top of the original building with grey in colour and plaster in material, replacing the red bricks. Source: author, 2018.



FIG. 8.27 The changed entrance arch of one household residence. Source: author, 2019.

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FIG. 8.28 The damaged wall and the veneering with a red brick pattern (left), and the details with a zoomed-in angle of view. Source: author, 2019.

To sum up, this thesis has to admit that although the entire neighbourhood is under protection of demolition, heritage approaches are barely satisfactory from the perspective of rigorous assessment criteria. Architectural façades have been altered to varying degrees from their original appearance by different stakeholders for different reasons. The significant beauty of the historic residences of Bugaoli is weakening. The progressive economy-led exploration of market reflection has not brought about prudently protection of the neighbourhood, let alone the promotion for the sustainable development of a real "better life" like what the slogan indicates. Despite the exterior, the deteriorating interior has also become a difficult point in the conservation of Bugaoli. The backward indoor habitats have a negative impact on both human health and daily life.

8.4.1.2 Urban features

Although the physical urban tissue has been maintained, it has still been influenced by changes in the way human society lives. First, the previous public plaza that was created by the China Jianye Real Estate Company for semi-public commercial activities for local residents vanished. Bicycles, electric bikes, and even cars firmly occupy the entire space of the square, leaving no surplus area for the other majority. On the ground, the community management department has even marked the dividing line between motorised and non-motorised parking areas with yellow paint to facilitate uniform management (Figure 8.29).



FIG. 8.29 The fully occupied internal plaza of Bugaoli and the parking spots for motor vehicles are framed by yellow lines on the ground. Source: author 2018.

In addition to this situation under the unified organisation and management, the phenomenon of roadside parking has become common as well. The four-meter-wide main alleyway for a spacious neighbourhood setting in the 1930s has thus accidentally shifted into a parking space that is highly accessible and easily occupied for contemporary needs (Figure 8.30). The three-meter-wide diversion alleyways could not escape from the predicament as well. Bicycles, electric bicycles, and tricycles in a larger volume are parked on both sides of the alleyways, leaving little space for pedestrians (Figure 8.31). In modern society, apart from the increasing number of vehicles, there is also an increasing amount of waste. In this respect, for hygienic reasons and for separate rubbish recycling, the management department of municipal facilities has built functional garbage chambers on the main alleyway as well, forming hard edges and boundaries on the previous urban texture (Figure 8.32). The contour lines of the urban tissue within Bugaoli have changed in terms of a soft and instant form as well. Some scholars also question the aesthetic appearance of the alleyways as many local residents habitually hang their clothes out to dry outdoors (Qian and Huang, 2017). This thesis does not consider such continuation of habits to have an impact on the urban tissue of the street, but on the transmission of intangible customs shaped by generations of Shanghainese. In this respect, although there was no major transformation or commercialised space alteration, the semi-public *longtang* that used to be local residents living in social places has been losing its presence as a bond in a traditional Chinese community.

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FIG. 8.30 Two motor vehicles occupied more than half of the pavement of the main alleyway. Source: author 2018.



FIG. 8.31 The narrow longtang space is inundated with bicycles, electric bicycles, and tricycles. Source: Marie-Therese van Thoor, 2019.



FIG. 8.32 The garbage chamber on the four-meter-wide main alleyway of Bugaoli. Source: author, 2018.

8.4.2 Intangible changes of Bugaoli[188]

Different from Xintiandi and Tianzifang, a commercial atmosphere has not penetrated Bugaoli. Although gentrification has been not in evidence here, the phenomenon of community hollowing-out is getting severe. Residents of Bugaoli, as well as residents of other existing historic *lilong* neighbourhoods without major changes, can generally be divided into three main groups: (1) residents who had moved to a certain *lilong* neighbourhood before 1949 or lived in this neighbourhood since birth; (2) residents who moved to a certain one between the 1950s and 1970s and enjoyed social welfare housing sharing policy during Shanghai's industrial development period; and (3) newcomers, in particular young migrant workers who moved in after the 1980s when Shanghai entered a market economy period. The community network is established on long-term interaction and the slow construction of networks, families, and identities.

188 Part of the content in "8.4.2 Intangible changes of Bugaoli" is taken from "Citizen time: spatial continuity and dynamic community identities in Bugaoli" of the journal article co-authored by Kaiyi Zhu (the author of this thesis) and Carola Hein (2020, 12–14). Zhu, K., Hein, C.M. Temporalities and the conservation of cultural relic protection units: legislative, economic and citizen times of the Bugaoli community in globalising Shanghai. Built Heritage 4, 11 (2020). https://doi.org/10.1186/s43238-020-00012-8

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Changes in the composition of the population and in social networks over time have an important impact on how inhabitants preserve the area, appreciate its history and advocate for change. This study suggests that different temporalities have created divisions between old and young people, long-term and short-term inhabitants, and local Shanghainese and outsiders. In the process of Bugaoli's urban change, three intangible characteristics are particularly relevant: a sense of community as well as individual attachment, a sense of a temporary living shelter, and the entitlement created by the post-colonial past and the reform of the public ownership system.

First, the citizens' sense of community is weakening because of demographic changes. Local residents inside have complex and diverse emotions about the places where they live according to the time of their engagement in a certain *lilong* neighbourhood. In the context of expanding urbanisation in Shanghai, the individual sense of belonging to Bugaoli has also become vulnerable. According to their investigation in 2017, Yingying Qian and Yanwen Huang demonstrates the statistics that Communities and social networks change over time and are dependent on the community's support for communal space. The *lilong* neighbourhood and its gated and hierarchically organised urban texture offer a relatively internal private living environment amid the city (Bracken 2013). Families in Bugaoli and other historic communities once lived close together, and everyday activities took place on an intimate scale, which created the social relationships typical of traditional vernacular communities once often found in rural China. Fei et al. (1992) name this social network as *chaxugeju* (**差序格局**), a relationship formed by every individual rather than different social classes.[189] Since the 1980s, the gradual departure of Bugaoli's original population has weakened or destroyed the close relationship once shared by neighbours. A set of statistics from 2017 shows that among the 957 registered household population, there were only 302 permanently registered residents, including 180 people over 60 years of age (Qian and Huang, 2017). Effects of this demographic change are evident in the changes in the neighbourhood and building forms. The communal space that needs to be safeguarded by local inhabitants appears neglected. One interviewee complained, "An increasing number of battery-powered motorcycles are occupying our shared alleys, which were semi-public spaces for children's play and gatherings for the grown-ups."[190] The people who can share their collective memories and sense of belonging have left, and the semi-public places, which can bridge the community and enhance their emotional

189 The term *chaxugeju* is used to describe the relationship among individuals rather than different social classes. It is also a social structure of grade connected by *guanxi* (**关系**), the fundamental driving force in personalised social networks of Chinese culture.

190 This interview was conducted on 28 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Bugaoli community.

interaction, have vanished. It is also worth noticing that the existing relatively younger 122 permanent local residents were to look after the 180 elderly in their families. Ageing is a growing phenomenon in the indigenous resident group. Allowing the buildings to age with their inhabitants, and indulging the "invasion" of the arrival of new floating settlers who have no affection or respect for the listed heritage have and will cause a more serious negative impact on the conservation of this historic site.

In addition, Bugaoli has served urban society in diverse ways in its history, such as offering temporary shelter to refugees during the post-colonial period and wartime as well to migrants today. Bugaoli was indeed built by the French developer as an elite community. Nonetheless, as times changed, the residents of this settlement have gradually shaped diverse and often contradictory sets of images and perspectives. As shown in the 2017 statistics, apart from the 302 permanent local residents, 285 migrant residents were also living in this area, including 22 foreigners and 253 migrant labourers who were mostly working in the service industry with low income (Qian and Huang, 2017). The changes in household size and population density reflect the loss of Bugaoli's social network. Traditionally, the social networks shaped by generations with bonds could guarantee the protection of community structures and everyday life. In the interviews held in 2018, several senior residents said, "We as long-term residents usually are careful about keeping our living space clean and tidy, but unfortunately, we cannot persuade the others to cooperate."[191] Such statements demonstrated the precarity of the sense of community in Bugaoli. The spirit of a cooperative community in which residents could build close relationships is no longer the norm. The decline of social networks in recent years has led to the disappearance of a social order in which people take care of communal space. In this respect, this thesis assumes that there is a degree of backlash against the other group by both local and immigrant residents.

Third, the local residents are accustomed to the incidental entitlement provided by the government for living in the dwellings that are property owned by the public and designated as cultural heritage. The spaces of Bugaoli that were originally conceived for middle-class families in the 1930s are not in line with the needs of contemporary households and lifestyles. This has led to requests for architectural transformation. Local inhabitants and their tenants have made changes. However, as mentioned above, these changes are irrelevant to the conservation of historic buildings. Supported by the landmark designation, although the government has constructed the image of a beautiful and hygienic community protected by its heritage status, yet without any substantial renovation. In the process of installing console facilities,

191 Ibid.

white plastic sewage pipes are exposed to the architectural façade. Cables installed for lighting, internet, or television signal are still haphazardly exposed to the alleyway sky. The conservation and renovation in a sense have generated a paradox in the urban practice of this area. On the one hand, the government needs to take responsibility for the management of Bugaoli which is counted as a site of publicly-owned properties. On the other hand, residents usually have the emotional intention for a better life in a broader sense of being direct daily users. However, when the living area for family lives becomes a publicly-owned space, local dwellers might hesitate to fully engage in the transformation of the housing environment. The problem created by the paradox — no one considers themselves to have full responsibility for the conservation, repair, or renovation, for maintaining the integrity of the listed cultural heritage neighbourhood. This participatory nature, laced with shifting responsibilities and dependence on others, has led to the consequence that every stakeholder might take a small step of action (or not), but everyone would not be dedicated to planning a holistic conservation strategy. The initiative of residents within the community has been lost in the urban development of recent decades. The neighbourhood of Bugaoli is its indigenous residents' neighbourhood, but not their community. A Tianzifang-style initiative from the bottom for change, for example, will never happen in Bugaoli which has been firmly shackled in its frozen "untouchable" status for a museum-like display created by the relevant housing and heritage regulations.

8.5 Discourse analysis: perspectives of stakeholders

Bugaoli has not encountered a redevelopment investment like Xintiandi or progressive adaptation like Tianzifang. In 1989, when Bugaoli and other post-treaty buildings were nominated as CRPUs for the first time. Urban vernacular architecture, represented by the historical *lilong* housing started to gain attention in the Chinese heritage discourse. The official title of "cultural relic" could not, however, provide a solid protection mechanism for these marginalised areas that cannot stand out from those magnificent buildings or famous legacies and monuments. Among all, *lilong* housing can be granted the most significant value only if it is associated with important revolutionary activities in about a century of development. Bugaoli and the same listed Shangxianfang in this respect are categorised in the scope of heritage for being former residences of famous persons and representative buildings

of Shanghai's modern and contemporary history. In general, the following three different groups created the heritage discourse related to Bugaoli: (1) the authority and administrative bodies and the officials within, (2) local residents, and (3) other citizens in Shanghai and visitors.

Among the authority and administrative bodies, their perspectives on heritage conservation also vary. From the perspective of the state, *lilong* housing without revolutionary significance apparently could not divert much attention. Although the municipality of Shanghai initiatively made the attempt in 1989, as the nominated *lilong* neighbourhoods failed to be granted national value, Shanghai has not made any Cultural endeavour in a similar way. This thesis argues that the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress issued and amended the Law several times, but the expectations and imagination of the authority did not address the difficulties in practice inherent in the protection of large-scale government-owned properties. In Chapter 2 about immovable cultural relics of the Regulation for the Implementation of the Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China (2017 Second Revision), Article 12 suggests that:

"Where a CRPU has any user, the user shall establish mass protective organisations for the cultural relics; where there is no user, the local villager's committees or resident's committees may set up mass protective organisations for cultural relics. The administrative departments for cultural relics shall guide and support the activities of such mass protective organisations.

The administrative organs for the cultural relics protection entities shall establish and perfect rules and regulations, take safety precautions, and the security guards may be equipped with defence appliances."[192]

In the Regulation for the Implementation, we see the emphasis on "organisation" and the corresponding requirement for the specialised functional departments. However, the professional guidance to regulate individual behaviour of cultural heritage protection is absent in this context. Neither is the relationship between the individual and the organisations for cultural relics teased out. This ambiguity has created obscure domains in the discussion that have allowed the utilisation of the concept of conservation and derived multiple justifications for individual heritage actions. This strategic neglect somehow places the burden of the conservation of

192 The State Council of the People's Republic of China first promulgated the Regulation for the Implementation of the Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China in 2003. The current executive version is the fourth amendment and the second revision was issued in 2017.

Bugaoli and other similar historic urban conservation on the residents. Indeed, in the Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China (2017 Amendment), Article 21 orders that:

"Repairs and maintenance of state-owned immovable cultural shall be taken care of by the users, and repairs and maintenance of non-state-owned cultural relics shall be taken care of by the owners." [193]

Article 26 further demonstrates that:

"The principle of keeping the immovable cultural relics in their original state shall be adhered to in their use, and the users shall be responsible for the safety of the structures and the cultural relics attached to them, see to it that the immovable cultural relics are not damaged, rebuilt or dismantled and that no additional structures are built on the site."

Many of the historic *lilong* neighbourhoods are publicly-owned properties, which are state-owned properties managed by state real estate authorities at each level. Under the legislation, conservation of Bugaoli is apparently within the responsibility of the users, that are, local residents. However, well over half of the local registered residents of Bugaoli have become the middle person for the secondary transfer leasing. Technically, it is difficult to define whom the term "users" refers to under such a circumstance. In addition, the national law does not explain the specific methods with which the users can protect their living places from being "damaged". In this respect, the regulated guidelines to promote appropriate approaches promulgated by local governments at different levels are necessary for heritage management.

In practice, the Shanghai municipality has taken over many heritage protection tasks in line with the cultural image created for Shanghai. This initiative by the local government is tightly related to the municipality's construction aims, but it is inconsistent with the legislation and with the law in the context of cultural relic protection. In Bugaoli, the indigenous residents accepted and enjoyed the heritage privilege granted by the government's "do not act" commandment without understanding the degree to which their everyday activities would impact

193 The Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China was officially approved and published in 1982. It was amended four times in the past. The current executive version is the fifth amendment approved in 2017.

the conservation of the neighbourhood.[194] The absence of protection activities from local residents in Bugaoli counteracts the conservation of the intangible and immaterial qualities of the community. The listed status of the site did not emphasise the significance of community conservation to the residents, nor did it address the responsibility for heritage conservation from below. According to Article 19 of the Shanghai Regulation on the Protection of Cultural Relics (Shanghai Wenwu Baohu Tiaoli, 上海市文物保护条例) promulgated on 19 June 2014, the protection of historical, scientific and artistic values of the listed buildings is categorised into three levels. In terms of the most flexible and tolerable standard requested in Article 19, it states that:

"(3) The main façade, the main structural system, the main spatial pattern and the valuable architectural elements of the building shall not be altered, while other parts are allowed to be appropriately altered."[195]

Ms Wang, the head secretary of the Party of the Bugaoli Neighbourhood Committee (BNC), expressed in an interview in 2018 that "We are going to restore all the front gates along the streets with black colour and timber, the same as their original design (Figure 8.33)".[196] This heritage approach is in line with the regulation, most alterations made by individuals in Bugaoli have been in fact in breach of the rules to a greater or lesser extent. Although, prior to this study, no criticism of similar behaviour had been heard or seen published. She also pointed out the problem and difficulty of urban conservation of Bugaoli generated by a high density and a loss of indigenous inhabitants. She said:

"The key point of the conservation of Bugaoli is its inhabitants. It is necessary to decrease and control the immediate number of the resident population, on the basis of which professionals can renovate and alter the interior, especially to reduce the slope of stairs. With a smaller overall population, I believe the area would be liveable after conversion."[197]

194 "Do not act" means that the residents in Bugaoli community can either make no contribution to architectural restoration or conservation approaches or make effort to provide ideas for the sustainable development of this area when living in the listed historic dwellings. This situation can also be regarded as "take no responsibility" for this community.

195 The Shanghai Regulation on the Protection of Cultural Relics was adopted by the 13th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 14th Shanghai Municipal People's Congress on 19 June 2014, and came into legislative effect on 1 October 2014.

196 This interview was conducted on 8 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in the office of the Bugaoli Neighbourhood Committee.

197 Ibid.



FIG. 8.33 The black timber front gates of Bugaoli along the street front of the West Jianguo Road. Source: author, 2018.

According to Ms Wang's interview, interventions are necessary for modern living and can also be justified even under the CRPS, in terms of living standards. The approach also benefits financial performance, living privacy and security, and neighbourhood liveability in the long term. Ms Wang (Figure 8.34) emphasised the problems caused by the contemporary young floating settlers. She indicated that it is still the state's responsibility to conserve the listed CRPUs, especially when the expense is huge. Although this thesis agrees that the state and local governments have an unshirkable responsibility and obligation, it does not accept Ms Wang's claim of a government-wide approach to heritage protection. The municipality of Shanghai took a leadership role in the maintenance of Bugaoli. However, for not being a revolutionary heritage, the identity of Bugaoli as a post-colonial product and controversial post-treaty heritage has always existed and will continue. Urban conservation in Shanghai circumvents the issues related to its history as a treaty port—a history which is intentionally marginalised by Shanghai's professionals in the formation of a local heritage narrative. In practice, since the government has recognised the significance of Bugaoli and admitted its qualification for being a CRPU at the municipal (provincial) level, the protection of Bugaoli has been at a standstill, with stakeholders on each side in a

passive state of wait-and-see. As the welfare housing system has been over for more than twenty years, the government does need to screen households and residents to ensure their fidelity to cultural heritage conservation. The heritage practices at this stage are fragmented, being unable to contribute much to protect the integrity and authenticity of the neighbourhood—for both tangible and intangible characteristics.



FIG. 8.34 A group photo of Ms Wang (rightmost), the author (middle), and an aged local resident in his 70s (leftmost). Source: Marie-Therese van Thoor, 2019.

Apart from the diverse understandings and perspectives of the governments and their officials, local residents' opinions are also diverse according to their attachment to Bugaoli. The length of residents' residence in the neighbourhood largely determines their attitudes towards Bugaoli and, whether they treat it as a "home" or a "shelter" and are willing to take care of the holistic neighbourhood environment. Nevertheless, regardless of their attachment to the community, the existing inhabitants are almost unanimous in their belief that the government should take measures to protect and rehabilitate their neighbourhood Bugaoli, even though many of the elder local inhabitants, who are over 70 years old, see themselves as the guardians of Bugaoli. One old gentleman expressed in the interview that:

"We, being the longest-standing residents, have not experienced the conservation and renovation of this historic neighbourhood, but we have requirements for it. With the development of Shanghai's economy, many of our families have become in financial or material difficulties, and our buildings are slowly becoming the worst in Shanghai. When Shanghai was liberated in 1949 and during the early stage when the

country was founded, we had a sense of superiority for living in Bugaoli, which was among the ones with relatively more liveable conditions. Those who lived there were also people with decent jobs, rather than many new floating temporary residents who are migrant labours and involved in the manual working field at the bottom, such as delivery persons, couriers, dishwashers, restaurant waiters, or security guards.[198]

In contrast, what about now? Our amenities, residential housing area, and population density are all getting worse and worse, while living in other areas of Shanghai is getting better and better. People ask me when Bugaoli will be transformed. I think it will be when we become a depression, when we become the worst when the government and the developers cannot make money from the development, and they then will come to renovate this area."[199]

By focusing on the long-term collective memory of Bugaoli, the original families formulate specific requirements for conservation and blame the area's decay on the government's inaction and the inequality of the global economy. In a similar tone, interviewee Mr Yang stated that it is not the local residents' responsibility to conserve urban heritage sites like Bugaoli and improve their condition.[200] He complained about several aspects of the current situation. He blamed the local government for not completely recognising the importance of cultural conservation. He felt the local government lacked an understanding of the traditional way of life in *lilong* communities and the need to adjust the space for daily necessities. He also expressed the opinion that for local residents like himself, it is necessary to select various *lilong* apartments and revert architectural styles and scenes to the look of each historical period in the past as a museum-type environment. For the rest of the *lilong* housing in Bugaoli, he called for thorough maintenance and transformation, funded by the government. Mr Yang thought that the flaws in the legislative framework made the communication between the local residents and authorities and decision-makers not reliable. [201] In the process of delivering needs

198 In a sense, the manual working field is considered as a "not decent" working field by interviewee, who does not appreciate the poorly educated neighbours from his standing point as a teacher. In addition, he and many other elder residents see the migrant labours as spoilers who destroyed the common space of the community and social cohesion within.

199 This interview was conducted on 28 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Bugaoli.

200 The discourse analysis of Mr Yang's interview is taken from the journal article co-authored by Kaiyi Zhu (the author of this thesis) and Carola Hein (2020, 13–14). Zhu, K., Hein, C.M. Temporalities and the conservation of cultural relic protection units: legislative, economic and citizen times of the Bugaoli community in globalising Shanghai. Built Heritage 4, 11 (2020). https://doi.org/10.1186/s43238-020-00012-8

201 This interview was conducted on 28 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Bugaoli.

or suggestions from the community to government agencies, the inefficiency of the bureaucratic hierarchies and verbose processes creates a morass of misinformation and communication blockages. This impedes both conservation and renovation that would be compatible with the cultural richness and diversity of Bugaoli's identity.

Bugaoli's history and post-colonial heritage are viewed differently by the various types of residents. For example, the ancestors of the residents who have lived in Bugaoli since birth usually moved to Bugaoli in the 1930s to avoid the violence and social chaos caused by war and economic crises. These families, who moved to Bugaoli before 1949, passed down their *lilong* housing from one generation to the next, as having a sense of living continuity and an attachment to the place. These citizens have a neutral attitude towards the semi-colonial treaty period. They feel that the buildings in the foreign settlements sheltered them during the Sino-Japanese War and that they have been preserved. Mr Zhou, who is in his 70s, narrated his family's story: "When my grandparents knew the Japanese army would enter Shanghai, they moved the whole family from the old town to the French Concession; from then on, our family settled down here."[202] Opinions of the interviewees over seventy years old presented their thoughts of many seniors who have strong emotional ties to Bugaoli with deep memories. However, while awaiting government action, many elderly inhabitants have lost the will and ability to master the rules and monitor the process to improve their living environment. This group supports urban conservation both in terms of spatial structures and the community lifestyle, even without knowledge of correct or appropriate measures for the conservation of cultural heritage in their renovation procedure.

Apart from these, another residential group who moved to Bugaoli during Shanghai's industrial development from the 1950s through the 1960s and the 1970s, when cross-city population movements frequently occurred due to welfare housing allocation opportunities or marriage, has a certain but less affection for the place. However, a considerable number of people in this group do not fully support the conservation of their living area and see the Bugaoli community as "a result produced by foreigners".[203] Many residents argued in interviews that the cultural values of the area were overstated. They displayed a more tolerant attitude to the natural demise of *lilong* housing and preferred it to be demolished rather than protected. Unfortunately, I failed to interview floating migrant users who are currently living in Bugaoli. During the group interview in the senior activity room of Bugaoli, one

202 This interview was conducted on 23 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Bugaoli.

203 This interview was conducted on 28 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Bugaoli.

lady grumbled: “Some small retailers made our streets dirty, and besides, they even threatened and tried to hit us when we complained.”[204] According to her expression and the randomly parked courier and takeaway electric vehicles in the alleyways, this thesis attempts to portray the indifference of the young temporary immigrant residents to the preservation of historic architecture and neighbourhood. This thesis, in particular, links the word “young” with “immigrants” as according to residents of No. 59 Bugaoli “the local young population of Shanghai do not want to live here”.[205]

The general public, in particular, visitors and tourists, created another viewpoint from a different perspective as observers. Although Bugaoli residents’ needs and interests are not aligned with those of the local municipality’s strategy of utilising historic sites for city branding and tourism, it is either not distinguished from other historic *lilong* neighbourhoods.[206] On Xiaohongshu, if typing “**步高里** (Bugaoli)” in the search box, there are also more than 80,000 notes, and the site has been praised as a representative of the classic image of Shanghai’s old *lilong* neighbourhoods, and attracts many visitors to come and take photos in order to enhance their influence on internet media for demonstrating their distinctive tastes of vintage posh style. Ms Wang also mentioned in her interview that “The original appearance of Bugaoli has remained largely unchanged, and is still intact. As a result, it is particularly popular with French visitors, and basically, about ten or more groups of tourists come to visit here every month.”[207] However, compared with Xintiandi and Tianzifang, Bugaoli or Cité Bourgogne is a name that is far too unknown for the general public as well. When an anonymous involver who is a born and bred Shanghainese filled in my semi-open questionnaire, he asked me blankly “Is Bugaoli famous? I have no idea of it at all.”[208] I believe it is a common confusion among the general public, particularly among the younger generation. This unfamiliarity with Bugaoli among the general public thus caused another interesting phenomenon on internet media, through which many internet influencers have promoted Bugaoli for its distinctiveness and listed status among all the *lilong* neighbourhoods of Shanghai.

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204 Ibid.

205 Ibid.

206 Zhong, Xiaohua, and Xiangming Chen. “Demolition, Rehabilitation, and Conservation: Heritage in Shanghai’s Urban Regeneration, 1990–2015.” *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism* 41, no. 2 (2017): 82–91. In this paper, authors Zhong and Chen argue that to conserve the historic lilong houses is to distinguish the local identity of Shanghai.

207 This interview was conducted on 8 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in the office of the Bugaoli Neighbourhood Committee.

208 This question raised by the interviewee was delivered to me on 30 October 2020, after he completed the survey.

For example, the title of the most liked post (1,846 times) is “Shanghai | Don’t go to Tianzifang anymore, the century-old alleyway is right here! (Shanghai | Bie Zai Qu Tianzifang La, Bainian Lao Longtang Jiu Zai Zhe!)”, which introduces the history of Bugaoli with 15 photos, being included in the topic of the cultural humanity of Shanghai (Figure 8.35). On the one hand, this post addresses the cultural significance of Bugaoli which is only famous among amateurs and professionals of historic buildings of Shanghai but not widely known by a mass of net users. On the other hand, it indicates the popularity of Tianzifang for being a more grass-rooted project, and the resemblance between it and Bugaoli. Unfortunately, we see the plogger’s depiction of the history of Bugaoli, rather than praise for the conservation of its architectural and urban features. The attention of internet users is not drawn to consumer goods, like the search results of the Xintiandi and Tianzifang cases. Nonetheless, the importance of heritage conservation this thesis addresses, the rarely listed status of a single *lilong* neighbourhood under a Cultural Relics Protection System, yet is not considered in the online discussion of Bugaoli.



FIG. 8.35 The post on the right receiving 1846 “likes” is the one entitled with “Shanghai | Don’t go to Tianzifang anymore, the century-old alleyway is right here!” It was posted by “Kyle**脚步不停**”, 6 January 2020.

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FIG. 8.36 By searching the keyword "Cité Bourgogne" on Instagram, the post by "la_joie_des_petites_choses" was liked the most as of author's searching time. This post is in French about the overall atmosphere in the release on 20 July 2015.

Coincidently, on Instagram, when searching on 17 September 2021 for the previous posts that are linked to the tag "Bugaoli", there were only eleven results, while under the topic "Cité Bourgogne" there were more than 100 posts. Visitors admire French elements more affiliated with the area. Therefore, in addition to English, there are also many posts in French. The net users either share images of Bugaoli to celebrate its history and culture, or demonstrate the life of local residents within. For example, among the top liked posts, the one that received 244 likes was posted in French. The user "la_joie_des_petites_choses" commented Bugaoli a quiet and typical closed quarter of Shanghai (Figure 8.36). Not surprisingly, all of the posts hold a positive opinion of Bugaoli for being a historic site, which presents enthusiasts with an authentic scenario of the splendid real estate market of the French Concession period. Like what was mentioned by Ms Wang in the interview, visitors largely see Bugaoli as a well-preserved neighbourhood with its original features. Visitors wandering through Bugaoli cannot truly appreciate the hardships of local life, and can only blindly judge from the appearance of historical traces maintained. This innocent and sightless positiveness is in line with the government's goal of enhancing Shanghai's cultural image. However, this thesis argues that the urban

conservation of Bugaoli only has its goods in the window with an illusory gloss. The admired scenario by foreign visitors is instead slowly dissipating the authentic part of the community and dragging it into the abyss as a whole.

Promulgating laws and public regulations takes time, and their implementation is often slow. Once put into effect, a legislative framework may have an impact over decades or even centuries. Legislation about heritage conservation is not always in line with short-time economic development goals nor with the everyday temporality experienced by the residents of impacted neighbourhoods. Bugaoli's status as a listed cultural relic has hindered its transformation in terms of modern residential living standards and commercial redevelopment. For China's cities, the strategies and approaches of heritage conservation have yet to fully express and convey the inherent cultural and social values of each historic community (Canziani 2008). Local residents living in historic *lilong* neighbourhoods, in those in Huangpu District, on the one hand, usually had a sense of superiority before particular the Cultural Revolution in a sense, and are still enjoying a convenient location and accessibility in the inner city of Shanghai. On the other hand, housing commercialisation has driven the rapid and sharp development of property prices in Shanghai, especially after the Shanghai Expo in 2010. Residents who were benefiting from the low rental fee of those publicly-owned *lilong* properties are parochial in their approach; those with the foresight and financial base might have purchased new real estate elsewhere early on, while the staying ones were marginalised by the market in the increasingly hotly speculated property prices. According to the above analysis, this thesis suggests that the dilemmas of Bugaoli centre on two main questions: (1) "Who should be responsible for the conservation and restoration of Bugaoli and other similar CRPU residential buildings?" and (2) "How can individual behaviour be regulated and organised in terms of conservation measures?"

The Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China creates benefits and privileges for Bugaoli, such as government input for its physical improvement and protection from being damaged. However, the regulations could not address the loss of community focus and collective memory, which were once the strengths of the Bugaoli community. In terms of the national system of cultural heritage protection, the local government of Shanghai has automatically classified itself as the role of "users" when utilising Bugaoli and other historic *lilong* housing for city branding promotion. Although they are not actual users. This thesis doubts that if it was not for the Expo 2010 and the promotion of the "sycamore" culture for foreign tourists, the local government would never have taken action for the "Bright Project"

and “Toilet Project” when private capital and investment in the market is absent.[209] In this respect, it is understandable why these projects have only been carried out once in the last thirty years or so before the Expo 2010, and have not properly tidied up the neighbourhood and sorted out the jumble of pipelines and wires.

On the contrary, according to the analysis above, local residents, the proper users of Bugaoli also failed to meet the obligations required by the Law. This thesis thus argues that the lack of clarity in the legislative definition and delineation of identity and obligations of each involved stakeholders has led to endless improper heritage approaches. In this respect, the local government of Shanghai should not be entirely blamed by either the local residents or scholars for inaction. The government actually not only took responsibility but also paid the most for the renovation projects. In Bugaoli, everyday users incurred no financial responsibility with the “Bright Project”, while in the “Toilet Project” every household provided 100 CNY of the 2,000 CNY cost. Under these circumstances, although local inhabitants were the most influential actors in Bugaoli, the population has a limited decisive role in these projects other than signing consent forms when the government intervenes. The population was rarely empowered to make decisions or to propose their own ideas. For example, one elderly person grumbled that “limited by my narrow living space, the installed toilet closet is next to my dining table, and I cannot use that in such a smelly environment (Figure 8.37)”.[210] In general, the cost for the conservation or regeneration of Shanghai’s entire *lilong* neighbourhoods is far beyond the scope of funding that the local government can provide. Whether it is the cultural identity that the Shanghai municipality is dedicated to creating or the low rental prices that the original residents and their later generations cannot abnegate, both the government’s and local residents’ intentions to seek financial benefits are the same. The difference is that the Shanghai municipality pursues economic benefits on a larger scale through tourism and commercial investment, while local residents living in historic sites care more about their personal interests. The detachment of capabilities and claims could not work for Bugaoli’s healthy and sustainable transformation under the Cultural Relics Protection System and conservation principles. In particular, when the permanently registered residents and their descendants are gradually disappearing from these historic communities, the question of where Bugaoli will go from here will become a serious one.

209 In Shanghai, it is widely known by the slogan “Where there are French sycamore trees, there is Shanghai”.

210 This interview was conducted on 28 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Bugaoli.



FIG. 8.37 It is impossible to distinguish between dirty areas and clean areas in one living space that is usually the living space for one family. In general, the average area for each family is nine square meters in Bugaoli. Source: author, 2018.

The measure that is worth noting in the conservation of Bugaoli is the maintenance of the neighbourhood from being demolished. In the site survey, I noticed that despite their complaints about the harsh living conditions, the native-born residents of Bugaoli were actually grateful for several government-led livelihood projects, and had a clear understanding of the deteriorating environment and facilities of their neighbourhood. Limited by their poor income level, the residents feel helpless more about not being able to protect Bugaoli in terms of material matters. Differently, their dissatisfaction and grievance are mainly directed at the floating migrants who refuse to fit into the life of the community and at their former neighbours, who rent out their residences at will for more financial gains. Faced with a lack of funding for heritage conservation, new economic activities have provided this historic residential area with new "possibilities", leading to gentrification and polarisation. In many historical communities, residents who are capable of purchasing properties in other places in Shanghai and bearing the cost of renovation often choose gentrification as a way of furthering their economic interests (Williams and

Arkaraprasertkul 2017).[211] However, in Bugaoli, such change is not welcomed by many elderly people, who live life even more slowly than other residents. The elderly are the residents who most appreciate the memories and culture of their small society. Although openness and easy access to information through the internet has an immediate impact on urban areas regardless of geographic location, language, culture or ethnicity, economic benefits are not where it shines. Tourists could totally visit Xintiandi for high-end and fashionable spending and Tianzifang for a creative experience, without bringing a commercial atmosphere to Bugaoli. In a sense, the material features can obtain suitable protection only if the intangible value of Bugaoli is appreciated by all stakeholders with strengthened significance.

To solve or settle a clear mind regarding the questions of "who should be responsible for the conservation" and "how actions can be regulated in practice in a listed site", it is essential to define the scope of "users" and the scope of their corresponding rights and obligations. For example, any household with one or more properties outside of Bugaoli can no longer have access to the government's subsidy, or enjoy the extremely low rent for welfare. Benefiting from the welfare-oriented public housing distribution system in the 1950s and 1960s, most senior residents and their younger generations pay extremely low rent (Figure 8.38). For multiple historical reasons, the rental price has not changed for many decades. With housing commercialisation and the rise of the real estate market in China, the *hukou* system plays a significant role in China's big cities, with far-reaching effects on Bugaoli.[212] The 957 registered household residents exactly enjoy this bargain because of their *hukou* in Huangpu District. The monthly rent payable by each household ranges from 10 CNY to 30 CNY, while the monthly rent for a similar size of housing in the surrounding area of Bugaoli is around 3,500 CNY upwards. The average rental price paid by long-time residents in Bugaoli counts as less than 1% of the rent paid by newcomers. In other words, without the reform of the public ownership system after the establishment of the PRC, rental prices of Bugaoli should follow the rules of the real estate market, being much higher. Therefore, this thesis suggests that secondary leasing needs to be strictly prohibited in Bugaoli. After all, different from the houses in Tianzifang, which were built by Chinese families, all the residential units in Bugaoli were built by the French China Jianye Real Estate

211 In Matthew Williams' and Non Arkaraprasertkul's (2017) paper "Mobility in a Global City: Making Sense of Shanghai's Growing Automobile-Dominated Transport Culture", they demonstrate that a certain group of lilong residents and prefer to renovate their living places, and turn them into exquisite short-term rental apartments.

212 This so-called *hukou* system was established in 1958 and intended to legally identify each citizen's household registration by recording their births, deaths, marriages, and household moves.

Company for leasing in the 1930s. In this respect, no single house of Bugaoli can be considered an "ancestral property" that belongs to one family. When all the inhabitants of a household cease to reside in Bugaoli, whether or not their *hukou* is still registered in Bugaoli, it is deemed that the household acquiesce in giving the use of the dwelling to the State by default.



FIG. 8.38 According to the receipt, the monthly rental fee for the dwelling in the No.8 Bugaoli is 21.80 CNY. Source: author, 2018.

Today, Bugaoli looks nothing like a high-end flat. Originally, the 79 units were built for 79 households. However, nine families sometimes share one unit for a maximum at present. According to the interview of Professor Ruan Yisan in October 2019 (Figure 8.39), he remarked that "Bugaoli is the ideal style of a *lilong* neighbourhood for conservation as I can imagine. However, as there is no promising conserved model of the historic *shikumen lilong* houses, people always misunderstand that *longtang* life must be unendurable."[213] Ruan further explained that "the living environment and material conditions can possibly deliver satisfactory results after conservation and restoration, only if the houses in Bugaoli can be recurred to the one-unit-for-one-family organising mode."[214] Considering this suggestion and taking the demographic statistics of 2017 as an example, if we only

213 This interview was conducted on 29 October 2019 by Kaiyi Zhu in Professor Ruan Yisan's office, Shanghai.

214 Ibid.

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recognise the local resident identity of the 302 existing inhabitants rather than the 957 registered residents, the 79 units of Bugaoli can be fairly redistributed to these people who truly have a genuine and authentic sense of belongingness to the community of Bugaoli with an overall proper renewal of the inner and outer space.



FIG. 8.39 During the interview with Professor Ruan Yisan (left) in his office, Shanghai. Source: Marie-Therese van Thoor, 2019.

In addition, starting with the overarching frame of conducting conservation measures, every alteration to the façade and interior should be referred to the direct supervision department for inspection and permission. On the one hand, it helps to reduce approval procedures and expedite the approval process. On the other hand, it standardises individuals' behaviour when taking a heritage approach, to prevent inappropriate practices noted above. From a professional point of view, this thesis also advocates that cultural heritage conservation sectors, conservation planning departments, and design institutes involved in conservation practices, can cooperatively design a series of renovation plans that are in line with conservation principles, as well as contemporary aesthetic and living standards, on the basis of the original design language of Bugaoli. This measure could provide a reference for the permanently registered residents and the possible censored new occupants, for better use of the listed cultural heritage site. In general, what is the most appropriate conservation mechanism for the Bugaoli is still unknown and needs repeated

proof. One thing for certain is that without addressing major registered residents' speculation through secondary leasing, and the decline in quality caused by a growing number of floating immigrant residents among immediate inhabitants, the conservation of Bugaoli will never face proper treatment.

8.6 Conclusion

Bugaoli has non-negligible and definite representativeness, challenging the economy-led assumptions within the dominant mode of urban heritage conservation. In an increasingly accelerated process of urban regeneration, how to properly conserve the historic neighbourhoods has become a severe problem. Following Professor Chang Qing's (2017) classification, Bugaoli is known and acknowledged as a cultural relic conservation model by the public, likewise Shangxianfang, and the CRPU at the national level Yuyangli. There are two main actors for the Bugaoli conservation: the government and the residents. In the name of conservation, local government of Shanghai utilised Bugaoli and its frozen status for scenario-based display, as well as incorporating the group of historic lilong neighbourhoods "under sycamore trees", to create a cultural image welcomed by international tourists. Globalisation has had a profound impact on the formation of urban landscapes and urban heritage practices. This action indeed benefits Shanghai's economic prosperity and global influence. In their practices, it shows that cleaning the brick facades and conduct infrastructure-related works for the survival of Bugaoli is the maximum the government could offer at this stage. In this respect, the ability to maintain the status quo of a cultural heritage unit and avoid malicious factitious damage is what the government considers to be an acceptable method for conservation. Yet this thesis insists that the negligent management of Bugaoli in terms of both tangible and intangible aspects is the most urgent issue to be addressed today. The government usually invites authoritative experts in each development project of the listed historic area meant for conservation as members of the jury committee, as there are vague definitions of many heritage-related terms in laws and regulations of China's legislative framework.

The listed status under the CRPS endows Bugaoli with an overarching baseline for practical activities that may occur within. Actors involved in each sectors have engaged in the protection of Bugaoli with their various understanding of heritage conservation. However, different heritage approaches and conservation measures

and diverse looks are indeed present. These scenarios thus bring confusion for both spectators and practitioners, in particular, when they struggle to discern and judge what an appropriate approach to a listed cultural heritage is. Under these circumstances, the government usually invites authoritative experts in each development project of the listed historic site meant for conservation as members of the jury committee, as there are vague definitions of many heritage-related terms in laws and regulations of China's legislative framework. Professor Zhang indicated in the interview that "We as scholars can give advice and criticise directly in expert meeting, but we know that we are not invited to make difficulties for the government and developers." [215] In urban practices of Shanghai, the dilemma of conservation of the legacy of the masses lies not in what values have more weight. It is the heritage approach that can sustain and enrich the contemporary relevance of a greatly-appreciated listed heritage like Bugaoli that needs to be focused on.

It is necessary to recognise the dynamic nature of urban heritage as it has evolved together with social development and the evolution of actual practices (Schoorl 2005). In the name of conservation, local residents accessed to a steady stream of government subsidies, while the government received external recognition for their contribution to heritage conservation. In short, residents living in Bugaoli demand and depend more on the government in the process of urban conservation after its heritagisation. The local permanent residents are, in a sense not capable or willing to join in a conservation action, and show a greater need for renovation of the architectural interiors in Bugaoli rather than simple installations of toilet closets. Nevertheless, these group, who make up just under a third of the total registered population and about half of the current resident population of Bugaoli, has had a stronger appreciation of community spirit. They thus could clearly state the problems caused by the squeeze on space by increasingly influx of immigrants. Without any theoretical underpinning, the local permanently registered residents with their most simple and authentic emotions as a starting point, strikingly pinpoint the loss of community spirit and social cohesion of Bugaoli. They also put themselves in the middle between commercial investment and conservation requirements, and attribute this result to the rapid capitalisation of urban land and the conservative inaction of cultural heritage protection mechanisms. It is too early to predict any positive results in the slow transformation of Bugaoli in line with urban conservation. Nonetheless, the listing status as a significant heritage site offer urban texture and architecture of Bugaoli a chance to be maintained, from either being largely demolished like in Xintiandi nor radically altered as in Tianzifang.

215 This interview was conducted on 20 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Professor Zhang's office, Shanghai.

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9 Conclusion

The Ever-changing Interpretations of Urban Conservation

History is concrete; while the narrating of history is not. Heritage is related to history, yet more about the being and becoming of the legacies with significant values. Therefore, heritage is about the process of making. Since the late half of the 20th century, professionals have seen a richness and diversity in the increasingly ever-expanding definition and scope of heritage, and the ensuing progressed conservation measures. Since 1964, when the second International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments adopted the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (i.e., the Venice Charter), in both theoretical and practical fields, professional practitioners have usually followed the paradigms with international recognition as guidelines.[216] This code ensures the political correctness of practitioners' local actions in different regions. However, the idealistic but Eurocentric principles are not always recognised and accepted by all. From the ruined Buddhas of Bamiyan and the destroyed Site of Palmyra by terrorism, to the criticised exhibits obtained through looting and smuggling in museums represented by the British Museum, the Louvre, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, these facts demonstrate a clear divergence in perception. Even if there are extreme cases in the above examples, they lay bare the complexity of heritage conservation. The world's stunning conflicts in reality imply the obstacles and difficulties in heritage conservation. In addition, even if we admit that "Outstanding Universal Value" (OUV) is a real and solid proposition, its application is limited to the World

216 The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) adopted the Venice Charter in 1965.

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Heritage Sites.[217] Resulting from the differences in cultural tradition, epistemology, cosmologic and social philosophy, and religion, the recognition of value ranking of heritage varies in each region. To distinguish, define, and conserve the enormous number of cultural heritage sites scattered around the world in different countries and regions is thus a topic of another dimension. For many countries in Asia, Africa, and South America, heritage conservation is an imported concept. It was historically related to colonisation in a global context that accelerated the spread of the concept in non-European countries around the world. Therefore, comprehensive in situ trials and successful conservation results are necessary for a conceptual localisation process before the concept can receive full recognition and respect in a non-European region. By taking local practice in China as an example, this thesis draws out the maladaptive nature of the localisation of the conservation concept and heritage discourse in China. To verify the hypothesis in this thesis, the localisation process of an imported idea, Chinese cultural history and contemporary practice are the focus of its examination.

The goal to underscore nationalism is embedded and inherited in the genesis of the concept development of heritage conservation in China. In history, the opening of China's treaty ports has inevitably integrated its social development course into a global narrative. The historical event led to the introduction of many new ideas and technologies in the 19th century. Chinese people became aware of the concept of heritage conservation and modern architectural industry in the same historical period. With the increasingly emphasised value of modern heritage, conservation of the post-treaty legacies gained attention in the course of China's globalisation. These two issues in different dimensions—conservation of heritage and post-treaty architecture—were eventually entangled at the end of the 1980s.

Radical and rapid urban development has crashed urban conservation since the late 1980s. Although the protection of historical city centres was weak in China before the country's large-scale urbanisation. In the new era of reform and opening up, many historic buildings and sites in city centres have suffered varying degrees of damage that are justified in the name of conservation. Stakeholders in practice use interpretations of conservation to defend the reasonableness, legitimacy, and professionalism of heritage-related activities and actions in authoritative

217 Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is the criteria defined by UNESCO to select World Heritage worldwide. According to UNESCO, OUV means "cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity." UNESCO. 2008. Operational guidelines for the implementation of the world heritage convention. Technical report, UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

examinations and critiques. In particular, the use of wording could contribute to the access to recognition from conservation planning departments and heritage conservation authorities. The increasingly emphasised value of modern heritage has subsequently made the boundary of heritage conservation ambiguous. With the increased promotion of heritage conservation among the Chinese population, traditional architecture and monuments have gradually gained attention from the masses in the 21st century to prevent their vanishing. Magnificent works such as the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, and the Mogao Caves belong to this category of built cultural heritage. These ancient and traditional sites—results of the wisdom of Chinese craftsmen—were actually included in the scope for conservation when Chinese heritage practitioners first encountered the concept. However, one category is not the same as the other among the entire scope. Modern heritage, in particular, the mass-produced housing built after the Industrial Revolution for inhabitants' everyday use, represented by the historical *lilong* housing in this thesis, is a marginalised category among the entire heritage scope.

The four sections in this chapter mainly answer the key question "Why and how have evolving actors interpreted, adapted, implemented, appropriated and justified the concept of heritage conservation in transforming historic neighbourhoods (with case studies of the Shanghai *lilong* housing neighbourhoods)?" In the first section, by focusing on the introduction and application of the new concept through transnational exchanges, it unfolds the diversity in the paths through which Chinese pioneer individuals brought the new idea related to the protection of ancient and old things into China in different forms. It further suggests the three layers of conceptual importation caused by power competition between countries in the process of transnational exchange, and an ending that ultimately leads to the establishment of a conservation-related legislative mechanism in China. The second section reiterates the different goals, objectives, and interests of participants in heritage practice, and their diverse wording and interpretations in the name of conservation. This paragraph outlines three categories of the goal-and-interpretation-led phenomena, and describes the lag of legislation in the overall flow of heritage practice and the unfettered and flexible growth in the interpretations of conservation measures accepted and endorsed by authoritative bodies. The third section points to the particular difficulty of heritage practice in relation to post-colonialism and urges an extensive and open discussion and debate on urban legacies left by foreign settlers. In the last section, this research attempts to identify the difficulties that the concept of conservation will face under the new national policy of "urban regeneration", and the responses to the conservation-benefited approach based on an analysis of both the historical and current situation.

9.1 Interplay between the imported idea, legislation, and stakeholders

To investigate what people do in the name of conservation, every chapter analyses the interaction between different involvers in the localisation of the new and imported concept and attempts to figure out different involvers' understandings of the idea. It is worth noting that the state authorities of China, under different regimes, have always issued regulations in response to the discovery of efforts devoted to heritage-related practices from civil society. This is both a summary of the experience of those pioneers advanced in society and a way to educate the public. In a sense, the government's formulation of regulations and the public's inclination are both the result of mutual selection and subtle influence. For example, Chapter 2 reveals the loss of movable national treasures through theft and smuggling. We thus see the establishment of a code of regulations led by archaeology objects, and the involvement of pioneers who specialise in history, linguistics, archaeology and geology to analyse of stone rubbings or excavated artefacts. Chapters 3 and 4 point to the growing importance of revolutionary buildings and sites in urban development after the foundation of the PRC. It thus sees a shifting focus on the immovable built cultural heritage represented by those with revolutionary significance. It also investigates practical approaches and individual discourse in the transformations of various historic *lilong* neighbourhoods. This thesis conclusively confirms the hypothesis that the concept of conservation in China is obscure and it is a matter of opinion.

Indeed, the concepts of heritage and conservation are both indeterminate. To demonstrate their contribution to the cause of conservation and their respect for history and culture, in the recent heritage movement, most practitioners prefer to justify their heritage approaches as conservation to a certain extent. Professor Zhang Song once expressed in an interview that:

"Cultural relics experts, archaeologists, architectural historians, and people like me involved in the field of conservation planning, and more dealing with intangible heritage studies have different understandings of conservation. And of course, the given definitions regarding conservation are different. People usually refer to some regulations and authoritative explanations, but the real practice is different. It's not the same for conserving ancient buildings, conserving historic buildings, or conserving modern architecture in Shanghai. Some experts might conduct their conservation measures in one way in Shanghai, but when they go to Wuhan, they would change their measures. It is difficult to say. Actually, it is not possible

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to say that the definition of conservation is unified. If it is a specific act of the administrative bureaucrats, it is usually nothing more than 'integrated conservation' or 'reintegrating the aged as the aged (zheng jiu ru jiu)' in a Chinese context."[218]

9.2 Multiple types of Conservation-related Interpretations

Between 1842 and 2021, both in the process of promoting the dissemination of an imported concept and in practice, the players involved unconsciously utilise and interpret the concept of heritage conservation according to their own interests. Based on the findings in the previous seven chapters, it has been argued that the reasons for participants' interpretations of conservation basically fall into three categories. In the first scenario, stakeholders, including national and local governments and professionals, are clear about the meaning and content of protection, but deliberately interpret the concept of conservation for their needs and lead other participants to get used to the interpretive environment they have created. In addition, in the second scenario, stakeholders, represented by developers, designers, and other initiators, usually hear of the concept of conservation but do not know much about it, and so they use the idea in heritage-related proposals and strategies for the support of decision-makers from the top. The third scenario is slightly ignorant. The mass involvers are familiar with the authoritative wording established by the state apparatus and experts and have unconsciously followed the trend, cementing the existence of various interpretations. In this respect, in the third scenario, participants are not the wording creators but the champions of diversity in interpretation.

In the first scenario, from the perspective of governmental management, in the name of conservation, the national government proposes to protect immovable built cultural heritage and establishes an adaptable legislative system, for a cultural and political narrative with grander implications. The national goal is to educate the public population on patriotism through revolutionary relics, as well as to promote the country's scientific and cultural legacies through other archaeological

218 This interview was conducted on 20 August 2018 by Kaiyi Zhu in Shanghai.

treasures and monuments. Influenced by globalisation, China has to interact with international stakeholders and abide by international moral rules. In the political game, the national strategy is both to enable the heritage that represents China's identity the most to be recognised by the world, and to capture the benefits in an era of heritagisation, seizing international prestige and business opportunities via an increasingly flourishing cross-border heritage tourism. By taking the municipality of Shanghai as an example, in the name of conservation, the municipal government utilises urban heritage for city branding and public education. It mainly plays a macro-regulatory role to implement national policies, but it also coordinates and supervises the conduct of subordinates. Under this circumstance, the two heritage-related authorities, the SPNRB and the SMACH, play a complementary role to support or make recommendations on the decisions of the municipal government of Shanghai. The governmental sectors issue different regulations and accelerate the refinement of the conservation system and the grading of numerous immovable cultural heritage sites in the city. It is worth noting that the real effect of heritage-related legislation is only triggered when the damage of a historic site becomes a highly read and discussed social hotspot that triggered retroactive investigations. In this respect, the effectiveness of the layered legislation remains uncertain. Except for the listed Cultural Heritage units at the national-level designation (5,058 sites as of October 2019), it is no exaggeration to argue that all historic units that have been listed to emphasise their cultural values as heritage are at risk of destruction. Unauthorised demolition and reconstruction by individuals occur from time to time, making heritage beyond recognition. Meanwhile, in the name of conservation, each district government (e.g., the Huangpu District where the cases are located) aims to protect the greatest value of the cultural heritage in their jurisdiction. The regional economic increase usually acts as the most important indicator to assess the performance of successive governments. Attraction brought by cultural values is thus no longer enough to compete with the revenue brought by land values for district governments, such as Huangpu, Jing`an, or Hongkou. Involved in the booming real estate market of the early 21st century, conservation of urban heritage has continuously moved forward in a tricky means that is similar to the inferior excuse of "dental prosthetics style transformation" utilised in the late 20th century (see Chapter 4). In the process of re-advocating cultural heritage conservation in response to the national call, "conservation" became at once a "camouflage", through which local government helps to pave the way for capital in the redevelopment market for the transformation of sites with historic significance. When the unhealthy ostensible obedience formed in the early stage of reform and opening-up becomes common in the urban practice of the newly appreciated modern heritage, it takes time to rectify. Nonetheless, the interpretation produced by each district government shares the same aspirations and objectives as the municipality of Shanghai.

From the perspective of academia, in the name of conservation, professionals, experts, and scholars who are engaged in heritage practice also speak up for their own standpoints. It is a means to consolidate the influence of the authoritativeness of their judgment on conservation measures, whether the views are reasonable and acceptable or not. To enhance the credibility of their decisions, professional heritage-related practitioners are the most vital social force that the district government needs to unitise. This thesis suggests dividing professionals into two categories: those who work for the market, and those who work for their expertise. The former category's responsibility is to provide each specific client with professional justification for the interventions that probably damage the architectural attributes and works not in line with conservation principles, presenting the public with a reasonable interpretation for the smooth progress and completion of a real urban transformation project. When these experts are placed in such a role, they often hold a tolerant attitude to explain what "conservation" stands for and what the requirements are for practitioners. The latter category is responsible for raising questions and challenging inappropriate actions. Their criticism comes later than the occurrence of inappropriate practices. Nonetheless, it is always better later than never to have criticism to set the record straight. Heritage discourse is shifting between conservative and aggressive in the tug-of-war between the two sides. In a sense, Chinese heritage-related professionals are aware that they cannot influence the market. However, their affirmations, discussions, debates, and criticism of multiple practical operations in academia still contribute to the development of the subject of heritage conservation.

The next two scenarios cannot be easily characterised due to the uncertainty of the participants. The distinction is that the participants appearing in the second scenario are more likely to be supported by the aforementioned authorities and more aptly justify their actions through the use of conservation-related terms. For example, in the name of conservation, developers prefer to maintain and beautify some iconic cultural heritage sites to directly increase the cultural influence of their social recognition and brand value. Being involved in a conservation project is a must for developers' real estate investment in old city centres. However, maintaining and restoring historic properties is extremely costly when compared with net construction on undeveloped land. Under these circumstances, only a few developers have the capacity to dabble in this field. State-owned investment enterprises or mega-investors, such as Shui On Group, Kerry Group, and Hong Kong Land, are usually among the tier which is committed to the transformative development of large-scale historic districts. They are thus a power that catches the attention of the local government, which stands ready to provide the investors with facilities related to conservation interpretations and heritage discourses.

Meanwhile, in the third scenario, other individual participants have taken part in heritage practices with various personal demands in the name of conservation. These participants are artists, retailers, entrepreneurs, social activists, historians, architects, and urban designers. They prefer to either demonstrate personal ambitions, aesthetic interests or professionalism, and cultural awareness in the field of heritage conservation through self-led transforming samples, or engage in booming regional development dividends for commercial interests. For the former group, creating a unique piece of work with renovation highlights has become mainstream. Through this method, the individual stakeholders can obtain amplification effects for the business they are operating, and bring extra value to their commercial offerings. In historical areas where these types of stakeholders aggregate, popularity and cultural atmosphere accumulate, enhancing the overall historical and cultural value with a deepened heritage market label. The latter group usually joins in heritage practices at a certain temporal node under a matured circumstance. In this kind of transition phase, inappropriate operations often occur for net profit-seeking. Resulting from a lack of public review and judgement like what is found in a large-scale (re)development, management sectors defer to the district government to arrange for the facilitation of participant-based heritage approaches and even allow illegal practices to occur. The linkage role and function of heritage-related official departments and governments are vanishing, virtually negligible as long as no huge controversy arises in society.

The general local residents, tourists, and net users are the expressers in the third scenario. In the name of conservation, local residents are indeed the necessary involvers among all stakeholders who are living in the historic neighbourhoods in everyday life and have the ownership or right of use of historic properties. However, this group of people does not create conservation-related discourse in the spread of interpretative wording. Local residents' function is effective only if the neighbourhood is under a smooth and improving conservation-dominated transformation process. However, the fact is local residents who live in *lilong* neighbourhoods today have no choice in most cases. In this respect, some residents made the transition to enhance the spatial use of their dwellings by working with capital and integrating into an increasingly dynamic neoliberalism wave in the name of conservation.

In addition, in the name of conservation, visitors and the public online or offline do not directly participate in the making of the historic neighbourhoods where they visit. It is not their concern whether a heritage practice is "conservation" or not. Nonetheless, their preference affects to an extent the presenting result of these historic urban landscapes. Especially in an era when the application of data mining spans all industries for production and investment analysis, mass consumer choices and preferences are crucial. The popularity of various sites already reflects, from the

side, what the public would like to see in the transformation of historic districts. The flourishing Xintiandi and gradually decaying Tianzifang have slipped into very different fates in their approximate twenty years of development. The trend is not about whether the project is a presentation of heritage "conservation", "preservation", "maintenance" or "regeneration". As the network flow can be converted into fame and fortune, "heritage" itself has no value from the perspective of the tourists and the public users who harness the key opinions, unless the historic sites can be transformed into effective tools for creating internet celebrities or attracting network flows.

9.3 A Swinging Attitude towards Post-colonial Legacies

To summarise, "how to deal with the historic neighbourhoods in a historical city centre" is still largely determined by national policy and a game of chance between the central and local decision-makers. After the establishment of the PRC, the central government marginalised the city of Shanghai for a long period. The city's closeness to foreign settlers in the previous concessions period and the prosperity and global influence built on their many contributions were at odds with the new Chinese government's commitment to propaganda centred on the people's ownership of the country. If Shanghai's post-treaty historical buildings represented the technological, fashionable and cosmopolitan identity in the Far East before 1943, after 1949 they somehow became a microcosm of the city's scarred and humiliating history in the revolutionism-influenced context.

The economic reform policy in China and the international heritage movement in the 1970s both brought a turning point in Shanghai's attitude towards post-treaty legacies. By seizing the opportunity, Shanghai is ahead of many other Chinese cities in valuing and protecting modern heritage through the exploration and polishing of theories related to heritage conservation. Benefiting from its international reputation as a crossroad for engaging in globalisation and transnationalism in its heritage studies and conservation measures, the cultural heritage in its inner city has been a long-standing topic of debate on a global scale. Shanghai has thus become a research destination for many heritage professionals. The architectural heritage of the previous concessions has constantly attracted scholars from France, Russia, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, which has had a great impact

on this land. These favourable conditions, therefore, enable the rectification of the identity of the historic buildings, sites, and urban landscapes which emerged after the Treaty of Nanking.

With the contribution of Shanghai's heritage-related authorities, the outstanding cases of architecture with a history of over thirty years have gained the possibility to be designated into the category of modern heritage in a Chinese context. On the one hand, this decision enables the city to achieve a new look after the reform of national policy in keeping with the times and international convergence. On the other hand, it marginalises the impressions related to post-colonialism to eliminate a humiliating past in terms of the political environment, recapturing national policy support for the regional development of Shanghai. These external factors indeed accelerated the rapid and radical transformation of many historical areas in Chinese historic cities including Shanghai, but the understanding of the protection of built heritage in Chinese society has not undergone substantial change. On the one hand, the high priority in heritage practice is still closely related to the popularisation of patriotism and nationalism in the national strategy. On the other hand, the possible human-made threats to the post-treaty heritage are larger than the immovable historic buildings and sites. Communities with the will to respect the value of post-colonial products are not the majority in China. In recent years, amidst a wave of rising patriotism, communities that still appreciate post-treaty heritage have decreased; indeed, some individuals choose to conceal their true views of history and the idea of respecting the post-treaty legacies out of concern for their own privacy and security. Different heritage sites are subjected to uneven concerns due to their various natures and attachments to society as a whole.

Among all the types of post-treaty legacies, the historical residential buildings—*lilong* housing—account for the largest proportion. However, the conservation of residential heritage is not the main concern that can attract dedicated efforts in China. Globally, the concern for built vernacular housing increased significantly in the second half of the 20th century. Working in line with Eurocentric criteria has long appeared inexorable in China. Nonetheless, in choosing the heritage items to highlight and support, China is bound to pay attention to and take into account the practical aspects of making advances in the cultural entity of the country. In this respect, when promoting vernacular residential buildings created through massive local practices, Pingyao Ancient Town and Old Town of Lijiang, or the representative vernacular dwellings of Chinese ethnic minorities such as Fujian Tulou, hold a national priority in heritage strategy. Different from countries of immigration like Australia, this thesis argues that the national government of China may never endorse cultural diversity in relation to the post-colonialism that led to the generation of historic *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods. Under these

circumstances, even though Shanghai is China's preeminent economy and has many nationally renowned experts in architectural and urban heritage with appeals, in practice, the municipality is hardly assigned to devote its energy to the conservation of *lilong* blocks like other ancient Chinese towns. The tone has also consequently led to a rapid expansion of urban transformation in the name of conservation with the development of commercial and economic activities as the main objective.

The municipal government of Shanghai officially confirmed the significance of the unique architectural type and urban morphology of *lilong* in 1989. The conservation of *lilong* architecture and neighbourhoods has become an unavoidable topic and a verbal trick in various governmental decision-making procedures in urban development. According to what we can read between the lines, the value of the historic lilong housing and neighbourhoods is complicated. It can be anything defined by stakeholders who hold the power of speaking or discourse hegemony. For the city's characteristics shaped under the influence of colonialism, foreign settlers could justify themselves regarding Shanghai's transition which also happens in the urban development of many post-colonial regions. Certainly, we see responses from the academy from the position of the indigenous community (Waterton, Smith and Campbell 2006; Greer 2010; Waterton and Smith 2010). This thesis suggests that the global discussion regarding the creation of Shanghai's post-treaty urban landscapes of its previous concessions needs an emphasis on prudence, and besides, more empathy. However, a similar discussion disappears throughout the narratives. In effect, the neglect of its history related to treaty settlers and colonial power expansion has made the community in *lilong* areas of Shanghai lose its integrity in terms of intangible significance.

In reality, the significance of listing the historic *lilong* housing and neighbourhoods in Shanghai contributes to addressing the importance of examining "foreign settlers' legacies" from different perspectives rather than boxing these emerging cultural heritage into classic conservation principles and measures. Many publications discuss the role of indigenous communities in the conservation of colonial and post-colonial legacies in heritage management and assessment (Scott 2014; Chan and Lee 2017). The cases are mostly located in Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia and Australia, which were literally colonised in history. The legacies left in previous treaty foreign settlements in cities such as Shanghai, Tianjin, and Fuzhou are not included in the discussion scope. The specific cultural heritage in Shanghai has its dualistic meaning of reality—a product that emerged from the expansion of colonial power, and a carrier of Shanghainese's collective memory—and cannot be defined simply as a colonial or post-colonial heritage. This thesis suggests that the category of heritage complements the discussion on the topic of the formation of heritage under the influence of colonial power.

9.4 Heritage Conservation at a time of Urban Regeneration

As stated above, conservation of urban vernacular, including numerous vernacular housing in the core areas of various historic cities in China, is not the main concern for protection in a national heritage strategy. In 2021, the concept of urban regeneration has catapulted into a perennially hot topic in Chinese big cities. The Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China promulgated the Notice of the General Office of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development on the First Batch of Urban Regeneration Pilot Projects and designated 21 cities (including Shanghai) for the pilot scheme on 4 November 2021. Urban practitioners subsequently ushered in the nationwide official first year of urban regeneration. On 25 August 2021, with the official approval of the municipal first Regulations of Shanghai on Urban Regeneration by the 34th Session of the Fifteenth National People's Congress Standing Committee of Shanghai, urban regeneration is becoming the trend in cultural heritage governance and policies, including the content related to historic urban landscapes. According to the regulation, old districts, old buildings, and urban villages all fall within the concern scope of urban regeneration. Listed cultural heritage areas, neighbourhoods, and streets in the former foreign settlements with significant historical and cultural features, being "old" properties with special values, obtain considerable attention in legislation. After approximating the commercialised urban practices of historic dwellings in the inner city in the last two decades, whether the new regulation for promoting urban regeneration in Shanghai could bring mechanisms consistent with the protection of historic districts remains unknown in the 21st century.

In the urban regeneration of those listed Protection Areas, Protection Neighbourhoods, and Protection Streets, conserving architectural heritage with recognisable significance is usually an essential condition for developing historic sites according to conservation plans (Figure 9.1). In this respect, the government creates a set of specific heritage discourse for enabling developers to successfully pass expert review and public announcement. In 2021, the wording applied in an authoritative context includes: maintenance and restoration (*baoliu xiushan*), renewal and renovation (*gengxin gaizao*), improvement and rebuild (*youhua fujian*), and texture-based reconstruction (*jili xiufu*) approaches for sites that are listed in a

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specific category (Table 9.1–9.2).[219] Apparently, the newly established rules in terms of planning try to avoid the use of the terms “conservation” or “protection”. The agglomeration of a series of altered terminological applications has led to a variation of heritage approaches. Furthermore, in the new heritage discourse, we see the fading out of the word “conservation” in urban heritage governance.

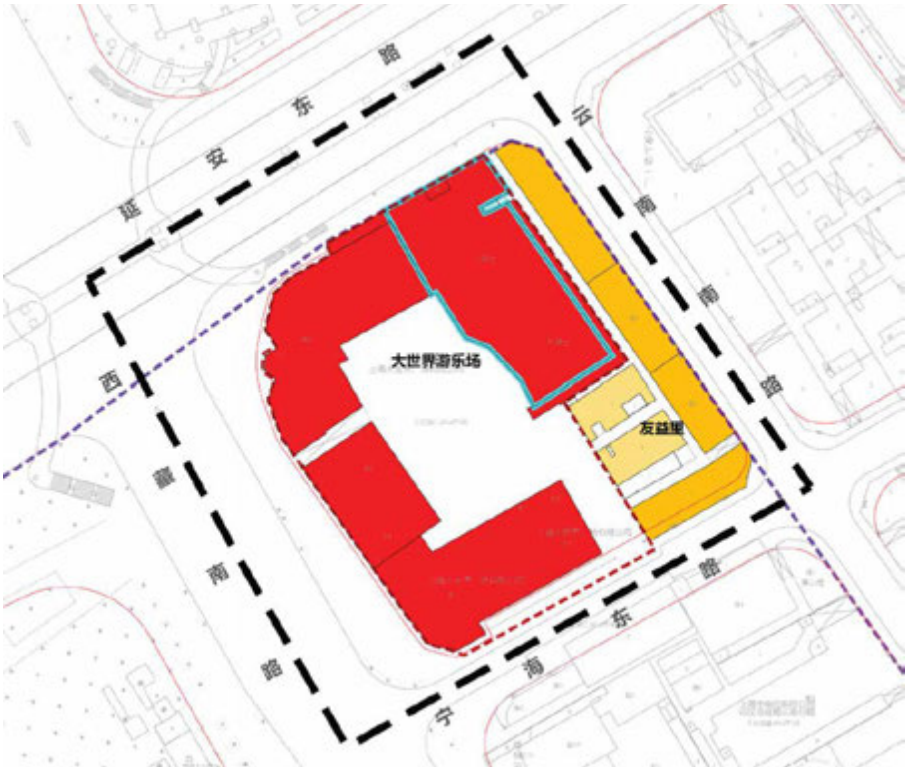


FIG. 9.1 The urban planning appraisal of the Protection Area HP-45-II, in which the building “Great World” marked with red colour is under a strict conservation requirement from being rebuilt, while the decisive authorities have allowed the buildings marked with different yellow colours to be rebuilt for historical appearances and torn down according to internal provisions for practical measures. Most listed Protection Areas of lilong neighbourhoods include architecture coloured with yellows only according to urban planning appraisals. In this respect, redevelopment of historic neighbourhoods becomes imperative and unobstructed in terms of procedure review and approval, under the shield of carefully crafted justification. Source: SPNRB, 2021.

219 This information was accessed by Kaiyi Zhu during project meetings with one state-owned real estate developer when participating in a practical urban regeneration project in 2021.

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TABLE 9.1 Four design strategies in urban conservation and regeneration.

Design Strategy	Approach
Maintenance and restoration	No demolition; the building shall be repaired on the original site or by shifting, and the main façade and distinctive interior decoration shall not be changed.
Renewal and renovation	The building can be reconstructed on the original site or by shifting, and the main façade, volume and style of the building shall not be changed (most of the original components and raw materials should be used).
Improvement and rebuild	The building can be reconstructed on the original site or by shifting, and the characteristics and style of the building's façade shall not be changed (valuable original components and raw materials should be retained).
Texture-based construction	New buildings should be in harmony with the scale and style of surrounding historical buildings.

TABLE 9.2 Category of historic buildings to which each method applies.

Design Strategy	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Maintenance and restoration	Heritage Architecture Cultural Relic Protection Unit Cultural Relic Protection Spot	Retained Historic Building General Historic Building (in protected sites)	/
Renewal and renovation	/		/
Improvement and rebuild	/		/
Texture-based construction	/	/	There are no buildings in the lot with protection requirements.

Before the promulgation of the regeneration-oriented regulation, influenced by the heritage discourse and conservation principles, urban transformation of historical areas remained prudent. By analysing the three cases, this thesis notes that Xintiandi and Bugaoli reveal two different acceptable conservation pathways for architectural protection: (1) restoration-based adaptive reuse on an architectural scale, and (2) conservative maintenance on an urban scale. This thesis particularly acknowledges the repeated experimentation before the restoration of other historic buildings. If in the future, other listed cultural heritage sites like Bugaoli are fortunate enough to be restored and conserved, a prudent testing step is needed for experimenting in a single unit first, facilitating technique trial and error. Meanwhile, for those more than one hundred listed *lilong* neighbourhoods with excellent historical and cultural features, the deteriorating but still existing Bugaoli provides a positive model. Once the material existence of a historical neighbourhood is extinguished, all the other relevant subsidiary values will dissipate into ashes. The widely applied advanced 3D imaging and printing technologies cannot reshape the atmosphere of communities, nor the physical mottled patina. Indeed, heritage approaches in the three locations have respectively left much to be desired. First, from the perspective of architectural conservation, the most prominent disadvantages are: the much later

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intervention of a professional team for careful screening of conservation-restoration strategies in the range of the "building control zones" and extensive demolition (Xintiandi), unorganised and disordered architectural modifications and additions (Tianzifang), and a permissive and ever-deteriorating internal environment (Bugaoli). Furthermore, this research could not see any effective means to well protect the life of local permanent residents. The specific group is losing faith in the city and likewise abandoning and moving away from their community one after another. This is probably the most pressing issue for the conservation of urban vernacular in city centres today. An initiative from the bottom with the participation of local residents is rare. Under the circumstance of large-scale urban regeneration, Tianzifang is thus almost the only example in its model across Shanghai.

Today, relocation of local residents of the listed historic neighbourhoods under protection remains to be the most common process. In line with the policies resulting from the Regulations of Shanghai on Urban Regeneration, the historical blocks in the city centre of Shanghai, such as the Qiaojialu area of the old walled-city (*laochengxiang*) and the East Jinlinglu area of the previous French Concession, have suffered the largest appropriation and relocation of local residents in their not-long history. The administrative strategy and measure to vacate developable historic buildings have inevitably accelerated the exclusiveness of those historical communities. In this respect, regardless of how those indigenous permanently registered residents understand historic buildings and how they interpret and utilise the concept of "conservation" for their common interests, the folk narrative and discourse of inhabitants will have little room to exist in the heritage practices of Shanghai's urban heritage from 2021 onwards. Nonetheless, many of the Xintiandi-like highly-popular commercial districts and the recently promoted urban regeneration strategy are, however, a reflection of the choices made by the public, including this portion of local residents.

In this thesis, Chapters 3 and 4 clearly demonstrate a tradition of architectural construction not associated with the protection or maintenance of historic buildings. In addition, the literature review of Chapters 6, 7 and 8 shows a gradual shift of terminological use from "conservation" to "regeneration" or other more neutral terms. Liang Sicheng raised many challenges and difficulties that heritage conservation faced in their pioneers' early practice in China, demonstrating a reminder to subsequent practitioners. However, contemporary practice does not circumvent these problems and may even in some cases be exacerbating them in the 21st century. Professionals, who are usually the most knowledgeable group that the public chooses to believe, have a responsibility for not blurring professional boundaries, misleading other stakeholders, or deceiving the general public. However, unfortunately, this thesis reveals that a professional division between conservation and other measures in urban practice does not appear to exist in many instances.

It is difficult to answer the question of whether each transformation of historic *lilong* is "conservation", on what basis it can be assessed, and what heritage approaches are recognised as "conservation". This thesis argues that even with the existence of international and national conservation principles, it is not possible to arrive at a uniform and practical approach that can be universally and strictly followed in practice. Particularly in the case of less important and even controversial heritage sites built in a short period in recent history, those in practice do not leave much room for these so-called "uniform" approaches in practice. Furthermore, even for those listed monuments and traditional architecture, intentional vandalism also occurs from time to time. The occurrence of protection of urban residential heritage in contemporary China is literally without any relation to the development of heritage theory and technology. Indeed, if the question of "how to do" is not addressed, any new notions and technologies can be misused or abused, for the achieving interests of each stakeholder. Similar to the distinction of personal wills in the process of promoting heritage conservation, after more than one hundred years of evolution of the Chinese heritage movement, countless people have engaged in heritage conservation practice, naturally becoming groups of stakeholders in different social function hierarchies and divisions with respective interests as a starting point for consideration and decision-making. In this respect, this thesis attempts to summarise the claims of the various communities of interest when intervening in the transformation of heritage sites and their corresponding justification and interpretation "in the name of conservation" of practices and adopted measures.

In the international heritage movement, people see heritage conservation as a dynamic issue. This thesis argues that the inclusive attitude does not apply to the Chinese conservation environment of cultural heritage. A progressively broader interpretation of the term "conservation" only breeds more anachronistic and destructive practices. To implement the purpose of heritage conservation and to promote the continuation of the historical-cultural value of historical buildings and sites through conservation in urban regeneration, this thesis concerns two aspects: (1) a more careful heritage registration strategy and procedure to prevent the overflow of heritagisation, and (2) a more open and transparent information basis, for ensuring accurate judgement and choice of implementation methods in practice.

First, in the context of Chinese practice, constrained by a political system in which localities cater to central decision-making, practitioners need more rigorous top-down rules for reference and discipline. In the making of legislation, authorities have the responsibility to identify sites that are genuinely in need of protection and conservation as heritage sites, rather than creating cultural destinations in the name of "heritage" for consumption. This thesis demonstrates a process of heritagisation in Shanghai. It notes that the emerging categories, including Protection Area,

Protection Neighbourhood, and Protection Street have blurred the public's and investors' perceptions of heritage. According to the current heritage discourse, obviously, only the listed Heritage Architecture and Cultural Relic Protection Units (Spots) coloured with red (see Figure 9.1) in a conservation plan have a chance to be protected in accordance with the conservation principles stated in international charters, declarations, or recommendations. The idea to protect a holistic historic urban landscape is not effectively valid in this case either. A popular trend at present (after 2021) is to redevelop all the historical buildings in the listed areas under protection by only maintaining and conserving the Heritage Architecture and Cultural Relic Protection Units (Spots). This strategy means that decision-makers will dismantle historical buildings in their entirety, and then reassemble the dismantled pieces together to suit the redevelopment needs. This approach is similar to what was done in Xintiandi or worse, which was criticised in the last two decades but is gradually becoming mainstream nowadays. Thus, from the perspective of heritage governance and policies, if heritagisation and heritage listings are not restricted, it will certainly lead to the infiltration and erosion of conservation principles by speculative conservation-related interpretations and discourse.

Furthermore, in real practice, a lack of information on the listed cultural heritage sites is a constant in China. In this respect, in the absence of reciprocal information between the government and the civilian involver, stakeholders are usually not fully informed about the heritage they need to transform or protect, and the corresponding conditions under which measures need to be taken. Architectural or planning proposals, especially those that need to be submitted to an expert committee for review and assessment, become more of a gamble on the preferences of authority with decision-making power. The transformation of urban heritage becomes a game of testing the bottom line, and conservation becomes a matter of various opinions and interpretations. The stakeholders are in fact unable to make a comprehensive understanding of what heritage conservation is or an accurate judgement of their approaches. In the absence of open and transparent information, stakeholders have little idea of what is the right and appropriate thing to do, even if they are committed to preserving cultural heritage sites in their projects.

There is a crossover between the two points above, namely, how heritage is selected and what criteria are included in the assessment. In the research, through the study of literature, official reports and documents, interviews with members of the expert committee, and personal involvement in heritage-related practice, the results together lead to the conclusion that—in the process of drafting a heritage list and submitting it to a higher authoritative agency of approval—an assessment report with comprehensive criteria is not mandatorily required. This method is far from what is required by UNESCO in the selection of the WHSs. Therefore, the most

important puzzle piece of information missing in practice is the basis and gist for what makes each listed heritage site a piece of cultural heritage. Because of the lack of assessment reports and criteria in the heritagisation process, stakeholders in practice do not know which elements need to be protected, let alone how important they each are. This thesis thus suggests the urgent necessity of the programmatic approach to heritage registration. The registration paradigm needs to be developed by professionals and easily understood by a wide range of practitioners and enthusiasts, serving as a reference standard and basis prior to heritage listing. This is an effective means of ensuring that heritage conservation can be carried out in an orderly, appropriate, and reasonable manner under the new norm of urban regeneration.

Addressing the issue of heritage conservation in Chinese historical cities and making it an enabler of urban development requires a rethinking of the relationships and roles of the various levels of players in the overall management and operational system. Cities have embraced a range of different trials and errors. Heritage conservation in China, or even in most countries of the world, is an experimental process. It is not a specialised discipline, but a derivative study that draws inspiration from the practice of art, architecture, archaeology, and anthropology as leading experts' perceptions change over time. The research on the diverse interpretations of conservation leaves us with many unsolved problems and questions due to the ever-changing definition and scope of heritage and the consequent constant adaptation of complementary conservation measures. This thesis is titled "In the Name of Conservation" and is centred on the diverse ways in which conservation semantics have been introduced, shaped and used in China owing to the promulgation of the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China (ICOMOS China 2015). The issue of the principles has led to the widespread and indiscriminate use of the term "conservation" in academic and more popular circles for a while in the last two decades. It has also made us aware of a long-standing but deliberately avoided ambiguity that is unclear even to the international authoritative institutions. This thesis can almost foresee a precipitous decline in the discussion of heritage conservation in cities in the context of China's emerging wave of urban regeneration. This trend could lead stakeholders to move away from the obsession with labelling their projects as "conservation". It frees up space for urban practitioners to think. What kind of laws and regulations should be put in place by the authorities to avoid the unregulated destruction of the historic urban landscape in a growing number of investment projects? How to properly deal with the fact that the imported Eurocentric concept is not fully accepted in Chinese heritage practice? Who are the custodians of cultural heritage, and how can the practical users of historic buildings be released from marginalisation, and be more proactively involved in the formulation of conservation plans and the making of decisions? How

can China's specific post-treaty legacies actively contribute to the rethinking of the immovable products created under the expansion of colonial powers, and what role can international and domestic experts play in encouraging the public correctly understand and use the cultural heritage of this type?

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Appendices

Questionnaire (English Version)

Stakeholders' View towards the Urban Heritage (Historic Neighbourhood) in Shanghai

In a project of historic neighbourhood transformation, multiple related personnel are involved, and different participants (stakeholders) have different concerns and interest starting points; the participation of one party may even also affect the realization of other participants' demands and appealing dimension. The term "conservation" is applied as a carrier and medium to be interpreted by multiple participants into the concept meeting their own value judgment and interests. Therefore, understanding the concerns and appeals of different participants in the "conservation" process of urban heritage (historical neighbourhood) is of great significance for standardizing protection measures, managing and supervising "conservation" processes, and promoting effective cooperation among all stakeholders.

- This questionnaire aims to obtain the concerns and weight in proportion of multiple stakeholders in the urban transformation project of China's urban heritage (historical neighbourhood).
- The interviewer, a PhD candidate at TU Delft, declares that your answers will not be tampered with maliciously.
- This questionnaire would take about 10 minutes.

Part 1 Background

1.1 Interviewing Object – Background Information

1 By type of city heritage historical community protection project participants, you belong to:	
□ The public	□ Heritage conservation professional / practitioner
□ Architecture / Urban planning practitioner	□ Investment developer
□ Resident of a historic neighbourhood	□ Merchant (retailer, artist, etc.)
□ Member of a public organization	□ Other _____

2 How long have you lived in Shanghai?	
□ 1 year or less	□ 1-5 years
□ 5-10 years	□ 10 years or more

3 What is your age?	
□ Under 18 years old	□ 19-35 years old
□ 36-50 years old	□ 51-70 years old
□ Over 70 years old	

4 What is the highest level of education you have earned so far?	
□ High School diploma or below	□ College's degree
□ Bachelor's degree	□ Master's degree or above

1.2 Interviewing Object – Living Conditions

5 Have you lived in Lilong residence (historic residence in Shanghai urban historic neighbourhoods)?	
□ Yes	□ No (No need to answer "Additional")
Additional: How long have you lived/ been living in Lilong residence?	
□ 1 year or less	□ 1-5 years
□ 5-10 years	□ 10-15 years
□ 15-20 years	□ 20 years or more

6 What is the size of the place you live in?	
□ 30 m^2 or less	□ 30 m^2 - 60 m^2
□ 60 m^2 - 120 m^2	□ 120 m^2 - 200 m^2
□ 200 m^2 or more	

1.3 Interviewing Object – Understanding of Urban Heritage "Conservation"

7 Have you participated in/experienced the urban historic neighbourhood "conservation" project?	
□ Yes	□ No

8 How much do you know about the "conservation" of China's urban historic neighbourhoods?	
□ No idea (No need to answer "Additional")	□ Not very clearly understand
□ Understand	□ Clearly understand
□ Very familiar with	
Additional: How did you learn about the "conservation" of China's urban historic neighbourhoods?	
□ Words of mouth from neighbouring friends	□ Media promotion
□ Popular lectures	□ Personal interests
□ Relevant urban conservation practitioners	□ Other _____

9 Whose opinions do you think have the greatest impact on the heritage approaches of urban historic neighbourhoods in Shanghai (China)?	
□ The public	□ Government department
□ Expert and scholar	□ Investment developer
□ Resident of historic neighbourhood	□ Merchant (retailer, artist, etc.)
□ Member of community/public organization	□ Other _____

10 Whose opinions do you think should be mostly adopted within every "conservation" project?	
□ The public	□ Government department
□ Expert and scholar	□ Investment developer
□ Resident of historic neighbourhood	□ Merchant (retailer, artist, etc.)
□ Member of community/public organization	□ Other _____

Part 2: Attitude Comparison
This questionnaire uses a "Likert Scale" method. Please assess and rate the importance of each indicator on a scale from "1" to "5" for each factor involved in the conservation of historic urban areas. 1 - No need to consider (NC) | 2 - Unimportant (U) | 3 – Neither important or unimportant (N) |4 - Important (I) | 5 - Very important (VI)

Your Focus on the "Conservation" of Historic Neighbourhoods (Such as Lilong Districts)	Measurement Scale NC U N I VI
1. Is it necessary to protect historic neighbourhoods in Shanghai's urban development?	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2. How do you think historic neighbourhoods should be physically protected? (Please rate the following indicators based on how important you think)	
2.1 Original exterior appearance of historic residence (style, colour, height, and etc.)	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.2 Original indoor layout and interior of historic residence	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.3 Original urban texture, street width and road paving	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.4 Outside every single historic neighbourhood, the historical environment within a certain range should be retained as a whole	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.5 Traditional economic activities in a historic district and surrounding areas (e.g., vegetable market, early stalls, grocery stores, sauce gardens)	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.6 The mark of the times in the long history of urban development of Shanghai	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.7 Continuous, stable and sustainable protection measures and heritage approaches	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.8 The historical and cultural values of historic neighbourhood (e.g., celebrities' former houses and places for major historical events)	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.9 The aesthetic values (beauty) of historic neighbourhood	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3. How do you think the spirit and life of historic neighbourhood should be protected? (Please rate the following indicators based on how important you think)	
3.1 Original neighbourhood relationship tied and bonded by old/local residents (e.g., people who have lived in one place for more than 10 years)	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.2 Active population mobility between permanent residents and migrants	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.3 The traditional street living atmosphere	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.4 The public health in historic neighbourhood and reduce safety and health (personal) hazards	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.5 A living environment that is more conducive to human comfort	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.6 A living condition that is more in line with modern living standards	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5

Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

关于上海城市遗产（历史街区）保护中各参与方观点的调查问卷

在历史街区保护过程中，涉及相关人员众多，不同参与方有不同的关注点和利益出发点，而一方在实践过程中的参与也可能影响其他参与者诉求的实现。“保护”一词作为载体和媒介，被不同参与者译介为符合其自身价值判断和城市转型理念的概念。因此，了解不同参与方在城市遗产（历史街区）保护过程中的关注点以及诉求，对于规范保护措施，管理监督保护进程，促进各参与方有效合作有重要意义。

- 本问卷旨在获得中国城市遗产（历史街区）的城市改造项目中多个利益相关者的关注点和比重。
- 本问卷的设计者为代尔夫特理工大学的博士生，在此声明，你的答案不会被恶意篡改或乱用。 这个问卷将需要大约10分钟。

第一部分: 背景

1.1访问对象——背景资料

1 按城市遗产历史社区保护项目参与者类型划分，您属于：	
□ 政府人员	□ 遗产保护学者/咨询机构从业人员
□ 建筑规划类从业人员	□ 投资开发者
□ 历史街区常住居民	□ 商家（零售，艺术家等）
□ 社会大众	□ 社团组织成员（公益机构）

2 您在上海居住了多久：	
□ 1年以下	□ 1-5年
□ 5-10年	□ 10年以上

3 您的年龄是：	
□ 18岁以下	□ 19岁-35岁
□ 36岁-50岁	□ 51岁-70岁
□ 70岁以上	

4 您目前已获得的最高学历是：	
□ 高中及以下	□ 大专学历
□ 本科学历	□ 研究生及以上学历

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1.2访问对象——居住条件

5 您是否居住过里弄住宅	
□ 是	□ 否（不需要回答附加问题）
附加：您在里弄住宅中居住的时长是：	
□ 1-2年	□ 2-5年
□ 5-10年	□ 10-15年
□ 15-20年	□ 20年以上

6 您居住的房屋面积为多大？	
□ 30平方米以下	□ 30平方米-60平方米
□ 60平方米-120平方米	□ 120平方米-200平方米
□ 200平方米以上	

1.3访问对象——对城市遗产保护的理解

7. 您是否参与/经历过城市历史街区保护改造项目？	
□ 是	□ 否

8. 您对我国城市历史街区保护过程的了解程度：	
□ 完全不清楚（不需要回答附加问题）	□ 不太清楚
□ 了解	□ 清楚
□ 非常清楚	
附加：你是如何了解到历史街区保护的：	
□ 邻居朋友口耳相传	□ 媒体宣传报道
□ 普及讲座	□ 个人兴趣
□ 专职人员	□ 其它_____

9. 您认为，谁的意见对我国城市历史街区保护的影响最大：	
□ 政府部门	□ 常住居民
□ 专家学者	□投资开发者
□ 其它_____	

第二部分: 指标重要程度选择

本问卷采用“李克特量表”法，请您针对各指标对城市历史街区保护过程中涉及的各要素的重要程度从“1”到“5”进行评估和打分，其中：1-不需要考虑，2-不重要，3-重要，4-比较重要，5-非常重要。

您在历史街区（如里弄）保护中的关注点	重要性
1. 在上海的城市发展中是否有必要保护历史街区？	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.您认为历史街区该如何保护？ （请根据您认为的重要程度对下列选项进行评分）	
2.1 原有的建筑外部风貌（样子、颜色、高度）	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.2 原有的建筑内部样式	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.3 原有的街道宽窄、铺设方式	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.4 被保护的历史街区之外，一定范围内的历史环境也应被整体保留	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.5 保留历史街区内及周边的传统经济活动（菜场、早点摊、杂货店、酱园等）	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.6 历史街区本来的历史遗存和全部历史信息也应被保留	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.7对历史街区应有长期、稳定可持续的保护措施	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.8保护街区的历史与文化价值（如保留名人故居、重大历史事件发生场所）	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
2.9 保护和展示街区的艺术价值（美观性）	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3. 历史街区保护对原有的社区生活造成的影响	
3.1 维护传统的街道生活氛围	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.2 维护街区内部原本的邻里关系	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.3 促进常住居民和外来居民之间的流动	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.4 保障街区公共健康，降低安全、卫生（人身）隐患	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.5 保护改造后的里弄住宅居住舒适度	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5
3.6 能否改造并符合现代化的生活标准	□1 □2 □3 □4 □5

Semi-open Interview Questionnaire (English)

Your Personal Understanding of Urban Heritage Conservation Regarding Shanghai's Lilong Housing[220]

Statement
1. Your answers of this online interview will be only applied to an "urban heritage conservation" related research topic, and I am looking for your authentic and thoughtful attitude.
2. The interviewer, a PhD candidate at TU Delft, declares that your answers will not be tampered with maliciously.
3. Depending on the length of your answer, this online interview would take about 5-15 minutes.

1. Opinion for be anonymous	
□ If you do not want to be named in any research paper, please check this.	
□ If you would like to be named in research papers, please check this and leave your contact information below.	
2. Contact Information	
Name	(Other contact methods)
Affiliation	
Occupation	
Email address	

3. What impression did you get when you see Shanghai's historic lilong neighbourhoods in the former concession areas?
4. According to your own experience and understanding, what type of lilong neighbourhood transformation practice do you prefer? Why? Can you name one?
5. What information (if there is) do you know about **Xintiandi**? How do you related this urban block to architectural and urban heritage conservation? P.S. If you have no idea of this case, please skip this question directly.
6. What information (if there is) do you know about **Tianzifang**? How do you related this urban block to architectural and urban heritage conservation? P.S. If you have no idea of this case, please skip this question directly.
7. What information (if there is) do you know about **Bugaoli (Cité Bourgogne)**? How do you related this urban block to architectural and urban heritage conservation? P.S. If you have no idea of this case, please skip this question directly.

Thank you for your joining this online interview survey! If you have further questions, please feel free to contact the interviewer via K.Zhu-1@tudelft.nl

220 You can also find the semi-open interview questionnaire online with this address https://nl.surveymonkey.com/r/G89PTTQ.

Curriculum vitæ

Kaiyi Zhu

Date of birth	15 February 1991
Sex	Female
Nationality	China
Address	TU Delft Faculty of Architecture & the Built Environment Room 01+Oost 700, Julianalaan 134, 2628 BL, Delft, Netherlands
Email	K.Zhu-1@tudelft.nl | zhukaiyi0215@outlook.com

Education and training

Sep 2016 - Jan 2023
Defence: 16-01-2023

PhD Candidate (defence date: 16 January 2023)
Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology, Delft, Netherlands

Sep 2014 - Sep 2015

Master of Science in Conservation of Historic Buildings
University of Bath, Bath, United Kingdom

Sep 2009 - Jun 2014

Bachelor of Architecture
Nanjing Tech University, Nanjing, China

Aug 2012 - Feb 2014

Bachelor of Civil Engineering in Town Planning
Avans University of Applied Sciences, Tilburg, Netherlands

Jun 2013 - Jul 2013

International Summer Programme in Architecture: Cities in Asia
University of Hong Kong, Shanghai & Hong Kong & Singapore

Academic positions

2022 – Present

Project Research Fellow
The Research Institute of Better China Initiative, China Academy of Art

2017 – Present

Editorial Staff
European Journal of Creative Practices in Cities and Landscapes

2018 – Present

Research Member
Heritage & Environment - Centre for Global Heritage and Development (Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Universities)

2020 – Present

Research Member
Port City Futures (Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Universities) & UNESCO Chair Water, Ports and Historic Cities

Teaching experience

2022

Instructor
Place Narrative Design Workshop, Institute of International Collaboration, China Academy of Art

2021 & 2022

Instructor
Water Works: Activating Heritage for Sustainable Development

2017 & 2018-2019

Teaching Assistant
AR2HA010 Building Green: Past, Present, Future

2016 - 2017

Instructor
AR2A010 Architecture History Thesis

Professional work

2022

Peer Reviewer
Planning Perspective (SSCI)

2022

Panel Chair (19th IPHS Conference)
Session 3.5 Tools and Methods (July 5)
Session 3.4 Transnational Histories (July 6)

2022

Peer Reviewer
Conference papers | 19th IPHS Conference - City Space Transformation: Renovation of The Urban Environment

2021

Convenor
Re-Scape Colloquium: Mobilizing Water Heritage in Sustainable Development

2019, 2020

Peer Reviewer
The Journal of Architecture (A&HCI)

2019

Organizing Committee Member
International LDE-Heritage conference: Heritage and the Sustainable Development Goals

2019

Organizing Committee Member
2019 academic week of architectural history, Harbin Institute of Technology

2019

Panel Convenor (XXIX IVR World Congress 2019 - Dignity, Democracy, Diversity)
Panel - Contemporary Spatial Justice in Urban China: Theoretical Review, Case Studies and Legal Critique

2018

Convenor
Lecture LI Hu “OPEN Questions” | Towards Openness, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment TU Delft

Grands & awards

2022	Bronze Prize for outstanding performance in the 8th China International College Students' 'Internet +' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition
2021	Winner of Re-Scape Competition - LDE Centre for Global Heritage and Development, VU Amsterdam research institute CLUE+
2017 - 2020	Scholarship from the China Scholarship Council
2018	GUHP-sponsored Travelling Grant
2014- 2015	University of Bath Faculty of Engineering & Design Elite Msc Scholarship
2014	Excellent Design Work in 2014 Students' Works Exhibition of Exchange Programs of Architecture Schools in China
2012 - 2013	Avans Scholarship for Best performing non-EEA Student
2010 & 2011 & 2012	Second Prize of Academic Scholarship (Nanjing Tech University)
2009	Third Prize of Academic Scholarship (Nanjing Tech University)

Invited speeches

2022 "In the Name of Conservation: Reflections on the Interpretation and Justification in China's Urban Heritage Practice", IPHS Spotlight: Emerging Research and Researchers in Planning History, Online

2021 "Dutch Dynamic Heritage Strategies", Lecture Series on Classical Chinese Garden Study, School of Architecture, Southeast University, Nanjing, China

2019 "Protecting Cultural Relics in Globalizing Shanghai: Assessing Issues of Identity and Heritage in the Listed Bugaoli Community", Built Heritage International Scholars Forum, Tongji University, Shanghai, China

2018 Book Presentation of "Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage: Past, Present and Future", International Symposium on Water Heritage in Asian Cities (NYU Shanghai & Fudan University & IIAS/ Urban Knowledge Network Asia, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences), Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, Shanghai, China

Conference presentations

2022 "Controversial Heritage: Caught between collective memories and post-colonialism", EURA 2022 Conference, Defrag-Europe: fragility/ antifragility at play in contemporary Europe–Politecnico di Milano, Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Milan, Italy

"The Resurgent Exclusion-oriented Approach in Shanghai's Heritage Conservation Practices", IPHS 2022: 19th International Planning History Society Conference – Online

2019 "Chinese Cultural Inaccuracy and the Necessity of Detailed Regulations in Chinese Conservation Practices", ICAS 11th International Convention of Asia Scholars, Leiden, Netherlands

"Lilong in Modern Shanghai and its Preservation in the Legal and Realistic Context", 29th World Congress of the International Association for the Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy: Dignity, Democracy, Diversity, Lucerne, Switzerland

2018 "Constrains or Opportunities: Sin of the World Heritage List", The 4th the Biennial Conference of ACHS (Association of Critical Heritage Studies) - Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China

"Dilemma Between Density and Quality: The demographic history of Sinan Road area", IPHS 2018: 18th International Planning History Society Conference - Yokohama, Japan

"Transformation of Urban Communities from Within: Residents' Role in Lilong's Attributive Switch Between Market-led Commodity and State-controlled Property", IPHS 2018: 18th International Planning History Society Conference - Yokohama, Japan

2016 "Resilience of Dwellings and the Creation of Liveable Historical Residential Areas in China", 17th IPHS Conference History-Urbanism-Resilience - Delft, Netherlands

Employment and practice

2021 Conservation Consultant
Building Design Partnership Ltd (Shanghai) & Vanke (Shanghai) Project - Yuqingli Project (East Jinling Road) of Huangpu District, Shanghai

2021 Curator Member
2021 Beijing Urban and Architecture Biennale

2020 Invited Interviewer (2020 Beijing Urban and Architecture Biennale)
An Interview with Herman Hertzberger, Amsterdam, Netherlands

2018 - 2019 Copyright Manager
Springer book by Carola Hein - *Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage: Past, Present and Future*

2017 Discourse Analyst

Carola Hein and Elise van Dooren's journal article - *Teaching history for design at TU Delft: exploring types of student learning and perceived relevance of history for the architecture profession*

2015 - 2017 Overseas Editor
CCTN ARCH

2016 Assistant Architect
CCTN, 19F, Building B, No.1398 of Siping Road, Shanghai, China

2015 Assistant Architect
Building Design Partnership (BDP.), 7 Hill Street, Bristol, BS1 5RW, United Kingdom

TOC

Publications

Sun, L., & Zhu, K. (2022). The Social Dimension of Urban Transformation in Shanghai: Population Mobility, Modernity, and Globalization. *Journal of Urban History*, 48(1), pp. 213–221.

Zhu, K., Ting, C-S., Lin, S-L., Hein, C. M. & Mager, T. (2021). Roundtable I: Water and Heritage. In U., Fatoric, S., Hein, C., de Maaker, E. & Pereira Roders, A. (eds.), *LDE Heritage Conference on Heritage and the Sustainable Development Goals Proceedings*, Delft, pp. 513 –515.

Zhu, K., & Hein, C. M. (2020). Temporalities and the conservation of cultural relic protection units: legislative, economic and citizen times of the Bugaoli community in globalising Shanghai. *Built Heritage*, *4*(1), 1–16.

Sun, L., Kaan, K. & Zhu, K. (2020). Time Machine: Interview with Prof. Kees Kaan, *The Architect*, 2020, (1): 5–13.

Zhu, K., Hein, C. M. & Sun, L. (2020). Dynamic Heritage Strategies: Dutch Practices of Architectural Heritage Transformation in the Cultural, Economic and Historical Dimensions, *The Architect*, 2020, (1): 22–31.

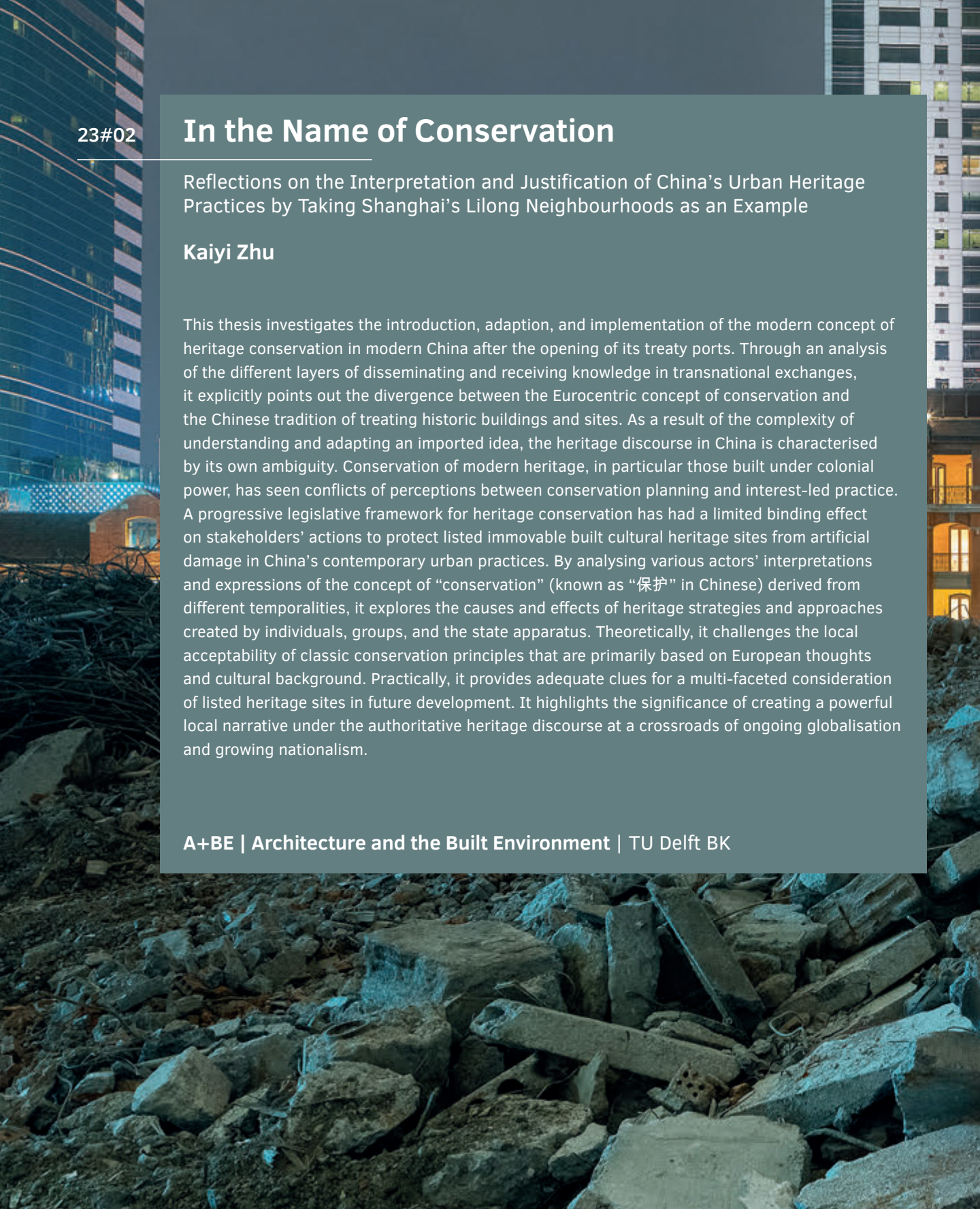
Zhu, K. (2019). Water Heritage in Asian Cities Symposium, 29 November – 1 December 2018, Shanghai, China. *European Journal of Creative Practices in Cities and Landscapes*, 2(1), 195–206.

Zhu F., Sun L., Zhu K., & Jing L. (2019). Why Factory 1: Spatial Significance of Architectural Education Buildings. In *2019 XJTLU International Conference: Architecture across Boundaries* (pp. 328–338). KnE Social Sciences.

Sun, Y., Schwake, G., Zhu, K., & Zhu, P. (2018). Report from the 18th International Planning History Society conference: 15–19 July 2018, Yokohama, Japan. *Planning Perspectives*, *33*(4), 657–663.

Zhu, K. (2018). Dilemma between Density and Quality: The demographic history of Sinan Road area. In In the *18th International Planning History Society Conference Proceedings, Yokohama*, pp. 202–208.

Zhu, K., & Hein, C. (2018). Transformation of Urban Communities from Within: Residents' Role in Lilong's Attributive Switch Between Market-led Commodity and State-controlled Property. In the *18th International Planning History Society Conference Proceedings, Yokohama,* pp. 588–597.



23#02

In the Name of Conservation

Reflections on the Interpretation and Justification of China's Urban Heritage Practices by Taking Shanghai's Lilong Neighbourhoods as an Example

Kaiyi Zhu

This thesis investigates the introduction, adaption, and implementation of the modern concept of heritage conservation in modern China after the opening of its treaty ports. Through an analysis of the different layers of disseminating and receiving knowledge in transnational exchanges, it explicitly points out the divergence between the Eurocentric concept of conservation and the Chinese tradition of treating historic buildings and sites. As a result of the complexity of understanding and adapting an imported idea, the heritage discourse in China is characterised by its own ambiguity. Conservation of modern heritage, in particular those built under colonial power, has seen conflicts of perceptions between conservation planning and interest-led practice. A progressive legislative framework for heritage conservation has had a limited binding effect on stakeholders' actions to protect listed immovable built cultural heritage sites from artificial damage in China's contemporary urban practices. By analysing various actors' interpretations and expressions of the concept of "conservation" (known as "保护" in Chinese) derived from different temporalities, it explores the causes and effects of heritage strategies and approaches created by individuals, groups, and the state apparatus. Theoretically, it challenges the local acceptability of classic conservation principles that are primarily based on European thoughts and cultural background. Practically, it provides adequate clues for a multi-faceted consideration of listed heritage sites in future development. It highlights the significance of creating a powerful local narrative under the authoritative heritage discourse at a crossroads of ongoing globalisation and growing nationalism.

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