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Community participation in cultural heritage management: A systematic literature review comparing Chinese and international practices

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ABSTRACT

Community participation is an essential issue in heritage management. The international heritage organisation ICCROM published a guidance document discussing people-centred approaches to heritage management in 2015. Cultural heritage management is recommended to be carried out through a community participation process. Despite the growing literature on community participation in cultural heritage management, little research has been done on comparing Chinese to international approaches. Although in China several pilot projects have conducted effective community participation and achieved excellent outcomes. This paper aims to fill this gap by providing an overview that compares and discusses the similarities and differences between Chinese and international approaches. A systematic literature review of the state-of-the-art was conducted to explore these differences based on four themes: engaged communities, participatory methods, degrees of participation and steps taken within cultural heritage management. This review concludes both Chinese and international practices seek to collaborate with and empower local communities in their approaches, with Chinese pilot cases, such as Tianzifang in Shanghai. However, in general, Chinese cultural heritage management is government-led, in which community participation is happening to a minimal degree. China is encouraged to learn from international practices when developing contextualised management approaches, to better face the challenges of rapid urbanisation.

1. Introduction

Community participation is an essential issue within heritage management and effective community participation is a process that is vital to enhance long-term sustainable heritage management (Landorf, 2009). Furthermore, with the approval of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, community participation is recognised as a fundamental tool in heritage management practices (Taylor, 2016; UNESCO, 2011; Veldpaus, Pereira Roders, & Colenbrander, 2013). This recommendation seeks to involve public participation, in order to, among other aims, mediate conflicts between stakeholders, including residents, visitors, developers, experts and governments (Srijuntrapun, Fisher, & Rennie, 2017; Verdini, Frassoldati, & Nolf, 2017). Moreover, the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention have emphasised the importance of the participation of a variety of stakeholders in heritage identification, protection and preservation as a worldwide strategic policy (Bruku, 2015; UNESCO, 2012). These guidelines

attempt to ensure that local communities' needs are included and not solely the interests of experts or governments (Schmidt, 2014).

In 2003, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) initiated the Living Heritage Site Programme in the Southeast Asia region, including projects in Thailand, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka (Poulios, 2014; Court & Gamini, 2015). Based on this programme, ICCROM published a guidance document discussing the concept of living heritage and people-centred approaches to cultural heritage management in 2015 (Court & Gamini, 2015; Wijesuriya, Thompson, & Court, 2017). People-centred approaches develop a community-based process to inclusively manage heritage properties connected to religious affiliations, traditions, social networks and daily lives of local communities (Khalaf, 2016; Wijesuriya et al., 2017). These approaches are positioned within the mainstream framework of urban planning policies and practices, highlighting the roles and human factors of local communities (Ripp & Rodwell, 2015; Sully & Cardoso, 2014, 2016). In this setting, cultural heritage is managed as a dynamic resource contributing to societies and

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communities in the present as well as to future generations (Dormael, 2016; Khalaf, 2016).

Despite common international principles, differences between European and Asian heritage management approaches have been noted and recognised, caused by different local developmental conditions and socio-political regimes (Taylor, 2004; Verdini et al., 2017; Winter, 2014). Taylor (2004) and Winter (2014) report that Asian countries place more emphasis on managing daily lives of residents as associated with local cultural heritage and improving overall living spaces under the pressure of rapid urbanisation. In line with this, cultural heritage management projects in China are undertaken by local governments as profit-driven processes are used as a catalyst for the promotion of socio-economic urban growth (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015). Some European scholars classify Chinese approaches as unorthodox, because they rely on top-down management processes and emphasise urban growth over the conservation of built heritage (Verdini, 2015; Verdini et al., 2017). Even so, as Verdini et al. (2017) point out, Chinese cultural heritage management has its own contextual identity whilst still adhering to international frameworks and practices. In addition, Verdini et al. (2017) suggest that sufficient and effective community participation for cultural heritage management has to be facilitated as a long-term strategic goal in order to address the European criticism.

Given the centralised and profit-driven process of decision-making in China, cultural heritage management could easily become a top-down process in which local communities have insufficient opportunities to be engaged (Fan, 2014; He & Wu, 2009; Verdini et al., 2017). Local governments generate alliances with profit-driven developers in order to foster pro-growth urban (re)development and heritage revitalisation (Ng, Zhai, Zhao, & Li, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Residents lack public participation opportunities and governments have the exclusive power in the process of decision-making (Shin, 2010; Zhang, 2017). Yung, Chan, and Xu (2014) point out that public participation is considered a practical solution to mediate the social tensions between different stakeholders (Fan, 2014; Verdini et al., 2017). Some pilot projects have conducted effective community participation and grassroots initiatives and achieved excellent outcomes (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015; Verdini et al., 2017). However, bottom-up processes of decision-making in China still need to be explored, further understood and developed so that these pilot projects can be expanded on further (Fan, 2014; Zhang, 2017).

Despite the growing literature on community participation in cultural heritage management, little research has been done on comparing Chinese to international approaches. This paper, therefore, aims to fill this gap, by providing an overview that compares and discusses the similarities and differences between the two approaches. A systematic comparative literature review of the state-of-the-art was carried out by reviewing papers from the last 15 years detailed below.

2. Methodology

2.1. Publication collection processes

The systematic literature review began with retrieving and collecting related publications, and followed the review process developed by Boland, Gemma Cherry and Dickson (2014). Two phases of literature retrieval were performed to collect publications from current academic databases. We identified a series of keywords, namely China, Chinese, heritage, cultural, management, conservation, community, residents, people, public, engagement and participation. The first search strings in Scopus were finalised as TITLE-ABS-KEY (“communit*” and “heritage” and (“participat*” or “engage*”) and (“conservation” or “management”)), and the retrieval returned 581 documents¹. A set of inclusion criteria was drawn up to help eliminate the low-relevance publications,

as shown in Table 1. In this phase, 53 case studies were selected, and out of these were four Chinese case studies. In order to include more Chinese cases, we conducted the second search strings (“communit*” and “heritage” and (“participat*” or “engage*”) and “Chin*”) in Scopus and Google Scholar. We identified seven additional relevant publications focusing on Chinese cases from the last 15 years in the second phase. Overall, the 60 collected publications included 11 Chinese and 49 other international case studies, and these were all selected for the full-text review. Geographical distribution of these cases is worldwide and presented in Fig. 1.

For the inclusion criteria shown in Table 1, the selection process included seven steps related to publication time, language, keyword-frequency, accessibility and relevance to the topic. A PICOSS tool was designed to assess the quality of each selected paper regarding the topic, which was then applied in steps 6 and 7 (Boland et al., 2014). The PICOSS tool includes the following six aspects: (1) population: local communities who live and/or work within or nearby heritage properties; (2) interventions: heritage management that engages local communities; (3) comparator: none; (4) outcomes: outcomes of participatory governance; (5) study design: participatory methods in case studies; and (6) setting: cultural heritage.

2.2. Review focus themes

To analyse publication designs and outcomes, each case study was researched by using pre-coding methods (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; e.g. Guzmán, Pereira Roders, & Colenbrander, 2017). At first, these 60 selected publications were categorised as either Chinese or international, depending on the location of their case studies. They were also classified on their main focus, using the themes / keywords: (1) engaged communities, (2) participatory methods, (3) degrees of participation and (4) steps within cultural heritage management. The theme / keyword (1) engaged communities, included the following stakeholders: residents, governments, experts, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), tourists and businesses. Then, (2) participatory methods were categorised as: questionnaires, interviews, meetings, workshops, committees and digital technologies. With regard to the (3) degrees of participation, the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) model was used (see Table 2): i.e., inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower (AbouAssi, Nabatchi, & Antoun, 2013; De Leiuwen & Arthure, 2016). The sequence represents the extent to which community participation varies from lower to higher degrees. Last, (4) the process of cultural heritage management takes place in three steps: identification to understand contexts, programming to develop strategies, and execution to manage actions (Veldpaus, 2015).

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used to review these 60 selected publications. For the quantitative analysis, the frequency percentages of these pre-coding keywords were counted and Chinese and international cases compared. For the qualitative analysis which forms the main body of this paper, the 49 international case studies were compared with the 11 Chinese case studies to discuss Chinese contextualised management approaches from a global perspective.

2.3. Quantitative overview of selected case studies

Fig. 2 presents the quantitative overview in focus (ratio between the four main themes / keywords), distinguishing the Chinese and international studies (based on the original review results presented in the Appendix). Globally, the top three communities engaged in cultural heritage management are residents, experts and governments. Residents were engaged in most cases, slightly more on the international cases (98 percent), than the Chinese cases (86 percent). Governments were engaged in almost 2/3 of international cases (62 percent), while Chinese cases always included the government as stakeholders. Heritage experts were involved in most of the international cases (88 percent), and in more than half of the Chinese cases (57 percent).

¹ We conducted this literature retrieval on 10 July 2018.

Table 1
Publication inclusion process.

Step	Publications		Process
	International	Chinese	
1	531	50	Publications that were retrieved
2	478	50	Publications retained after 53 publications published before 2004 were excluded
3	444	48	Publications retained after 36 non-English publications were excluded
4	217	- (48)	Publications retained after 227 low keyword-frequency (< 12) publications were excluded
5	171	40	Publications retained after 54 inaccessible publications were excluded
6	49	4	Publications retained after 157 irrelevant-topic articles were excluded
7	49	11	Publications retained after 7 Chinese case studies were supplemented



Fig. 1. Geographical distribution of the case studies by continents.

Furthermore, the participation of Chinese businesses reaches almost half of the cases (43 percent), compared to the international cases (18 percent). Businesses play an important role in the profit-driven processes of decision-making in China, which is in line with the government’s expectations.

Regarding participatory methods, the most popular tools globally are public meetings (48 percent), closely followed by workshops (40 percent) and interviews (40 percent). Furthermore, the method of forming committees (35 percent) has also been applied in China, indicating that governments are trying to share more responsibilities with the general public. Moreover, digital technologies such as GIS, RS and social media have become feasible tools and methods employed in the international cases, but were rarely used in China (within the selected cases).

Within the degrees of participation, informing and consulting are popular rungs achieved within global heritage management. Involvement (as a degree of participation) in international cases was higher (68 percent) as compared to the Chinese cases (43 percent). Similarly, the degree collaboration in China was almost half (29 percent) of the international cases (54 percent). There was also no Chinese case that engaged residents to the degree of empowerment. For the process of management, international cases often engaged local communities from the identification phase (90 percent), but local participation in China mostly occurred in the programming phase (71

percent). This syncs with the dominant role the government plays in cultural heritage management and the empowerment of local residents in the entire management process remains limited.

3. Establishment of a global perspective: international management frameworks

The international framework of cultural heritage management positions the review focus themes as follows: (1) community identification – to define communities’ roles and their connections to cultural heritage; (2) active participatory methods – to raise awareness and build capacities in local communities; and (3) community participation – to integrate cultural heritage management in sustainable urban development (Husn in, 2017; Labrador, 2011; Mackay & Johnston, 2010; Sully, Raymond, & Hoete, 2014).

3.1. Community identification: core and broader communities

A wide variety of stakeholders are engaged in the decision-making of cultural heritage management in practice (Bruku, 2015; Human, 2015; Lewis, 2015). With regards to their roles and priorities, a distinction is recognised between the core and broader communities who are defined as associated users and facilitators, respectively (Poulios, 2014).

Table 2 Modified IAP2 Spectrum of community participation degrees in cultural heritage management (table adapted from De Leuten and Arthur (2016) and AbouAssi et al. (2013)).

Participation Degrees	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Description	To provide the community with relevant and objective information to assist them in understanding the management project, approaches and intended outcomes.	To obtain community feedback at the start of the management project to help with analysis, approaches and/or decisions.	To work directly with the community throughout the management process so that their concerns and aspirations are understood and considered properly.	To partner with the community to work through management problems, alternatives, solutions and decisions together.	To place final decision-making and future projects in the hands of the community.

Local communities living within or near heritage properties are both cultural custodians and associated users, and they are identified as a core community (Aykan, 2013; Borona & Ndiema, 2014; Poullos, 2014). Their daily routines and rituals are associated with local cultural heritage (Nic Eoin, Owens, & King, 2013; Poullos, 2014). They maintain the continuous association with local identities, sense of belonging, traditions, and ownership and custodianship to the heritage (Lenzerini, 2011; Poullos, 2014). This makes them a key stakeholder with priority, willing to sustain heritage functions and meanings (Poullos, 2014). In terms of cultural heritage *per se*, this association only supports cultural meanings and significance if the community continuously uses it to enhance local identities in their daily lives (Malheiro, 2014). Conforti, Fernández-Lomana, Mariano, Endere, and Romero Alonso (2015) argue that the interests and opinions of the core community need to be well considered in order to enhance their motivation for safeguarding cultural heritage. They need to be empowered in the whole management process, with other participants such as governments and heritage experts fostering partnerships in decision-making and action management (Bruku, 2015).

The broader community, which spans experts, governments, NGOs and economic actors, is defined as a group of facilitators (Lekakis, 2013; Poullos, 2014). They need to support, guide and assist the core community in the decision-making processes of local cultural heritage management (Lekakis, 2013; Poullos, 2014; Chipangura, Chiripanhura, & Nyamagodo, 2017). In terms of the role of governments and experts, Cissé (2012) proposes that their duties are to facilitate collaboration and to share responsibilities with the public. Experts can provide scientific and technical knowledge whilst governments are able to decentralise management power to local communities (Tipnis & Chandrashekhar, 2017; Walker, 2011). NGOs are also important as they empower residents by bringing in expertise and mediating between local communities and their governments (MacRae, 2017; Stephens & Tiwari, 2015). For example, the NGOs Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation in the UK and Luk Lan Muang Phrae in Thailand were each committed to fully taking charge of local heritage management. They carried out communication and consultation with local communities, offered financial support and enabled the introduction of new commercial activities (Lewis, 2015; Poullos, 2014). Economic actors including developers, businesses and tourists are the main drivers to promote local socio-economic growth (Ferretti & Gandino, 2018; Ghanem & Saad, 2015; Lewis, 2015). These stakeholders are indispensable in policy- and strategy-making, since cultural heritage resources are a crucial sector within the local economy and key for the economic sustainability of traditional community life (Lewis, 2015; Rahman, Norhisham, Razali, & Zubir, 2013).

3.2. Active participatory methods: awareness-raising and capacity-building

Participatory methods that can actively engage communities in decision-making with awareness-raising and capacity-building are preferred in the field (Borona & Ndiema, 2014; Mackay & Johnston, 2010). These methods not only aim to collect the information about community interests but also to raise the awareness of local cultural heritage and build management capacities in the core community, in collaboration with the broader community (Poullos, 2014; Woodley, Marshall, Taylor, & Fagan, 2013). Ideally, the core community is willing to be engaged and then trained to be capable of undertaking management practice through a blend of traditional knowledge systems with experts' modern scientific assistance and governments' support (Atalay, 2010; Chirikure, Manyanga, Ndoro, & Pwiti, 2010; Sidi, 2012; Wilson & Koester, 2008).

Interviews are an effective method whereby experts engage with locals when co-mapping cultural heritage, such as the nature and location of intangible heritage (Fitri, Ratna, & Affan, 2017; Musa & Feng, 2016). Ferretti and Gandino (2018) employ both interviews and questionnaires with residents in discussing local issues and finalising

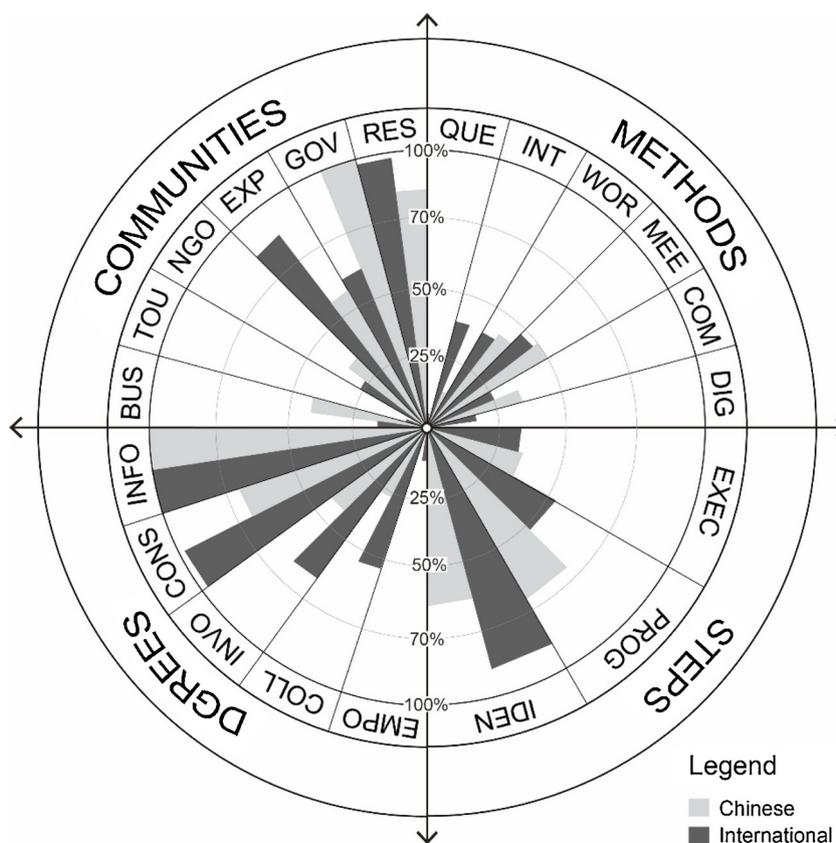


Fig. 2. Visualised quantitative overview.

management schemes. Meetings are a platform on which communities can express their aspirations and preferences during discussions with different prioritised social sectors (MacRae, 2017; Stenseke, 2009). To share more responsibilities with local communities, committees formed by residents to assume the role of approving management strategies and plans in public meetings are considered important (Bruku, 2015; Chinyele & Lwoga, 2018; Dormaels, 2016; Stenseke, 2009). It is a negotiation process whereby the community aims to protect their rights and benefits while raising awareness and positive attitudes towards local heritage (Mackay & Johnston, 2010; Ntui & Rampedi, 2015).

On the basis of local awareness and willingness to participate, workshops have become the most popular way of building capacities in decision-making (Achille, Fassi, Marquardt, & Cesprini, 2017; Ferreira, 2018). Workshops not only work as a sensitisation activity to enhance local cultural identities and sustain traditional art (Kyriakidis & Anagnostopoulos, 2015; Bruku, 2015; Inniss, 2012) but also as training to educate communities about conservation knowledge and technologies (Ferreira, 2018; Husnéin, 2017). Interestingly, digital technologies including GIS, RS, GPS and social media have been included in workshop programmes in recent years (Achille et al., 2017; Fitri et al., 2017; Tipnis & Chandrashekhar, 2017). Residents are trained as local professionals to work with experts so that governments can share and improve digital heritage databases (Achille et al., 2017; Tipnis & Chandrashekhar, 2017; Wilson & Desha, 2016).

3.3. Community participation for integrated cultural heritage management

Current international approaches involve a public participatory process to enhance the integration of cultural heritage management within local sustainable urban development (Cissé, 2012; Ferretti & Gandino, 2018; Husnéin, 2017). Residents, their cultural heritage properties and socio-economic activities constitute the urban living environments that span both heritage *per se* and its surroundings

(Nagaoka, 2015). Through involvement in the participatory process of decision-making, the tension between cultural heritage preservation and urban socio-economic development can be mitigated (Lewis, 2015; Poullos, 2014).

The entire process of cultural heritage management from the steps of identification through programming to execution needs to involve a high level of community participation (Achig-Balarezo, Vázquez, Barsallo, Briones, & Amaya, 2017; Oevermann, Degenkolb, Dießler, Karge, & Peltz, 2016). When local communities feel that they are truly included from the very beginning, they are more motivated to play roles as both information providers and management partners (Achig-Balarezo et al., 2017; Hammami, 2016). It is important that these communities are involved in the initial consultation phase to help identify heritage attributes, values, and significance as well as local social issues (Bruku, 2015). Based on the identified information, in the programming phase, governments and experts can work out management strategies and plans attached to wider urban development frameworks (Ferretti & Gandino, 2018; Lewis, 2015). In addition, these strategies and plans need to be approved by residents, ensuring their concerns and interests are well considered (Chipangura et al., 2017). In the execution phase, partnerships are generated so that residents can be trained with skills of both heritage conservation and utilisation as local professionals (Chinyele & Lwoga, 2018; Ferreira, 2018). They undertake daily maintenance of heritage structures as well as collaborating with experts to implement management plans (Ferreira, 2018; Poullos, 2014). In addition, locals can gain income and benefits from participating in heritage-based economic activities such as working as tour guides and festival performers (Borona & Ndiema, 2014).

High community participation contributes to a wider mobilisation of residents, thereby favouring local heritage along with positive grassroots initiatives in both decision-making and benefit-sharing (Chinyele & Lwoga, 2018; Lewis, 2015). MacRae (2017) argues that the core of decision-making should be in the hands of local residents. Residents

have a better knowledge of local realities and how to incorporate heritage management in community improvement. In addition, community-based bottom-up initiatives contribute to outcomes that are well-accepted among the public (Kyi, Tse, & Khazam, 2016). Hence, it is necessary to generate high levels of participation from local communities in the entire management process (Chipangura et al., 2017; Human, 2015).

4. Contextualised cultural heritage management in China

Parallel to the international practices, cultural heritage management in China is also experiencing a paradigm shift, towards preserving cultural heritage, whilst managing change of communities and heritage properties to facilitate sustainable urban development (Verdini et al., 2017). This section discusses contextualised approaches to Chinese cultural heritage management.

4.1. Centralised administrative roles of governments

Given the pressure from international organisations and domestic civil society, the Chinese central government has established local state organisations including Street Offices (SOs, in Chinese: *jiedao ban-shichu*) and Residents' Committees (RCs, *juweihui*) to manage residents' issues (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015). These local organisations play an integrated role within governance which spans communication with residents and the implementation of heritage management plans and strategies from higher-level government (Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013). RCs cannot be perceived as fully representative of residents, but rather local institutional representatives of the state in charge of informing residents of the decisions made by government (Verdini, 2015). NGOs and civil groups in China, as Fan (2014) points out, have to attach themselves to governmental institutes to be legal when undertaking heritage projects, such as ICOMOS China, which is under the administration of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH, *guojia wenwu ju*). SACH plays a fundamental role in issuing principles, documents, and announcements in national cultural heritage management (Wei, 2018).

With the centralised administrative role of Chinese governments, it is still difficult for local residents to wield enough power, as it is generally initiated as a top-down practice (Fan, 2014). Local residents are often considered nothing more than information providers and not the core community in decision-making (Verdini et al., 2017). Regarding the broader community, the Chinese government aligns itself with economic actors who are the dominant players in the management process rather than empowering residents (Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Local state organisations such as SOs and RCs, NGOs and other civil groups are strictly under the control of the national central government (Fan, 2014). Other actors such as real estate companies are also highlighted together with their economic development interests in the practice of urban regeneration and conservation projects in China (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013).

4.2. Government-led methods and civil protests

Within centralised governance, local residents are struggling not just to have their voices heard and but also for rights towards cultural heritage management respected in China (Tan & Altrock, 2016). From the reviewed Chinese cases, we recognised both "formal" participatory methods led by governments and "informal" protests initiated by either residents or other civil groups (Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013).

In the cultural landscape management of Shuang Wan Village for example, interviews were carried out with the main decision-makers and local inhabitants. After that, a residential scenario workshop and a public meeting were held to ensure residents' interests were included in local development strategies and plans (Verdini et al., 2017). Interviews, workshops and public meetings were also positively used in

some other Chinese heritage management projects including Tianzifang, Wenhuali and the Grand Canal (Fan, 2014; Wei, 2018; Yung et al., 2014). Through public participatory processes in the cases of Wenhuali and Hong Kong the attitude of residents shifted from being passive and negative, to being active and positive towards local heritage and its management (Fan, 2014; Yau, 2009; Zhang, 2017).

The chance of civil protests and social tension between residents and governments increases significantly when there are low degrees of participation and the management of the project deviates from local expectations (Fan, 2014; Zhang, 2017). In the Enning Road regeneration project for example, in central Guangzhou, public meetings and interviews were held with residents, but their interests were not included in the management plan. Following this, citizens wrote petition letters and held civil protests. These methods were informal and can be considered as passive participatory processes, an effort was made to support public voices and challenge the government's decisions (Tan & Altrock, 2016). A similar situation also arose in a historic urban area of the Drum Tower Muslim District (DTMD) in Xi'an. A resident committee (*siguanhui*) mobilised residents to discuss the government-finalised regeneration plan. The committee collected local petitions and presented them to different levels of government, including the City's Municipal Government and Planning Bureau (Zhai & Ng, 2013). In another example, in the South Nanjing project, protest flyers and mobilisation through mass media were used to address local opposition and expectations. Eventually, the urban characteristics of this heritage area were partly preserved to respect residents' interests (Verdini, 2015).

For government-led methods to progress smoothly and avoid civil protests, both horizontal (among local various communities) and vertical (from the central government to residents) relationships are key between involved stakeholders in China (Verdini, 2015). It is necessary to engage residents and truly incorporate their needs in management schemes through active participatory methods rather than in a tokenistic manner (Zhai & Ng, 2013).

4.3. Co-existence of bottom-up and top-down management processes

China is endeavouring to adopt the international view of integrated cultural heritage management, aiming to improve communities' living conditions and protect cultural heritage values (Kou, Zhou, Chen, & Zhang, 2018; Verdini et al., 2017). Both bottom-up and top-down processes of cultural heritage management exist in China based on the reviewed Chinese case studies (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015).

Chinese bottom-up processes appear synchronous with international frameworks wherein local communities are engaged in the entire management processes of several pilot projects (Fan, 2014; Yung et al., 2014). In the management process, residents act as consultants in identifying local cultural heritage and living conditions (Verdini et al., 2017), before local aspirations and interests are programmed into official management proposals and plans (Kou et al., 2018; Yau, 2009). Through public approval, residents can be willing to collaborate with local governments in the execution phase such as in infrastructure improvement, housing renovation and reconstruction work (Fan, 2014; Kou et al., 2018). Residents can gain income and further economic benefits from the collaborative practices as well as protecting their intangible heritage and traditional lifestyles (Fu, Kim, & Mao, 2017; Yung et al., 2014). For example, Tianzifang in Shanghai is a case of a Chinese community-initiated bottom-up process (Verdini, 2015). In this project, local residents negotiated and partnered with different stakeholders including enterprises, artists and business owners. During the entire process, there were no exclusions of residents or forced relocations, and residents had the right to decide how to conserve and use their heritage properties (Yung et al., 2014). During the successful Wenhuali project in Yangzhou, households were invited to contribute by sharing their needs and expectations (Fan, 2014). Within these two cases, local governments provided both administrative and financial support (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015; Yung et al., 2014).

In contrast, the top-down processes are also happening within Chinese cultural heritage management as discussed previously. For example, when the local government undertook a heritage project in the old town of Yangzhou, numerous retailers were introduced and communities were relocated. This may have positively impacted the urban regeneration of the old town as per the agenda of the government, but it excluded residents from decision-making and broke existing social networks (Fan, 2014). In DTMD for example, though residents were involved in the finalisation of the management plan, during implementation it was discerned that the plan was not representative of local residents and their needs. This then led to conflicts between residents and the government (Zhai & Ng, 2013). Unfortunately, in many Chinese cases, residents refuse to be relocated out of the original areas, but governments nonetheless attempt to release the land to real estate markets to acquire economic profits (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013).

To date, the participatory process of decision-making in China still lacks a system to ensure grass-roots initiatives are acknowledged within in cultural heritage management (Verdini et al., 2017). Top-down management processes are widespread due to centralised governance (Fan, 2014; Zhai & Ng, 2013; Zhang, 2017), yet bottom-up processes of decision-making have also been observed in several pilot projects with positive outcomes (Verdini et al., 2017; Yung et al., 2014).

5. Discussion

As China endeavours to incorporate itself into the global system, current international frameworks have a strong influence on Chinese approaches to cultural heritage management practices (Fan, 2014). Compared to international community-initiated projects, governments lead the process of Chinese cultural heritage management. The government-led processes are often in line with the interests of economic actors as heritage projects need both administrative and financial support. This increases the risk that the realisation of political and business agendas become prioritised over resident and community interests. To some extent, this government-led process deviates from international frameworks. In practice, however, it can also achieve well-accepted outcomes by the public, as long as community ideas, interests and expectations are genuinely included. Residents need platforms and training with regard to the role they can play in the management process. Information on international frameworks, awareness-raising and capacity-building with local communities will enable Chinese residents to act as partners with governments and other social actors. However, within Chinese heritage management processes, it may be necessary to find a medium between community-initiated (bottom-up) and government-led (top-down).

Under the pressure of rapid urbanisation and large scale re-development, cultural heritage management in China faces three main challenges: (1) insufficient community participation, (2) the profit-driven process of decision-making, and (3) centralised governance. Though these challenges create barriers for the participatory process within cultural heritage management, it is necessary to find ways forward. More so as to avoid the exclusion of socially marginalised groups and boost the understanding of local needs in order to solve social tension issues (Yung et al., 2014). International approaches focus on promoting the integration of cultural heritage management in sustainable urban development through community participation for example (Guzmán et al., 2017; Verdini, 2015). However, these approaches need to be adapted to work within China's local political and socio-cultural contexts. They need to be contextualised to promote the overall improvement of urban living environments and move beyond static preservation of original heritage objects.

6. Conclusion

Community participation is a useful tool when applied globally in

cultural heritage management. The literature review performed a comparative overview of the similarities and differences between Chinese and international practices within the aspects of engaged communities, participatory methods, degrees of participation and steps within cultural heritage management. In doing so, the position of Chinese cultural heritage management in relation to international practices can be better understood. These results can encourage researchers focused on China to further explore and engage with international practices.

Within the international practices, local residents as a core community are a priority, while governments, experts and other social actors play a secondary role as broader facilitators. In China, the government has exclusive power and often aligns with economic actors in decision-making. Local state organisations including RCs and SOs have been established to manage residents' daily issues. Residents are often considered only as information providers, not management partners, as they lack participation platforms, such as in the old town of Yangzhou. Within both international and Chinese management practices, when people's needs are sufficiently discussed and integrated into management schemes, the heritage projects receive better local support and run more smoothly. Active participatory methods of awareness-raising and capacity-building in local communities are needed to support their voices.

Due to the centralised and profit-driven processes of decision-making, top-down processes are easily applied to cultural heritage management in China, which differs from international practices. International cultural heritage management develops an inclusive and integrated approach primarily through a bottom-up process of decision-making. This process seeks to collaborate with and empower local communities in the entire process of cultural heritage management. In China, though top-down management processes are quiet prevalent, and bottom-up processes also exist. The top-down process is exclusive and encounters difficulties when working with local residents. Residents are engaged only to a minimal degree, such as informing and consulting. For example, the management process deviated from residents' interests in DTMD and civil protesting activities happened. Some Chinese pilot projects have carried out a bottom-up process of cultural heritage management, such as in Tianzifang and Wenhuali. Local residents were actively engaged in both decision-making and benefit-sharing. These positive projects should be researched further and expanded, to develop Chinese contextualised approaches adhering to international standards.

Community participation within cultural heritage management is still nascent in China and has yet to find a firm foothold. Further studies and cases are needed to explore the compatibility (and potential adaptation) of international management frameworks to Chinese cases.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

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