

## **Chapter 3**

### **Conservation issues: comparing Italy and China**

“The rage of repairing....will be less fatal to our magnificent edifices than the reformation and the Civil war.” written by Thomas Gray in 1785 to J. Bentham

### 3 Conservation issues: comparing Italy and China

Conservation thoughts began to be introduced to China in the end of 1900s, mainly from the Japan’s research results, then from the Western directly from 1930s. Owing to two world wars and internal political turbulent situation, it led to little gains. The huge quick urbanization from 1980s has swept away existing built environment extensively and annihilated national-wild identity. Professionals shed great attention on the historic heritage conservation since then. Massive international laws, charters and international cases began to be introduced, and China started to involve in international historic conservation movements actively. Though basic hierarchy conservation system was established, ideal methods was plotted, specific planning program was outlined, limited projects was performed successfully. Actually, the current system cannot prevent large-scale violation and destruction, misinterpretation and aberrant interventions. The “stylistic restoration” and “rebuilding” was prevalent while the true “historic restoration”, “document-based preservation”, and “scientific conservation” were just empty conceptions.

#### 3. 1 From philosophy to practical practices

##### 3.1.1 Italian-Chinese dialectic discussion and perspective study

There are two levels in cultural good’s values: one is the substance once it was created; the other one is brought by the affiliation to outer settings. C. Boito and C. Brandi, based on phenomenological viewpoint, presumed historic good have three aspects peculiarities, including **aesthetic aspect**, as the unique basic through which it is a work of art; **historical aspect**, the dual historical nature includes a certain time and place in which it was created, and a certain setting it exists and reinterpretation nowadays; and **utility** as a carrier of the prior two. After re-establishing good’s peculiarity, Brandi gave the definition as “Restoration consists in the methodological moment in which the work of art is recognized, in its physical being and its dual aesthetic and historical nature, in view of its transmission to the future”. The restoration is a re-interpretation process aiming at the future. He noted “physical nature, as the necessity takes precedence”.

Material represents the real “place” where the image is materialized, ensuring the image receiving into human consciousness, and then securing the image transmission to the future. In other words, the good’s physical nature becomes of primary importance<sup>275</sup> in this transition, hence the focus of the conservation must be undertaken to ensure the material lasts as long as possible. The restoration should aim to “re-establish the potential

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<sup>275</sup> Brandi C., *The concept of Restoration*. In Brandi C., Brandi C., translated by Rockwell C., *Theory of Restoration*. Istituto Centrale per il Restauro. Nardini Editore. 2005. Original title: *Teoria del Restauro*, Istituto Centrale per il Restauro. Nardini Editore. 1977.

oneness of the work of art, as long as this is possible without committing artistic or historical forgery, and without erasing every trace of the passage through time of the work of art". From the viewpoint of the physical nature and status quo, the material makes manifest the existing, thus forming the image. Part of the form, must be performed as sacrifice for original material, and authenticity gains priority to unitarity. Brandi gave the axiom of conservation: only the material of a work of art is to restore firstly. We can conclude that conservation is performed at the physical form and put the material shape at the first place<sup>276</sup>.

*"1 The material makes manifest the existing, contribute to the figurative appearance (the material is the first factor).*

*2 The character of oneness to a being refers to the whole but not the unity. The parts in the context in which they appear, they lose the individual value and are absorbed into the being of which they are part. It must bring about a whole (the form and image is the second factor).*

*3 The organic and functional oneness of existential reality can be shown to be a matter of logic, whereas the figurative oneness of a being is intuitive, at one with image as a work of art (wholeness is the third factor).*

*4.1 The existing original form, represents the potential oneness, can be preserved within the fragments themselves, and should be treated to be equivalent to the logical oneness of our perception of existential reality (the wholeness can sacrifice for the original material, and fragment can represent the whole, not only the wholeness status).*

*4.2 The intervening firstly denies in a mutilated, fragmented way, then is a treatment that seeks to recover the original oneness by developing the potential oneness of the fragments of the whole, should be limited to the evidence of the original that is implicit within the fragments themselves, or retrievable from reliable sources (intervention first refers to the material aim for the oneness).*

*4.3 To avoid crating an historical fake or an aesthetic outrage in the art re-established, any integrative intervention must always be easily recognizable but with imperceptible difference. The intervention should not prevent any future restorations but rather, facilitate them (intervention is with evident differences).*

*5 Intervention avoids integrations based on fantasies of the imagination, come to the empirical solution a neutral tone – an attempt to reduce the prominence of the lacuna in the foreground by means of a tone as inconspicuous as possible, which would push it to the background. (intervention should be conservative with concrete support).*

*6 Time and space constitute the formal conditions for any being, and are fused with rhythmic consonance that brings about the form. Individuals belong to various times and spaces have dedicated suggestive interpretation to the work of art. The being will be viewed in the light of current taste and chosen interests. Vestiges of art remain in a product of human activity, no matter how mutilated, it cannot be called a ruin (being is a multi-layers result, accommodating its later re-created traces).*

*7 Both the barbaric vandalisms and the integration, unconditionally, have to be respected. An addition to a work of art is nothing more than new evidence of human activity, is part of history. The conservation of an addition is unconditionally legitimate,*

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

whereas its removal always needs justification, or should at least be carried out in a manner that will leave a trace both in record and on the work of art itself (every addition should be treated carefully).

8 *The ruin, as vestiges of art remain in a product of human activity, on which it imposes a particular spatial enhancement, or it improves a given landscape. The ruin's importance is in its ability to draw attention to and emphasize the surrounding environment. A ruin left untouched is preferable to that abstract space, to the emptiness around a monument that is senselessly created. So the ruin was the stratification of time has settled must be treated on conservation, not integration.*

*The subsequent buildings should have be respected, and not replace in a completely arbitrary way by buildings that smothered the ruin, destroyed its special context and failed to incorporate it into the new space (the role of ruin should be highlighted).*

9 *The falsification is like assigning a quality or meaning to a particular subject, the substance of what has been lost. The falsification is not the property of the subject but an assumption that the subject should posses, and does not possess, but is still expected to possess. The historical fake is virtually a sort of sub-species, given that being is also a historical record, and given that the intention to mislead is identical in historic and aesthetic cases. In a word, falsification is a pre-conditioning and alien thing to the subject. Based on this, we can category the interventions: with no purpose other than to document or enjoy the object; with a specific intent to mislead others as to its period, its material nature or its creator; independent with clear difference from those pertaining to the object itself but for circulation of the object. So any falsification is an echo of the original but not substitution of it (intended falsification is crime should be prevented.)”*

Brandi finds out the material “transmits the epiphany of the image” rather from an ontological or epistemological position. Appearance is more important than structure in conservation. In this way, Brandi insisted on the delicate approach would be necessary to ensure that the altered structure does not influence appearance. The intervention should hence inflect its identification from the original and the compensation. This is different with Viollet le Duc’s “stylistic restoration”, and Ruskin’s “historic protection”.

Faced to how to deal with the extant fabric in the urban development, Italian architectural and planning professionals, supported by the national political and economic system, have insisted on dialectic identification and perspective study. As early as 1929, the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning (IFHTP) casted and shifted prominence to the relationship between modernity and existing architectural and landscape heritage in the reconstruction, so forming the themes of “re-planning old and historic towns to meet conditions and methods of planning for the expansion of towns with special reference to old and historic towns<sup>277</sup>. The shift has great foresight before the large scale and uncontrolled reconstruction and expansion took place between 1950s and 1970s. Just as some protagonist of Italian planning and architecture in Roma, Milan tried to prevent:

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<sup>277</sup> Riboldazzi R., *Historic heritage, landscape and modernity: aspects of the Italian contribution to the IFHTP congresses between the two wars*, Planning Perspective, DOI:10. 1080/02665433. 2013. 737714.

*“The uncontrolled increase in urbanization was taking place around most industrialized centers which threw into crisis both consolidated methods in construction of open urban space and put the long-standing city-countryside equilibrium into crisis, eating into those landscape which made Italy famous around the world with an unprecedented intensity<sup>278</sup>.”*

On account of this dialectic the process in progress reveals and indicates the gradual scientific understanding of the relationship between developments and conservation, recognizing various properties of the values was seen as a primary premise and is the first step to conservation. The good's various values confirm its subject role in conservation and different levels of intervention accordingly were discussed.

In Italy, the recognition of the historical fabric as an entity to be protected wholly would be a cultural conquest realized by the scientific community after decades of experimentation and practice<sup>279</sup>. In the late 1920s, the conservation was still delimited and corrupted by architectural restoration that revealed extensive cultural limits. In other words, Italian carries out the protection of historic centers through “methods of enhancing the beauty and value of characteristic buildings”<sup>280</sup>. The monuments “should be freed from buildings that have been super-imposed, considered not so much as the manifestation of layers of history, but as elements that contaminated the purity of the single architectural object”<sup>281</sup>. Along with the recognition of the positive role of the site, some professionals claimed that “the complete transformation of central area is justifiable”<sup>282</sup>, through with “**a deep respect for the past in the hearts of all**”<sup>283</sup>. In Rome, they tried to preserve their setting and the general character of a whole quarter without isolating old and historic buildings

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<sup>278</sup> As early as before the World War II, some Milanese and Roman town planning had some study, such as Reggiori, *Milano 1800–1943*; De Finetti, *Milano: costruzione di una città*; Franchi and Chiumeo, *Urbanistica a Milano*; Mercandino, *I piani urbanistici di Milano*; Consonni and Tonon, “*Aspetti della questione urbana a Milano*,”; by the same authors, see also: “*Giuseppe Pagano e la cultura della città*,”; “*Milano: classe e metropoli*,”; Grandi and Pracchi, *Milano. Guida all'architettura moderna*; Amorosi, *A Milano fra passato ed avvenire*; Boriani et al., *La costruzione della Milano moderna*; Campos Venuti et al., *Un secolo di urbanistica a Milano*; Vercelloni, *La storia del paesaggio urbano di Milano*; Rumi, Vercelloni and Cova eds., *Milano durante il fascismo*; Mioni, Negri and Zaninelli, *Il sogno del moderno*; Mioni, “*Milano anni '30*”; Morandi, “*Urbanista e 'civile servant'*”; Oliva, *L'urbanistica di Milano*; Bianchetti, “*Piero Porta- luppi e Milano*”; Morandi, *Milano. La grande trasformazione urbana*; Riboldazzi, *Una città policentrica*. On Rome town planning between the two wars, see for instance: Insolera, *Roma moderna*; Insolera and Perego, *Archeologia e città*; Guidoni, *L'urbanistica di Roma*; Cuccia, *Urbanistica, edilizia, infrastrutture di Roma capitale*; Benevolo, *Roma dal 1870 al 1990*; Sanfilippo, *La costruzione di una capitale*; Cardilli ed., *Gli anni del Governatorato*; Casseti, *Roma e Lazio*; Insolera, *Roma fascista*; Casseti and Spagnesi eds., *Il centro storico di Roma*; Casseti, *1870–1945: la costruzione della capitale and Cederna, Mussolini urbanista*. At the outset of the germination of large scale of urban transformation, Italian had carried out perspective study and meaning guide for the future challenge.

<sup>279</sup> Giambruno, M. et. *Per una storia del Restauro urbano. Piani, strumenti e progetti per i centri storici*. Novara: Citta studi, 2007.

<sup>280</sup> Piacentini M., “*Replanning Old and Historic Towns to Meet Modern Conditions*,” general report. In IFHTP 1929, Programme and General Reports, p.56–60.

<sup>281</sup> On town planning and architecture in Italy during the fascism, see for instance: De Seta, *La cultura architettonica in Italia*; Patetta, *L'architettura in Italia 1919–1943*; Danesi and Patetta eds., *Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo*; Pagano, *Architettura e città durante il fascismo*; Mariani, *Fascismo e 'città nuove'*; Cederna, *Mussolini urbanista*; Mioni ed., *Urbanistica fascista*; Mantero ed., *Il Razionalismo italiano*; Cresti, *Architettura e fascismo*; Ernesti ed., *La costruzione dell'utopia*; Ciucci, *Gli architetti e il fascismo*; Brunetti, *Architetti e fascismo*; Benevolo, *L'architettura dell'Italia contemporanea*; Nicoloso, *Mussolini architetto*; Melograni, *Architettura italiana sotto il fascismo*; Pennacchi, *Fascio e martello*.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Gorla G., “*Finanziamento delle costruzioni*.” In IFHTP 1929, Papers, p.93–99.

with old quarters. Then some others, such as Luigi Piccinato advocated some moderate way to plan interventions for re-adaptation of ancient nucleus in the framework of a “global and unitary vision of a general plan of transformation ... of the entire city’s development<sup>284</sup>”. In this way, it can avoid unnecessarily detrimental interposition to delicate urban contexts. It is in a less invasive way, rather with “brutal traces”. Hence, they proposed a “complex game of skill, compromise and study” strategy, providing for the project not only respect of the nature of contexts, but also interventions able to enhance the fabric”. Furthermore, interventions were necessary “to strive to subordinate to the general tone, the mass, color and rhythm of new building work, instead of entering the territory of stylistic interpretations”. Architectural style of the neighborhood will dictate the solution of interventions, like Giovannoni’s “thinning”



Figure 3-1, top, the copy of Lantingjixu. Tang dynasty, now in Forbidden City Museum; down, the copy of Nvshizhentu, Sui Dynasty, now in the British Museum.

The Chinese world presents a complete different attitude to preservation of the extant built environment, in terms of philosophical views and their embodiment. Chinese inherited that “the thing transcends/exceeds the form is the ‘Tao’ (the way), while inferiors to it is the vessel”. Here is a Chinese proverb says “abandoning in forms/things and sapping one’s spirit (玩物丧志, wan wu sang zhi)”. So it has an ethic tradition that despises the form and the material. The material and form, in the minds of the scholars and the Brahmins, should be exceeded to look at the essence, its symbol, its function, its substance and its cultural value. The Chinese perform a very inherent thought that “the building is only for the temporary generation not for the offspring”. So there is an inclination that the outside form of buildings can be easily substituted or rebuilt by the descendants. In terms of the whole

<sup>284</sup> Piccinato L., “Sistemazione delle città a carattere storico per adattare alle esigenze della vita moderna.” In IFHTP 1929, Papers, p.343–355.

city area, in the eyes of the elitists, it can be abandoned arbitrary or destroyed easily. In our history a great many capitals fell into oblivion, like Bo (Shang Dynasty) that was moved and rebuilt<sup>285</sup>, Chang'an and Luoyang were destroyed and rebuilt as the capital several times in the Han Dynasty. The inclination of preferring regeneration rather than expansion leads to the fact that once the fabric became dilapidated or the "function" is not more active; they can be definitely substituted by new ones.

These philosophical views have been performed into each aspect of Chinese life thoroughly. The painting can be mimicked to make some facsimiles which were seen as the original. Taking Lantingjixu (兰亭集序, lanting jixu), a very famous works of calligraphy as an example, the original written by Wang Xizhi (303-361) had been lost for a millennium, the autography copied (Tang dynasty copy) by other calligraphers were seen like the real one, and seen as a substitute of the original. The interests of the original can be interpreted by the substitute, while they neglect the authenticity. Nvshizhentu (女史箴图), originally painted by Gu Kaizhi (348-409), but were lost. The replica, drawn in Sui Dynasty, now collected by British Museum, was seen as the real. It is a continuous creativity, which they identify with "desire" to give continuous re-interpretation constantly. The two inherent differences between these two philosophical views can be seen: the oriental interprets the continuous values even without a real material basis.

In terms of scale of the built environment, Chinese also perform the same philosophical attitude. They insist on the standpoint that destroying historic tissues and rebuilding them consistently, while it can sustain the spirit and the value. Even influenced by the authenticity theory, face to the dilemma of great loose and market interests, they start to forge and choose wrong intervention methods.

### **3.1.2 What is to do: "Is it cheaper to start from scratch" or "Is it cheaper to tear it down and start over"**

Besides the identification of artistic and cultural goods value, there is the economic value. How to weight the importance of each of them is the premise deciding the following basic attitude. Though the western approach put in mutual relation the interest to both the economic and the artistic-cultural value, the developing countries choose a more radical way, sacrificing the latter for the financial benefits.

The western maintained historic centers without large-scale destructions during intense periods of urbanization, mainly choosing expansion rather regeneration. Since 1960s, the argument to justify the abandonment of the central city was based upon conventional economic factors: "it is cheaper to start from scratch". It is more expensive to modernize an existing buildings than to construct the same cubage on raw land, such costs take no account of the life-support systems, the infrastructure of institutions, services, and utilities without which no building could operate at all.

*Western plan and city officials began to acknowledge the failure of many of the*

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<sup>285</sup> Pang Yue. *Chinese Historic Culture City conservation, taking Northern Historic Culture City for example*. Ph.D thesis, Beijing University, 2009.

*grandiose schemes of urban renewal and large-scale redevelopment including demolition of the 1950s and 1960s. It was recognized that rehabilitation instead of demolition of old structure offered a more economically and socially less disruptive means of renewing cities. Planners and city officials joined with environmentalists and inhabitants of the neighborhoods that were originally slated for destruction to come up with new ideas such as neighborhood conservation. Beyond the benefit to the developer, these factors produce social benefits by conserving resources and employing proportionately greater numbers of workers. In sum, old buildings provide more interesting and varied environments for people to live, work, shop and eat.*

The economic factor in China has become more complex. Ironically, they think it is much more benefit to start from “tear it down and start over” in land-oriented economic. Hence they encourage the demolition without any consideration of the existing historic value. There are three causes to this phenomenon. First, the investment can bring back huge profits. The good site and affluent infrastructures can bring out a good price of the new buildings. Owing to the land cadaster is owned by the State, large-scale projects can bring out much more short-time income by the land selling than the rent. Secondly, the budget for the conservation mainly comes from public budget which depends on the leaders’ decision, while the leader view the conservation in a misinterpreted way. Thirdly, demolition and rebuilding can quickly seen as a political achievement. The reworking of any old fabric is labor-intensive and time-costing, they cannot wait to chase promotion.

	The Italian		The Chinese	
Philosophy	Caring more about material and physical form	Various levels of interventions	Look down the material form	Little respect to authenticity; misinterpretation Aberrant interventions
	Diachronic and synchronic dialectic analysis	Material and form lasting	Caring more the substance continuity	Performing change and transformation, preferring copy, and mimic
	----	----	Preferring integrity to authenticity	Preferring rebuilding missing parts
	Deep respect the existing	Adaptive reuse	----	Temporary reuse
Embodiment	Scientific restoration	Take the “bianca” serious	Stylistic restoration	Rebuilding to cover the time distance
	Historic conservation	Distinguishing between the original and compensation	Static preservation	Freezing museum-style protection
	Thinning	Erase the ‘superfetazioni’	Rude tools	Rebuilding
	Sustainability	Smart investment, regular maintenance, not once-off action, social participation	Sustainability	“Hollow out” conception

Table 3-1: Comparison between Italian and Chinese disciplinary views and embodiment in conservation



### 3.2 Comparison conservation's subjects

Edmund Burke, referring to a building or a fabric noted that the conservation is essentially “a means of keeping it alive”<sup>286</sup>. In Italy, city center naturally is seen as an integrated area with homogenous feature, which gains concrete boundary, contents, and social consensus. It emerges that in several Italian regions concrete steps towards an understanding of historical centers have been made. In 1967, the Superintendent of the Marche had organized a meeting in Urbino with a first catalog of 48 major and 98 minor historical centers. Emilia-Romagna Region has issued bylaws for an inventory of the ancient centers of 341 municipalities for training and research. The Friuli-Venezia Giulia took a census classification of its historical centers. Liguria has set up a study group to carry out the preliminary research. Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, Umbria, Marche, Campania, have promulgated laws<sup>287</sup> and taken specific initiative study in the field of Historic Centers. Finally, we should mention the publication in two volumes on the historical centers of Lombardy, which took place in 1975 under the auspices of the Region Government with contribution of ANCSA<sup>288</sup>. This basic study has provided quantitative information and technical references. In the figure 3-2, we can see the exiting buildings prior 1919 accounting about 22%, the amount of construction between 1912 and 1945 takes about 13.5%. The building before 1945 holds more than 1/3. Owing to a dominant “respectful” attitude, it does not allow any huge demolitions and arbitrary adjustments in historic center, which are more and more under a specific authority after 1970s. The strict regulation of historic center recovery is based on an “integrated” conservation perspective to the built environment, not only toward the physical fabric but also according to the social relationship and lifestyle.

Region	Construction ages											
	Before 1919		1919 - 1945		1945-1960		later 1960		Unknown			
	Houses	Roms	Houses	Roms	Houses	Roms	Houses	Roms	Houses	Roms	Houses	Roms
Piemonte	485.346	1.708.394	221.230	759.544	334.989	1.136.648	505.971	1.786.370	149.900	508.284		
Valle d'Aosta	12.230	36.735	5.767	20.217	12.581	46.027	17.995	66.318	4.523	12.716		
Lombardia	595.802	1.963.384	373.768	1.240.865	659.675	2.256.270	973.483	3.589.852	246.328	811.069		
Trentino-Alto Adige	81.413	313.726	32.466	126.231	52.323	213.797	81.438	338.407	23.804	88.728		
Veneto	255.593	1.097.893	141.514	623.467	271.237	1.178.809	422.831	1.893.740	113.355	464.927		
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	121.502	479.911	53.495	219.144	87.152	358.495	129.394	538.595	31.605	126.522		
Liguria	190.660	792.023	106.755	450.049	181.208	701.874	242.878	889.102	52.606	201.206		
Emilia-Romagna	263.898	1.034.260	161.047	623.399	326.315	1.289.891	432.018	1.795.774	94.883	363.803		
Toscana	326.673	1.407.904	137.631	584.075	233.483	987.735	325.924	1.429.856	108.100	440.985		
Umbria	62.575	246.807	28.584	113.921	48.972	200.862	63.667	278.270	32.067	120.752		
Marche	106.668	450.741	49.754	215.346	86.504	370.833	132.792	595.423	42.206	173.463		
Lazio	183.612	624.944	225.158	803.705	472.057	1.654.793	563.803	2.086.823	84.147	270.302		
Abruzzi	85.162	309.837	55.776	211.494	85.337	345.162	109.609	472.430	38.323	134.296		
Molise	36.338	124.746	13.255	47.942	17.066	66.645	25.111	104.166	17.185	54.363		
Campania	326.008	946.051	155.777	477.351	262.120	909.600	425.653	1.613.623	201.723	561.013		
Puglia	202.528	533.186	163.818	467.634	245.524	817.128	320.946	1.222.765	127.457	340.558		
Basilicata	45.474	114.440	25.169	67.701	43.370	139.972	45.174	165.800	29.203	71.180		
Calabria	130.695	366.833	98.748	294.394	121.804	402.739	150.704	564.242	89.149	242.720		
Sicilia	273.530	791.331	240.662	728.301	309.097	1.036.554	421.610	1.592.879	236.317	653.534		
Sardegna	57.038	219.055	61.210	253.464	106.267	455.498	123.760	549.246	44.319	159.891		
Italia	2.842.745	13.562.201	2.351.584	8.328.214	3.957.081	14.569.332	5.515.361	21.573.881	1.767.200	5.800.312		
% sul Totale (= 100%)	22,04	21,24	13,48	13,04	22,70	22,82	31,64	33,79	10,14	9,08		

Figure 3-2, Italian amount of construction in different periods and Regions

<sup>286</sup> Burke E., *Reflections on the French Revolution, 1790*. Dave A., "Edmund Burke and Reason of State". Journal of the History of Ideas, University of Philadelphia Press, 2000, 61 (4): p.617-634.

<sup>287</sup> Until 1976, the Regional laws related to Historic Center are: Lombardia: including local planning regulations and safeguards, Inventory of the urban centers of ancient foundation, planning tools for Historic Places (Laws. 39-4-73 and 96 of 20.06.75); Veneto: including laws for a comprehensive plan of the Laguna area. (Laws n. 39-4-73 and 96 of 20.06.75). Emilia-Romagna: including initial steps for the protection, conservation and enhancement of Historic Places (Laws. 10 of 01.03.73, no. 2 of 01.07.74 and no. 66 of 26/08/74); Liguria: including regulations for planning instruments; Toscana: including regulations for interventions in Historic Centers (Law 05.28.75); Umbria: including provisions for restoration and preservation in the Historical Centers, regulations of urban policy. (The project for the Historical Centers of Apennines and was approved by the Regional Board on 4/30/76); Lazio: including criteria for the formation of planning instruments of Local Authorities, Inventory of Historic Centers (started on 10/23/75), Bill for the protection.; Campania: including Law no. 32 (7/24/74) for the census of cultural heritage. And research was carried out on behalf of the Foundation B. Cross and C.N.R. collaboration with Italy Nostra (section of Naples), containing 259 Historical Centers, of which 102 of considerable importance.

<sup>288</sup> Mioni A., Rozzi R., *I Centri storici della Lombardia*. Silvana Editoriale d'Arte, Milano 1975.

Chinese conservation subject has evident official acknowledge feature, which avoid the main conflict in the conservation. HCC just refers to the whole city's "space structure" without a detailed interpretation of the given area, hence designated and seen as an honorary title. Other areas located inside the HCC have no special regulation to follow for their construction process. In the limit of the HCC, only a few districts and single heritage area are under control. It is so ridiculous that Beijing, Nanjing, where there are hundreds of skyscrapers more than 100-meter high, still hold the title of historical city<sup>289</sup>. There are no special regulation referring their buffer area: the Construction Control area and the Coordinated Area. Besides obscure and mechanic subjects, the misinterpretation of interventions and aberrant implementation exacerbate the situation. Some professionals have proposed "integrated conservation", but the plan only cares about the physical and neglects the social factors, see charter 3-2.

	The Italian		The Chinese	
Concepts of the elements	<b>Historic Center</b>	Historic area occupies most of the city center;	<b>Historic Culture City</b>	Must include more than 2 Historic District, each one more than 1km <sup>2</sup>
	<b>Historic Districts</b>	Blocks, urban tissues	<b>Historic Culture District</b>	Material interventions, Buffer area and coordinated area
	<b>Historic Buildings (Monuments)</b>	Historic or artistic value wholly or partial, basic unit,	<b>Historic Heritage/Building</b>	Material interventions, with Coordinated area
	<b>Built environment</b>	To be recovered to preserve the historic values at the urban scale	<b>Unlisted historic district/historic buildings</b>	Can be demolished arbitrary
Immaterial elements	<b>Inhabitants</b>	The most part is relocated	<b>Inhabitants</b>	Relocate most inhabitants
	<b>Lifestyle</b>	It is updated by caring to save the old values	<b>Lifestyle</b>	Completely has no relation with the regenerated area
Table 3-2: different subjects and tools in Italian and Chinese conservation				

### 3.3 Comparing some relevant aspects

It took a relatively long time before a full interest was shown in the conservation of historic buildings for Italy. Due to this long time of maturation, Italians were able to share some experience with other countries, like England and France. The continuous debate and the different attitudes and practices triggered the emerging of Italian approach<sup>290</sup>. Thanks to a great many predecessors' exploit, the conservation theory and practice was formed and

<sup>289</sup> Zhang Jie. The study of Nanjing Historic space evolution logic. Shanxi Architecture Journal, 2009. 22.

<sup>290</sup> Jokilehto J., *A history of architectural conservation*. Bath, the Bath Press, 1999. p.198.

applied, like in A. Zorzi and G. Boni. The debate mainly referred to various characteristics of the historic good, but sometimes the differences between various levels of interventions are so slight, that even the professionals need very careful attention to distinguish them. Gustavo Giovannoni propagated the idea of the scientific restoration, but performed also other type of intervention, making followers confused.

Owning largest number of world heritage, suffering natural disasters, time depreciation, Italian heritage conservation needs a great deal of investment, both publicly and privately. Such a great investment is a heavy burden to the public budget. For example, just a little church can need about 2 million Euros for its recovering. The investment should come from various bodies (see a French case in figure 3-3), like Public institutions, banks, private companies and other funding actors.

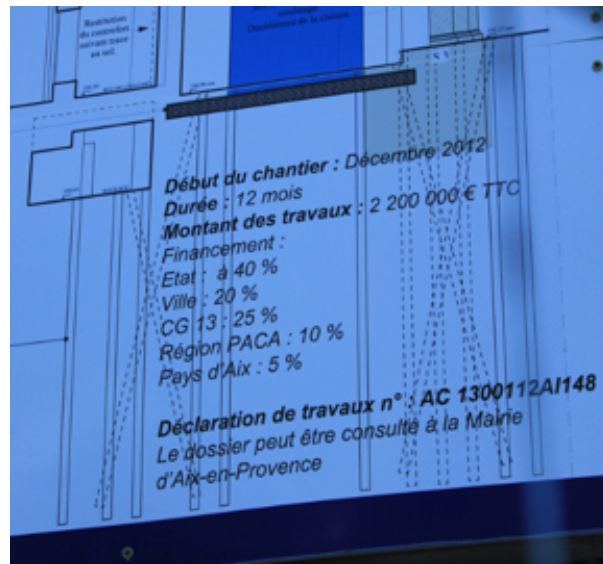


Figure 3-3, the cost of a church restoration, in Aix

In Torino, there are a great many industrial buildings which are granted to universities as classroom, research center. The recovery works has been founded by several public and private actors, while the university is in charge of the maintenance. For Chinese the single resource for conservation is the public budget and it covers limited identified historic buildings. A great many historic buildings and fabric are lack of regular maintenance, or swallowed by the real estate promotion.

In Italy, in 1830s, before the maturation of a modern approach to conservation, the widening of streets and the construction of new buildings resulted in the destruction of historic urban fabric, like Milan and Florence. During that period, scholars such as Raffaele Pareto and Alvise Zorzi defended historic towns against destruction<sup>291</sup>. Today it is simply illegal and strictly forbidden. This destruction phenomenon is until now quite popular in China, but there are few professionals that can reverse this trend. Built environment conservation movement is an ignored issue. Even if we have erected our Historic planning mechanism since 30 years and granted several historic laws, there is no strict implementation of the law. The violation is universal and face but a slight punishment. In most cases, the power and institutional will replace the professionals' role.

Facing to the existent fabric, we concentrate in detailed material interventions, but failed, and we also ignore the customs and conditions, social content, economic values of what has been cancelled. Also, the role of resetting of the subjects, the relations with the rest of the city is a more important issue which is neglected. At the same time, the history study

<sup>291</sup> Rocchi G., *Camillo Boito e le prime proposte normative del restauro*, *Restauro*, XV:5ff. 1974.

make Historic Centers are considered in an exclusive way over time, or identified with a fixed artist. In this way, this prejudice leads to violated hiding. Various interventions based on the e characteristics of the ontology; they can carry out the suitable action pointedly.

	The Italian		The Chinese	
<b>Problems</b>	<b>Multi-leveled binding legislation</b>	From Constitutional to provincial to municipal, a full-range involved	<b>Weak legislation</b>	The law is not full-range while the punishment of violation is too weak to abide.
	<b>Budget burden</b>	Concurrence of public and private funding	<b>Budget burden</b>	Very little proportion budget investment, private investment makes over-used of the heritages.
	<b>Various levels of interventions</b>	Various level and kind of intervention	<b>Interventions are rude, general</b>	Without real understanding the “existent values”, misunderstanding of the interventions, aberrant implementation. Lack of clear tools and techniques
	<b>City around</b>	No buffer area	<b>Buffer area</b>	But no concrete intervention to different buffer areas
	<b>Coordinated area</b>	Coordination’s acts by the networks of services and infrastructures	<b>Coordinated area</b>	Just based on 200 meter or 500 meter, not the feature of the neighbor area
	<b>Identity feature</b>	Conservative regeneration	<b>Identity/feature loss</b>	Popular, and in a large scale
	<b>Values of the subjects</b>	Scientific and careful identification	<b>Conception misinterpretation</b>	
	<b>Public participation</b>	Various groups and community involved, and NGOs	<b>Public participation</b>	Comparative weak
	<b>Conservation and development</b>	Coordination among development and conservation	<b>Conflict of the conservation and development</b>	The built environment is conflict with the modernity.

Table 3-3: Italian and Chinese conservation aspects

### 3.4 Conservation approaches comparison

The intervention tools of Italian conservation have a remarkable headway since 1860s following the reunification. During the debate about theories and practice, the Italian professionals erected a conservation method suitable to their philosophical characteristics and cultural context. From different attitudes to the stylistic restoration, historic restoration and other kind of conservation, we Chinese can learn different levels of intervention and cultivate argumentative attitudes to improve our approach.

The preservation is the least action exerted to subjects, including static freezing and embellishment of the image to keep the status quo. **Freezing** was propagated by Paravicini following the conservative thesis of John Ruskin and William Morris: maintaining the monument “as a living age of history” without removing anything or adding anything. The freezing attitude admits the change of the form and accepts it. There is no necessary to give any intervention to change the status. Due to the lack of financial support or a little “capital return potentiality”, the freezing and embellishment is a first choice for Chinese official bodies as the investment is affordable, in a “real” conservation” rather than a real estate-oriented project.

The idealists, visionaries and poets would like the historic fabric should be restored according to some putatively golden period in its history. But the time has made the historic building change to an actual different state. Modify the “actual state” to regain the “normal (i.e. original) state” leads to radical and apparent historically inaccurate manipulation of the fabric. In Italy this “**Stylistic Restoration**” was propagated by C. Boito initially, based on a thorough study of the building and its historical modifications, followed by a critical judgment of what to conserve, and what to remove. In the restoration, the normal state and actual state difference would be suppressed, reactivating and maintaining “the normal state” as far as possible. Restoration and reproduction of lost or damaged features was generally accepted on the condition that clear evidence of the original form existed, or that it was justified by the need of structural stability. If later additions were not important historically or artistically, their demolition would be allowed<sup>292</sup>. The original and uncorrupted appearance as it emerges from hands of its author should be restored by whatever means. Consequently, the policy was to remove all traces of natural decay, and re-established an integrity that corresponded to the original intentions. On account of the wooden structure is hard to maintain, the completion is prior to the authenticity. Chinese acts to rebuild the lost part or even demolish the extant to erect a new.

C. Boito doubted about the trend of the restoration imitating original form and preferred that additions and completions should be clearly indicated later. He established the criteria for intervention according to the subject’s property. The “**philological restoration**” defines ancient monuments as documents that reflected the past in all their parts. The existing “actual state” as “essential documents to explain and illustrate all the facets of the time, of various peoples throughout the ages, they should be scrupulously and religiously respected as documents in which any alteration could be misleading and eventually give rise to erroneous assumptions<sup>293</sup>”. Monuments were not limited to the “first structure”, all subsequent alterations and additions were considered equally valid as historical documents, and therefore should be preserved. As any falsifications should be out of the question, the stylistic restoration was seen as risky: the better the (stylistic) restoration,

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<sup>292</sup> Pavan G., *L’organizzazione dei servizi per le antichità e belle arti in Romagna e la conservazione dei monumenti ravennati dal 1860 al 1892*, Felix Ravenna, CXVI, II:103, 1978.

<sup>293</sup> Boito C., *Quetioni pratiche di belle arti, restauri, concorsi, legislation, professione, insegnamento*, Milan, 1893.

the more the lie would triumph. Then according to types of historic buildings and their values, different interventions aim for most important values, such as antique's archaeological restoration for the archaeological value, medievalist pictorial restoration for the picturesque appearance, and architectural restoration for the architectural beauty<sup>294</sup>. Reconstruction could be approved as exceptions, if justified with clear documents, even stylistic completion could be accepted.

But generally, Boito thought restoration were "superfluous and dangerous", while conservation was the only "wise thing" to do. Though in implementation, he showed ambiguity in the both. As there are few rational awareness of the relationship between the ontology and its addition, the intervention always mixes the prior addition with the work of art, so it always treat them together, demolishing them all or keep them all. Therefore, C. Boito set the basement for the transition from obscure restoration to operative conservation; the identification of various values began to have pointed ways.

The succeeding "**historical restoration**" sets the restoration should based on precise and enough document as the grounding for further representation. It is hard to distinguish "historical restoration" and "stylistic restoration". The latter prefers the "normal status" while the prior has no choice only in view of available documents. Actually, the "historical restoration" allows certain flexibility<sup>295</sup>.

*Historic monuments were built to carry a message as a kind of document. As a representation of history, they need to be analyzed and interpreted, but must not be falsified. The documents should be treated as mirrors of all periods in both heir merits and their defects. The loss of such a monuments, stylistic restoration or demolition would leave a lacuna in history, but even more serious would be its falsification as a document*<sup>296</sup>.

Gustavo Giovannoni consolidated modern Italian conservation principles, emphasizing a critical approach, the "**scientific restoration**", shifting restoration from an artistic to a critical sphere<sup>297</sup>. Faced to the dilemma of creating a "modern city", Giovannoni thought to solve the conflict between "life and history". He attached attention to the significance of "minor architecture and urban tissues" in providing continuity to the urban fabric in a historic city, which represents the living people, the same as important monuments. The town develops through time with different styles in different periods, any of which should not be purred as one element. The visual and picturesque values of the both "unintended buildings" need to be meticulously studied, to keep the authentic relationship and form. The demolition of less important structure in order to "create space for necessary services but avoid new streets cut into the exiting" is performed if necessary, like the *thinning theory*.

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Beltrami L., *Indagini e documenti riguardanti la Torre Principale del Castello di Milano ricostruita in memoria di Umberto I*, Milan. 1905.

<sup>296</sup> Tito Vespasiano Paravicini.

<sup>297</sup> Argan G.C., 'Restauro delle opera d'arte. Progettata istituzione di un Gabinetto Centrale del restauro', *Le Arti*, I, ii, 1938/1939.

As for Viollet-le-Duc's stylistic restoration it is anti-scientific, as the reconstruction brings falsifications and arbitrary interventions, presuming the "normal status" is the single period but covering the vicissitudes of the heritage. The rehabilitation of historic buildings should respect all periods' trace; instead of restore them to their ideal form. So he placed great emphasis on regular maintenance, timely repair, invisible consolidation and administrative duty, in which the modern technology is acceptable. The aim is to preserve the authenticity of the structure, and respect the whole "artistic life" of the building, not only the first phase. "Any modern additions should be dated and considered rather as an integration of the mass than an ornament, based on absolutely sure data"<sup>298</sup>. The scientific restoration includes "by consolidation, by re-composition, by liberation, by completion or renovation". Within the limit applicability of the "anastylosis" as a possible solution, the new completion/reconstruction has evident differences with the original, in colors, forms or material. Scientific restoration could prevent any surmise or recreation in the material interventions, which is allowed in the stylistic restoration.

Facing to drastic destruction brought by wars, aesthetic value demands another kind of restoration, a "Critical Restoration" based on critical assessment. Besides conserving all the elements of historic or artistic character whatever periods they belonged to, the creative act should be conceived in a new dimension, posing new form to the "lost part". The critical restoration is not only "complete the form" but create a new art accommodating the old. It modifies the current form of the monument in order to enhance its value, to 'possess it fully', and to purify it from later stratifications so as to reach its "real form". The aim is that restoration should not have the purpose solely of reintegrating losses, but to re-establish the work of art in its authenticity, hidden or lost, and thus focus primarily on its material<sup>299</sup>.

The revolutionary transformation of conservation from simplicity restoration was elaborated by C. Brandi. But as early as in 1877, Alvise Zorzi insisted on the fundamental differences between "restoration" and "conservation", recommending consolidation instead of demolition and renewal.

*Restoration presupposes innovations according to needs, conservation excludes them completely. Restoration is applicable to anything that has no archaeological importance, but purely artistic. Conservation aims at safeguarding from decay for its antiquity and for historic reason, has a special merit superior to art, symmetry, architectural orders, and good taste. Even more necessary will this conservation be, when other archaeological interest is added the artistic value, and when the object, in its whole and its details, has such a mark of history that this would be completely destroyed in a restoration carried out in the modern fashion<sup>300</sup>. The historical values of even minor details*

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<sup>298</sup> Giovannoni G., *Questioni di architettura nella storia e nella vita*, Edizioni Biblioteca d'Arte, Rome, 1929.

<sup>299</sup> Argan G.C., 'Restauro delle opere d'arte. Progettata istituzione di un Gabinetto Centrale del restauro', *Le Arti*, I, ii, 1938/1939. And G.C. Argan. *La creazione dell'Istituto Centrale del Restauro, intervista a cura di Mario Serio*. Palombi, Rome. 1989. And Brandi C., 'Argan e il restauro', *il pensiero critic di Giulio Carlo Argan*, Studi in onore di Giulio Carlo Argan, iii, Rome, PP.33FF. 1985.

<sup>300</sup> Zorzi A.P., *Le osservazioni intorno ai restauri interni ed esterni della Basilica di San Marco*. 1877.

and fragments as an irreplaceable part of cultural heritage as it constitutes “an irreplaceable and irremovable link in a chain of evolution”<sup>301</sup>.

C. Brandi’s “**conservation-restoration**” brings out conservation theory mature. All the work made by a “creative process” solidified the “existential reality” as the result of the “human consciousness”. “The reconstruction could not have the same meaning as the original as it becomes historically and aesthetically false. Conservation is to “embrace all acts that prolong the life of heritage” and “constitutes an inner-professional discipline coordinating a range of aesthetic, historic and technical methods”. All the restoration and conservation should be based on the cognition of its own specificity but not others’ tastes. So restoration must be limited to the original whole to prolong the potential unity without creation.

All the prior interventions were confirmed by various charters in various periods in Italy, such as the Carta del Restauro of 1972. These basic physical intervention tools were popularized world widely, promoting historic conservation movement in a healthy way. Chinese have drawn lessons from these “names” directly without further dialectic debate. The misinterpretation, plus different construction logic and an unique governance system leads to some superficial understanding, rather suitable for the historic inheritance.. Brandi concerns about “physical context”, in relationship with the spatiality of the surrounding built context, while later change should not modify spatial condition of the “built heritage”. Chinese choose to maintain the formal unity but historical instance was put in a secondary level.

			The Italian	The Chinese <sup>302</sup>				
Intervention tools	Official intervention	Restoration	Stylistic restoration	C. Boito early Actual state to formal state, simplified geometrical forms, A. D’Andrade	Un-Official intervention	Restoration	Stylistic Restoration	Popular, reconstruction, arbitrary rebuilding
			philological restoration	C. Mongeri, T. Paravicini Analogous with the linguistic studies			-----	-----
			Historical approach	Documentation as a scientific basis for restoration			Historical approach	Simply choosing some unreal styles

<sup>301</sup> Riegl A., *Der modern Denkmalkultus, sein Wesen, seine Entstehung*, 1903. The modern cult of monuments: its character and its origin. MIT Press, 1982. Riboldazzi R., 2012: Historic heritage, landscape and modernity: aspects of the Italian contribution to the IFHTP congresses between the two wars, *Planning Perspective*, DOI:10.1080/02665433.2013.737714.

<sup>302</sup> Ministry of Construction. *Code of conservation of planning for historic cities*. 2005.



			Scientific restoration	Consolidation, re-composition, liberation, completion or renovation. Thinning out of urban fabric, scientific analysis G. Giovannoni			Scientific restoration	Few, in small scale
			Critical restoration	R. Pane, R. Bonelli. A creative restoration with strict analysis			Critical restoration	Becomes stylistic restoration
		Conservation	Conservation	Multidisciplinary activity		Conservation	Conservation	Multidisciplinary activity
		Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation	Recovery attaching great attention on the role in the whole city		Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation	Adaptive reuse, for economic interests
		Preservation	Freezing	T. Paravicini following Ruskin's approach		Official intervention	Freezing	Museum-like freezing
			Embellishment	A. Rubbiani in Bologna			Embellishment	Appearance clear/pure
							Improvement	Embellishment
							Repair	Modification
							Refurbishment	Repair and consolidation

Table 3-4: Italian and Chinese conservation: official and un-official interventions

The essence of the historic good is in truth and poetry, while the “establishment of truth in the work means bringing forth a being as never was before and will never be again”<sup>303</sup>. The work of art's characteristics, generated by will to give a meaning in the creative process can be represented and elaborated with carefully distinguishing. The preserving means to generate the perception of its truth and meaning through its world of relations in

<sup>303</sup> Heidegger M., 'Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes', 1980 in M. Heidegger. *Holzwege*, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt Am Main, 1980.

the consciousness of the society<sup>304</sup>. Italy takes the work of art seriously, of which the inner characteristics is the various interventions objects, the historic value, the aesthetic values, the integration value, the culture vale and economic value. Each kind of intervention is to guarantee to prolong different values while Chinese understanding of the intervention is too superficial and too rude. "The rage of repairing.... will be less fatal to our magnificent edifices than the reformation and the Civil war", written by Thomas Gray in 1785, but we Chinese 200 years late do not make awareness of this aberrant action, see table 3-4.

### **3.5 Comparison of the legislation**

G. Dehio emphasized that the protection was not easily conceivable in the prevailing economic system and legislative framework<sup>305</sup>. Shortage of legislation will bring disasters to the relics definitely. Like what is happening in China, the deficient and low-effectual laws and its mechanical performing, encourages the deconstruction rather than to prevent them. While the Occidental conscientiously laws give a profound support for the conservation and deter anyone from committing similar crimes. The violation and aberrant behavior is seen not just a mistake, but also a serious crime.

There are four main differences between the both. Firstly, Italian give to conservation the highest priority, as the Constitution regulates it as one of the country's most important duty. While the Chinese do not exert any priority to the conservation but the development. Secondly, laws and regulation covers all aspects after the long-time dialectic exploit and professions charters. Chinese laws about the conservation only refer to the physic parts, with misinterpretation of the conservation definitions. Thirdly, the supervision and feedback is effective in Italy, but the Chinese violations are punished slightly, while most are found out by the media, not by the public institutions. Last but not least, the high quality of lawmakers – councilors who propose, propagate, and implement and supervise - is the key factor for the success of the governance in Italy. They can detect the conservation problems advanced and can hold great duty to involve into the conservation work. For example, the European council proposed to set up the Relics Day to remind the citizens of the duty. And they have the will to invest the budget for the work. Chinese counterparts are striving to call for basic attention to historic conservation. In fact there is few conservation content in the primary education.

Most of the time, the governance constraints the historic conservation rather than active perform it. In such a typical authoritarian country, governance should be more responsible for public interests. Chinese government always propagates that all the involved buildings are dilapidated houses without any historic values. Chinese leaders' will is the vital factor to determine which kind of intervention has to be applied. Unlike the Italian professionals who can independently carry out the planning and projects according to the available resources, the Chinese academicians affiliated to the power, doesn't have an independent role.

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<sup>304</sup> Jokilehto J., *A history of architectural conservation*. Bath, the Bath Press, 1999. p.214

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

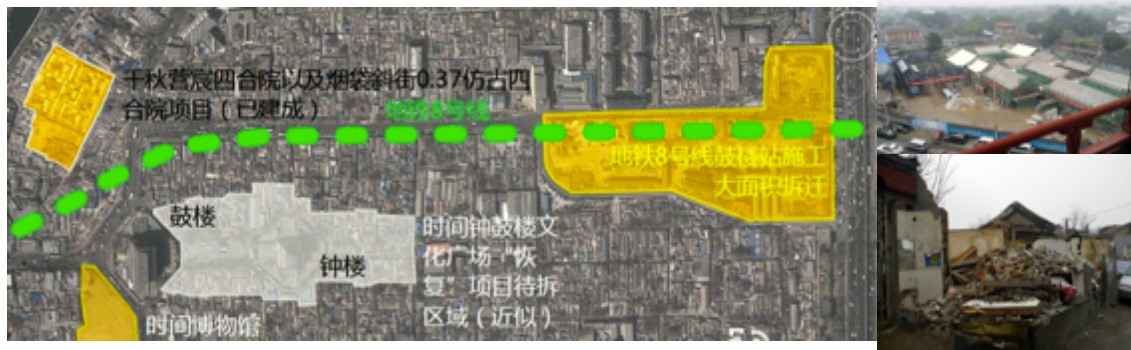


Figure 3-4, the demolition area and the site images of the demolition

Taking “Bells and Drums Tower Districts renewal project” in Beijing for an example, the instrumental power is more prevalent than the legislation power, while there are few civilians who cherish the culture heritage. Compared to the arbitrary political will, the “conservation plan” is but a powerless document.

According to various plans and legislation we mentioned above in Beijing, any large-scale demolition is forbidden within the Old City. As a World Heritage the Forbidden City is a key content in historic conservation plan. Actually, the new comprehensive plan tries to demolish the whole fabric to build a huge green piazza to link the Bells Tower and Drums Tower which never exists. In the “Regulation of Historic City, Historic Town, and Historic Village conservation” it is asked, “not change the space pattern and feature to keep the integrity and authenticity” (article 23). But the project, named “Beijing Time”, in an area of 12.57 ha, has completely violated the basic discipline. The left-top yellow part was demolished to rebuild archaized new buildings. The left-top yellow part was demolished to rebuild archaized new buildings.

The left-down area was demolished as the “Beijing Time Cultural City” which is in the name of the culture, but actually is a shopping mall. Then the white part was a green piazza in the ground floor but with shops underground. The right yellow part was demolished for the metro and new commercial buildings (see figure 3-4). In the white part, Jin Guildhall’s space was changed, Qiantai Temple was removed but actually completely new and the space pattern was scaled down. Taiwan Guildhall, Liuzu Memorial Temple, Ganying Sanguan Temple and Fude Temple are completely new, substituting the original. Furthermore it is more sadly that the front part of Tieshan Temple was demolished and was rebuilt juxtaposed with the back part. Most of the built environment including 66 common “courtyards” houses which were not listed heritage were demolished directly. Ironically, this project was approved by the State Administration of the Cultural Heritage! All the existing buildings are propagated as dilapidated houses without values, but it was false and even when there local persons and social activists protested, the government responded to them without concern.

How we make good use “the altruistic motivation” to protect our historic environment? Apart of the “historic value, art value and social value”, the “felling of humanity” is less sharp and nationalistic ethic feeling would be part of this more general justification. In face

of the economic interests and “ideal urban image”, the legislation power is too weak to control, see table 3-5.

	The Italian		The Chinese	
Legislation	Codification	Legislation articles	Codification	The legislation articles
	Civil Law System	Effective	Civil-Law System	Not complete, especially about the private property
	Guiding Cases System	Following successful cases		There are few successful cases
	Constitutional level	As the duty of the country		
	Distributive justice	To give the priority to the historic environment	Distributive justice	To encourage the modern but not for the “fragile” historic environment
	Procedure justice	Cases reference	Authoritarian	
	Law-makers quality	Public interests		Few law-makers are not professions
	Strict performing	Violations are strictly fined	Loosen performing	Few violation was punished and the punishment is too slight
	Effect supervision	Public bodies, academician, Unions of professionals		No supervision

Table 3-5 the comparison of the Italian and Chinese conservation legislation

### 3.6 Social participants comparison

The previous study elucidates there are four basic deficiencies in the Chinese participants issue in the conservation. In the firstly place, the authoritarian management is discretionary and vague. Secondly, the public budget is too limited. Thirdly, the public participation stays at a primitive level. Fourthly, the legislation has lost its role in the practice.

The powerful official participants make the conservation more obscure. Firstly, they are powerful, and they are involved in all aspects of the conservation, from the designation to the conservation ways, from the public investment to the evaluation. Secondly, they care too much short time return but pay not enough emphasis on conservation. Conservation plan and adaptive reuse of historic built environment aims to the development, and in this play the land is seen as the most valuable resources. Thirdly, the heavy financial burden in conservation makes the office volunteer to embark conservation work. Fourthly, the government branches’ neglect of duty is evident. Fifthly, there is a are lack of supervision and control. Culture department is viewed as a weak department as it cannot give birth to “interests”. It couldn’t control the violation and aberrant behaviors in current governance

system. While the powerful construction department casts priority to the development, it is also in charge for all aspects of the conservation and related “assessment”. It is not possible that it criticizes itself. They try to lead the private capital to participate the “conservation work” to give birth to financial benefit rather than the historic values.

When all the historic heritage are destroyed, the government comes up to criticize the violation. They always pretend to be innocent but actually they are indifferent to the violation and have no effective supervision, in their malpractice.

Compared to such a large historic built environment, the governments are powerful, but the public budget is comparative limited. Every year there is a fixed proportion in the public budget for the cultural work. Beijing has invested million Yuan for the conservation per year but it is only a drop in the bucket. So it only pays to some “vital” projects and some “image projects”, and experimental projects.

In these days, some social institutions and organizations are emerging. Though most are half-official, helped by some international organizations, were set up in conservation work. They are consulted by the government and by local authorities on historic architectural and context problems to important buildings. But they cannot positively participate into the conservation work directly. Inhabitants cannot claim their own right in the plans, even in dealing with their private properties. Though there are some publishing procedures, feedbacks of the inhabitants have no reply. Even the entire historic built environment in most of the Historic Culture Cities has been missed; there has been any penalization to the government and planners.

On the contrary, a successful conservation elucidates the product of interaction and cooperation of various participants, including official, civic and social communities. In the firstly place, there is a consensus on that it is an official duty to conserve the built environment and that the conservation can be accommodated into the development harmoniously. Secondly, there are various investments into the conservation, including the public budget, private payments and social donations. Thirdly, there are positive public participation and effective feedbacks. Then the council supervision and legislation should run properly<sup>306</sup>.

From the Constitution level, Italy views the preservation of the historic environment as one of its ethic duties. The governmental administrations entrusted with conservation are not depending on the planning administration, so they can casts a fully attention on the public interests. As most of the historic buildings are a private property, the private owners are the main actor for the conservation. The other private NGO and some private companies

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<sup>306</sup> In Italy, in 1872 the Ministry of Education established the first General Directorate, “*Direzione Generale degli Scavi e Musei*”, and hence issued the “*Direzione generale delle antichita e belle arti*” in 1881. In 1889, different regions of the country established 12 “*General Commissioners of Fine Arts*”, and the “*Uffici regionale per la conservazione dei monumenti*” was set in 1891. And then the office was divided into “separate soprintendenze”. The government offices are responsible for historic buildings. Several bills were presented in the 1870s to establish the national law and then a first law was approved in 1902 and modified later with the law of 1939.

are active into buy the historic heritage, reuse them, and maintain them regularly earning a correspondent profit. The public budget has a leverage effect to trigger the interest of the private resources.

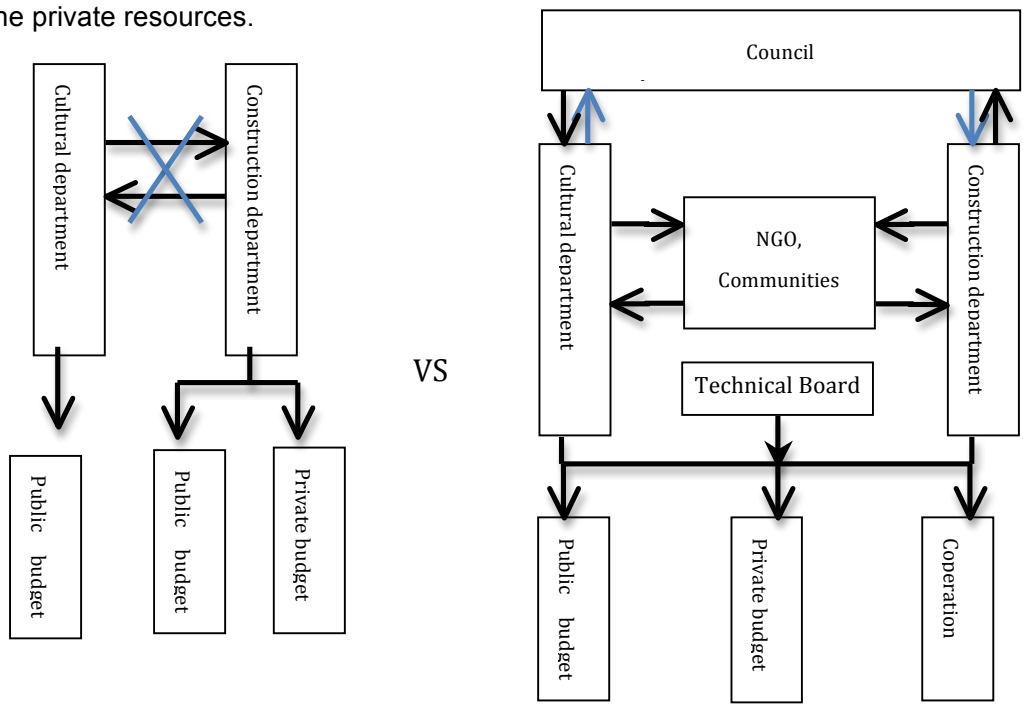


Figure 3-5: Chinese conservation participants

Figure 3-6: Italian conservation participants

### 3.7 Conclusions

Seen as a public interests, historic conservation should be an integrated policy. High level recognition of conservation triggers a full-scale regulation. Successful practice provides examples; active academician advance progressive theories and intervention tools; lawmakers try to accommodate the historic area into a city-wide development strategy; market forces positive involve in.... All these factors intertwined together perform feasible and operative governance.

The disparities through the comparison between the Italian and Chinese issues make more evident the actual defects, misinterpretation and aberration. The conservation in China still stays at the fundamental level of “born of sentiment” rather than historic concern of “dialectic characteristics”. Then it cannot meet or anticipate the “dimension of historic time”<sup>307</sup> and the complex political management<sup>307</sup> background. Here, the lack of identification of the various values, the ineffective social organization, the misinterpretation of the definitions, the unbalance of the public and private resources have made the conservation out of order.

The conservation of the Western conservation theories has been introduced to China since 30 years. But one sinks deeper into the mire while the other one is famous for their gains. It is quintessential to reflect and redevelop our existing conservation mechanism, in two basic ways, the technical intervention ways and ‘superstructure’ procedure design.

<sup>307</sup> Evans J., *A history of the Society of Antiquaries*. Oxford, P.I. 1956.

The procedure design aims to achieve a “procedure justice” to trigger the great potentiality of each participant, i.e. to involve the whole society of a conservation area. On the basis of the identification of various values of the heritage, a right methodology rather than closed in a single method should look to a scientific perspective which can suitable for Chinese context. In this sense, in the next chapter some proposals to improve the existing conservation planning mechanism are argued.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Italian conservation modes and what the Chinese need**



## 4 The Italian conservation modes and what Chinese need

Through cases study, some interpretation work about Italian intervention and governance mode for historic centers preservation can provide essential suggestions to Chinese field. Pointed to optimize the Chinese conservation system, this chapter proposes three parts based on prior research: “Correcting Concepts”<sup>308</sup>, “Physical intervention modes”, and “Procedure design”. The first two parts are proposed as a basic technical foundation for conservation work. Procedure design is meant as a strategic perspective to reorganize the management and governance, from structural level to improve the governance.

In this chapter, the first part introduces three kinds of physical intervention modes<sup>309</sup>. It aims to introduce accurate tools and give a feasible development suitable for the Chinese context. The second part is to put up Chinese conservation mechanism redevelopment proposals through “procedure design” model. The procedure model hopes to deal with the dilemma by making good use of Chinese typical authoritarian governance.

### 4.1 The logic of Italian historic cities’ construction

Historical cities, as container of a social organism add security on one hand and achieve dignity and beauty on the other<sup>310</sup>. The archetype of medieval Italian city has, according to Mumford: circular walls, large doors, a fortified citadel, palace and towers with strong vertical leaps, spontaneous fabric around country, forming a wrapping pattern. Cities perfectly express architectural art and artistic wealth on the basis of their origin and size, with a planning control since centuries, such as the buildings around the Square ‘Piazza del Campo’ in Siena having the same type of windows. Most of the western historic center expanded spontaneously, keeping integrity and homogeneity without any large-scale destruction to the existing. This basic discipline was also applied into following more stunning Italian urbanizing in last century. The urban construction is an ordered growth with strict and small-scale regeneration.

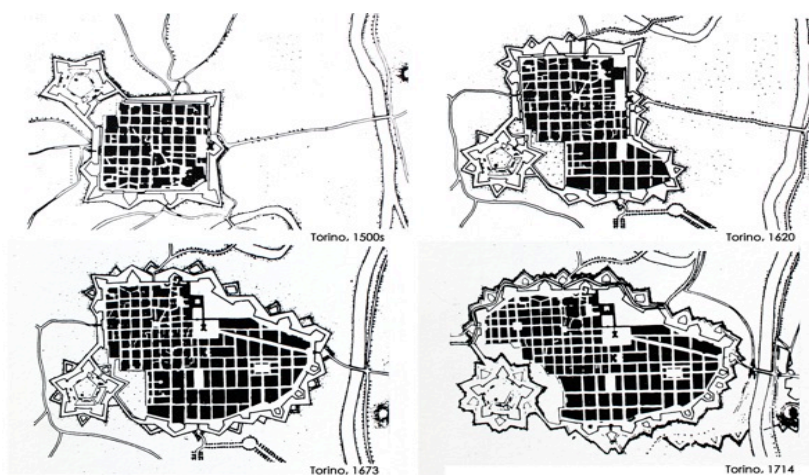


Figure 4-1: the morphology evolution in Torino.

<sup>308</sup> “Correction concepts (正名, zhengming)” comes from Confucian School “Lunyu Zilu”, as a way to exploit knowledge. If conceptions are not correct, the work will not go well, then the work will fail. (名不正则言不顺, 言不顺则事不成, ming buzheng ze yan bushun, yan bushun ze shi bucheng).

<sup>309</sup> This part firstly aims to give a scientific interpretation of physical interventions, includes its definitions and contents.

<sup>310</sup> Fazio M., *I centri storici Italiani*. Silvana Editoriale d’Arte. Milano, 1976. p. 140.

In the core of their construction philosophy, the old existing material is the reference to follow with irreplaceable value, which only can be annihilated by the irresistible time. The old construction logic have had an active influence on successive urban planners, who cherish extant beings, trying to keep traces of ancestors' work and caring for the communities' needs. Existing fabric is never thought to be conflict with development and regeneration. As Rationalist lays stress on "need", the need of the old to survive should be met too. Western new construction theory is to reconcile the old with the new; following the new should roots in history; and the old should not be isolated with the new but to be inherited. It is common that the historic and the modern can co-exist in the same urban system. As examples to cherish, to study, to respect, to follow and to mutual adapt, the material consistence interventions to historic built environment have two main modes.

#### 4.1.1 Italian modes of intervention

Italian conservation modes mainly concerns for **solid space ontology**, was implemented initially on a single building, later to aggregation of buildings, and finally expands to blocks and tissues of the whole historic center. Intervention subjects always refer to the material environment and the concrete space per se. The city is a collection of types<sup>311</sup>, such as types of settlements, types of space, types of construction. Physical and spatial homogenization of the traditional city is understood as a result of the maximal interaction of types. The neo-rationalists guided by the theory of types<sup>312</sup>, try to find out architecture types to reinterpret and maintain urban morphology structure.

Italian historic intervention strategy refers to two main basic modes: typology-oriented mode and morphology-oriented mode. The latter contains two sub-modes: block-unit mode, and tissue-aggregation mode, see table 4-1. Each mode gives particular emphasis on different aspects of space transformation. They can be applied simultaneously, adopting a consistent way.

Mode	Sub-mode	Scale	Subjects	Boundary
Typology -Oriented	Strict, absolute	Micro-	Individual	Conservation
	Mild, loosen			Conservation Redevelopment
Morphology -Oriented	Block-unit mode	Meso-, medium	Block, street	Conservation, Redevelopment
	Tissue-aggregation mode	Macro-	Area, historic center	Conservation , Redevelopment

Table 4-1: basic modes and its subjects

<sup>311</sup> Rossi A., Huang Shijun (tran). *The Architecture of the City*. China Architecture & Building Press, 2006. Rowe C, Koetter F., *Collage City*. Cambridge, Mass." MIT Press, 1978.

<sup>312</sup> The word 'typology' comes from Chrysostome A., *Dictionnaire historique d'architecture: comprenant dans son plan les notions historiques, descriptives, archæologiques, biographiques, théoriques, didactiques et pratiques de cet art*. 2 vols. Paris: Librairie d'Adrien le Clere, 1832.

#### 4.1.1.1 Typology-oriented mode

The typology-oriented intervention cares about consistency of building archetype, relating to single building at the micro-level. The “building cell”, as articulation of traditional social and physical activities, forms space feature and context. Owing to the application of the “building cell”, urban space quality and feature can be improved conserving the physical context. Typology possesses a strict means, but its application can have some adaptive change according to the status quo.

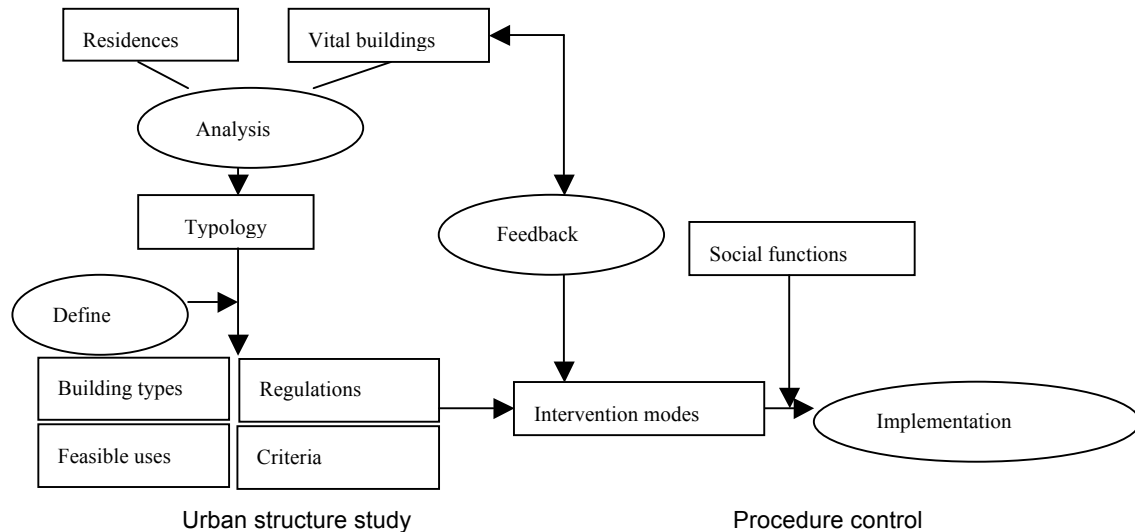


Figure 4-2: Framework of typology application

Typology is seen as the method for adaptively reusing of the physical form to maintain both physical characteristics and other values.. To be an integrated unit relating the built environment to policies, typology-oriented methodology has two aspects, one is about conserving basic physical elements and the other is forming interventions disciplines. The typological approach makes us aware of the critical feature to protect, to maintain and to achieve. Because physical properties delimit the subsequent intervention boundary, the use of the buildings depends on their typology and their structural, organizational features. The survey forms a database for all the materials, structure forms, styles and other accessories. The criteria and regulations are set in groups based on types previous defined, in order to indicate the allowed intervention types. Original material, structure and form of historic buildings are a superior concretization of the types aggregation, which is entrusted by use value, time value, artistic value and culture value. On account of analysis of physical types, a participative social governance and a public management provide the intervention background see figure 4-2.

The second sub-mode (tissue-aggregation) is a kind of conservation in small-scale regeneration. Focused on a part of the whole area conservation, the typology application is a mean to meet a context coordination. A Carlo Aymonino’s project<sup>313</sup> shows how it is applied. Around the Palazzo Scattolari of Pesaro’s historic center, trying to scientifically restore the Palazzo Scattolari, Aymonino recovers the original width in Via Bonami, keeps

<sup>313</sup> See in: <http://carloaymonino.blogspot.it/2008/01/casa-parcheggio-pesaro-1978-1981.html>.

the original length of the ground floor along Via Mazza, and maintains the appropriate height and massing. Using a porch to make a better access to social facilities of Palazzo Scattolari to meet the adaptation to the surrounding buildings, see figure 4.3. The building includes cementations walls, a loggia that encloses the upper part of the building with vibrant colors. The intervention accentuates the desire of the surrounding space in the "common decency," making up the continuity of the street. This redevelopment in historic area shows the conservative consideration about the continuity of its ontology and its active influence on outer space. As such, this kind of building type is not a mimic of the old one, but the result of a space "responsibility" in space regeneration.

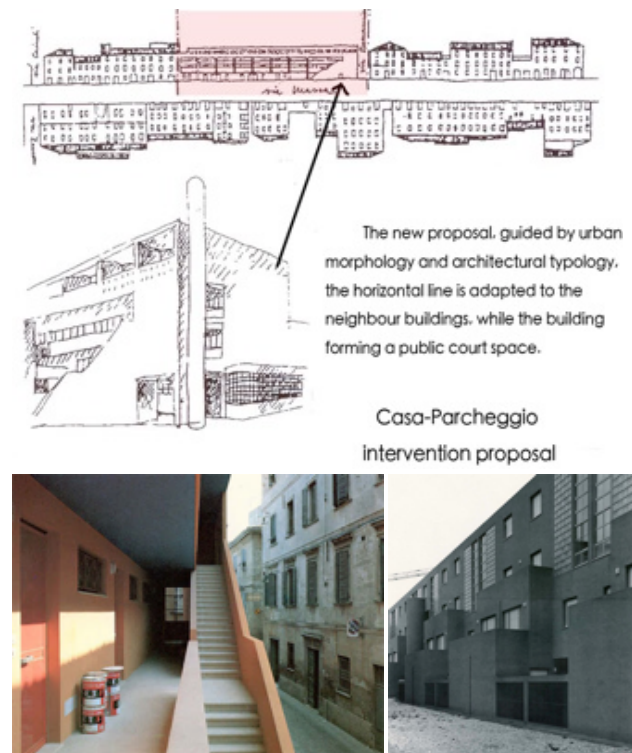


Figure 4-3: Casa-Parcheggio project in Palazzo Scattolari, in Pesaro.

#### 4.1.1.2 Morphology-typology mode

Typology-oriented modes provide feasible conservation means at detailed physical level. The elemental "cell" cannot express all the meanings, like organization way, structure form, urban fabric complexity, and city body varieties. Buildings, atrium, piazzas, streets and other elements form blocks, and blocks are organized by a construction logic into a large-scale tissue<sup>314</sup>. The combination of cells forms the morphology aggregation. Owing to various intrinsic flow of power, the dynamic state of "procedural typology"<sup>315</sup> naturally results in material pervasive relationship between its elements during the urban morphogenesis. The space aggregation has two scales: blocks, or "insula" are a medium-scale type; tissues are groups of blocks, open spaces, plots and streets which form a cohesive homogeneous whole. Because they were all built within the same

<sup>314</sup> Krier L., *Rational Architecture*. In George Wittenborn Incorporated. *The reconstruction of the city*. Paris: Editions des Archives d'Architecture Modern. 1978. p.120.

<sup>315</sup> Moudon A. V., *Urban morphology as an emerging interdisciplinary field*. *Urban morphology*, 1997 1, p.3-10.

constraints, or under a common process of transformation, each one is considered as a “plan unit”.

#### 4.1.1.3 Block-unit mode

Block-oriented mode is a way to maintain main space pattern, to deduct inconsistent parts, to fulfill urban Gestalt structure, and to incubate social vitality. It is a comprehensive method to bring the space pattern into a profitable adaption status.

We can take the West Berlin Center as an example to indicate its application by L. Krier in 1978. The block was with a high-density context, quite enclosed in built environment, isolated and with fragmented segments. The proposal firstly is to thin the volume to remove secondary buildings which are not with historic value. The following interventions include the re-organization of the communication roads to form a network, and then to add some parts to complete the “thinned” segments. The whole context become more integrated with a convenient accessibility, see figure 4-4. It strengthens the social identity by improving the traditional space pattern. Main space form is maintained and strengthened by interventions of addition and subtraction, not made in a hasty way.

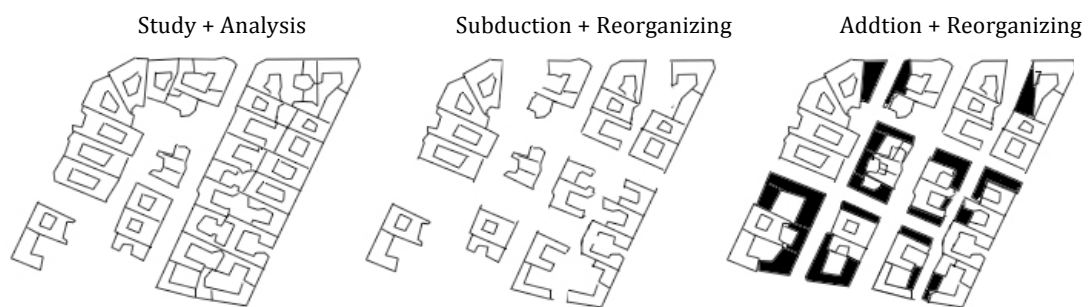


Figure 4-4: the re-organization of the West Berlin center tissue, by L. Krier, 1978

#### 4.1.1.4 Tissue mode

The tissue-oriented method is oriented to maintain material authenticity and space form continuity in the physical environment transformation from a macro-perspective. From this point of view the tissue is a container of the living activities and witnesses the evolution of the city social spirit at a large scale, accommodating great space varieties and interactions. The macro-level intervention can provide an “environment-respectful” background, triggering “integrated” perspectives. Like the Historic Center of Palermo case in chapter 2, the tissue-oriented plan sets the tone of stressing conservation and redevelopment in a wide sense, rather than only focused on physical structure. After studying strength flows which bring out the change of the space pattern, the whole context can be re-arranged and functions can be consolidated through an appropriate space allocation. The modification aims to conserve the historic built feature by incorporating more modern functions within an integrated space pattern. The redevelopment accommodates the extant built environment within an innovated space, while the historic built environment consolidated its attraction for the whole city.

#### 4.1.1.5 Typo-morphology intervention conclusion

Carlo Aymonino noted that the “new architecture (style, form) is only applied when

scientific restoration, conservative restoration or building rehabilitation has no chance to apply. The principle to follow in new construction is to restore and recover pre-existing part to complete and improve urban space<sup>316</sup>. As articulation and embodiment of the western space is stressing on being and authenticity, typo-morphology provides a field of reference for the conservation practices.

Buildings are corroded by the time slowly or destroyed by the human suddenly. During this process, we can carry out means to maintain its original taste and image through an attainable method. As subjects of conservation, both built spaces and open spaces should be incorporated into the urban structure to rehabilitate the collective memory. These prior modes are all based on the extant physical material. Let us make a metaphor: the block is organized by grammars, while the paragraphs are organized by the logic. We use our contemporary logic to represent and clarify the given historic context. Once material representation is fulfilled, spatial logic is reformed, vice versa! Immaterial relationship is the result and embodiment of the space construction logic while the “planned space pattern”, is the result of social ritual, religious belief and construction way. The immaterial logic has established existing rules, so intervention mode need to compensate the immaterial values. The affiliation planned or unplanned embodied into the martials can be a clue to provide a perspective for conservation.

Chinese cursory conservation has not exploited deeper space values and it lacks a theoretical and a practical methodology. The “city-wide” approach appears to be tough outwardly, but is timid inwardly. It is a rude way for almost 30 years which cannot prevent the loss of historic built environment on one hand, and cannot develop in a positive management on the other hand. The prior four modes what are elaborated in the section 1 of this chapter, which have been introduced to China, have been implied mechanically, giving a basic physical intervention basement. The failure should trigger more than just reflecting the Chinese gains and defects. We have to question whether Western theories are ‘sounding’ for Chinese context? Or are there any parts the Western modes do not cover?

Technically, various interventions make space fulfillment and embellishment in an integrated way. Man interventions deal with preventative sentences’ elements, rather than with the intrinsic grammar and logic of buildings. Using linguistics metaphor, words (building), sentences (blocks), marks (open space and accessory ingredients), sentence groups or paragraphs (tissue) are organized into a section with independent meaning. But all of them have to be imprinted with an integrated space identity. Or in other words, in Chinese approach, there are a methods or a logic way able to deal with the immaterial “spillover” values of historical city. Therefore the affiliation, as a spillover thing is a way to deal with its intrinsic organization.

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<sup>316</sup> Aymonino C., *Origini e sviluppo della città moderna*, Venezia, Marsilio, 1978.

#### 4.1.2 Chinese space affiliation-oriented intervention



Figure 4-5: the representation model of Roma in 4th century by Italo Gismondi, 1937

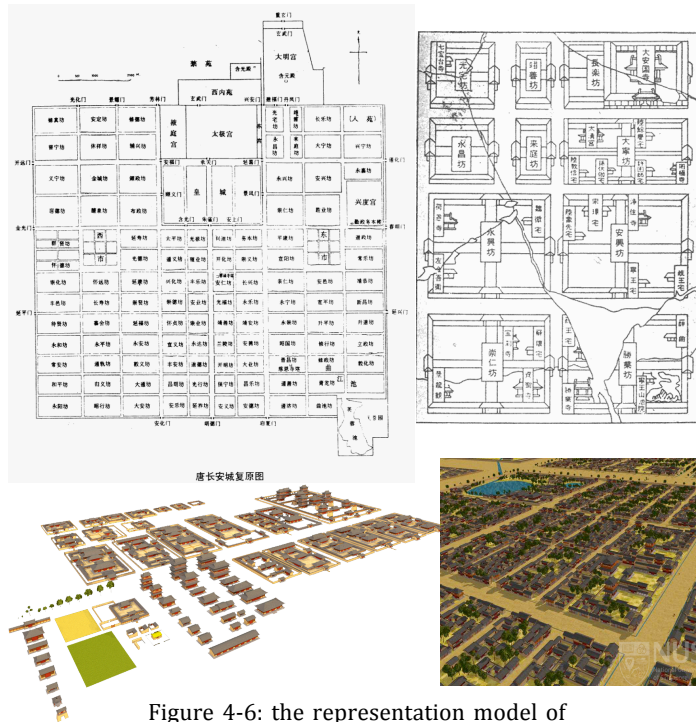


Figure 4-6: the representation model of Xi'an in 617-907 by Wang Caiqiang, NUS

The different urban morphology in Rome and Xi'an represent two construction logics, which reminds us there should be some other intervention modes besides the dominant and scientific western modes. This section proposes a mode based on Chinese construction logic interpretation. The “city-wide” planned construction logic, as an embodiment of “authoritarian urban construction views” indicates the intrinsic social flows erecting the city, shapes the morphology, cultivates the feature, even destroy it and then rebuild it. The aggregation of build space, under specific logic has specific connections and links. The inner immaterial connections, named as ‘affiliation’ can be an orientation-base to form a method to intervention.

##### 4.1.2.1 Affiliation-oriented intervention

The Occidental highlights original material as the first factor while the form is the second, hence they can sacrifice the original form for the original material, foregoing the relationship between the beings. As Washington Charter 1987 claims: The relationship between the town or urban area and its surrounding setting, both natural and man-made should be preserved. Chinese philosophy accentuates “change” and “connection”, advocating substance’s diachronicity but neglects its synchronicity. The Western approach cares about tangible built space to intervene and organize context, and the Chinese choose to depend on affiliated invisible “relationship and connection” to organize the form. Chinese cities show much more order as it was planned initially following certain ritual and logics so that cities’ morphology was imprinted with and within the “property of affiliation”. This property articulates three basic policies complying with the Confucian governance “order”, including “Power Centralization”, “Lizhi” and Lifang”. All these orders are applied into the “affiliation” at various levels, running through city-scale, tissue-scale,

block-scale and building-scale.

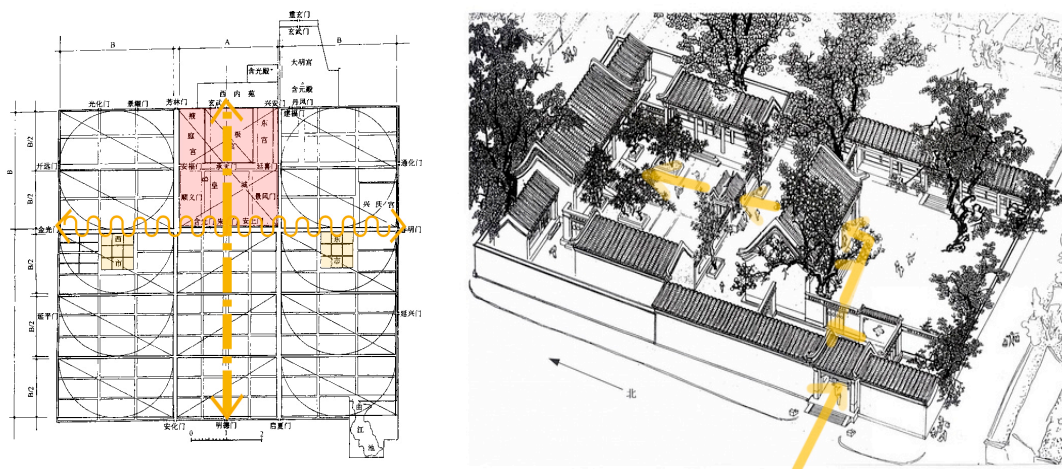


Figure 4-7:right, the main axis and space pattern of the city in Chang'an, Tang Dynasty;  
Left, space affiliation in Beijing courtyard house, different courtyards indicate social orders.

At city-scale level: As a planned whole, Chinese historic cities acquire their inherent entity, rational space order, axis, homogeneity, townscape, colors and materials from their proceeding plans, as embodiment of a strict patriarchal system and the Confucian ethics theory. The skeletal continuity at city scale, not resulting in an undisciplined “Frankenstein” city, is valid, indicating a paramount will, expressing an utilitarian mastering of the natural and manpower, psychic accommodation to the harsh diving right and ritual system. Functional areas are separated and linked by main axes, like longitudinal and transverse intersecting roads, which are the fundamental backbone. Gated blocks, including residential communities “lifang”— homogeneous vernacular cluster wards and official function areas filled in plot divisions. The whole urban space was the result of social regulation. Every built element together is part of this relationship. Architectural and urban semantics embodies the cohabitation of cultural and ethic aspects, political organization and techniques on one hand, and the existing context to be reinterpreted and rebuilt on the other. Relationship-oriented intervention tries to complete the structure and frame.

At a tissue scale, a functional area with evident feature actualizes elements' connection. Various palaces and yards are organized by an axis and serve for the “order” form given by the Palace area. Aristocratic area and official area contains vital palaces with gardens under axis, indicating pecking grade order. Residential area and civic areas are in a neat site with lowest-level building type. Every group has a series of yards affiliated to buildings. Space incorporates various building types embodying the social order and “fengshui”<sup>317</sup> principles. An invisible force performs into the space connections. At medium scale, the city uses the relationship to keep space integration and feature.

<sup>317</sup> Fengshui (风水) is a Chinese philosophical system of harmonizing the human existence with the surrounding environment. The Feng Shui practice discusses architecture in metaphoric terms of “invisible forces” that bind the Universe, Earth, and man together.



At block scale, building groups were arranged in a walled block, enclosed by lanes to higher level ones. Social ritual arranged built elements in a certain way: buildings were allocated in a horizontal and vertical way around yards and gardens. Soft space affiliated to solid space embodies the space connection into axis, corridor, viewpoints and nodes. In a construction logic the soft space is a necessity. It cooperates with the solid. Space relationship keeps persistent, which is the embodiment of Chinese stressing “changeability and inheritability”. At block scale, latter interventions following affiliations, on the basis of soft space relationship, can represent homogenous space. An exact relationship requires precise length, height, site and ratio. They are main feature container in historic centers.

At building scale, buildings are not isolated with their affiliated space. In Chinese construction logic, types includes given form buildings and their affiliated yards, as a basic unit. Soft space has a symbiotic relation with the solid buildings. Main building and accessory buildings with yards form a unit, which incorporate a structure with semi-public, semi-private and private various spaces. As a medium from the private to the public, soft space forms stratification performs the social order. As related to micro-level elements, the affiliation keeps unity of basic space form and feature.

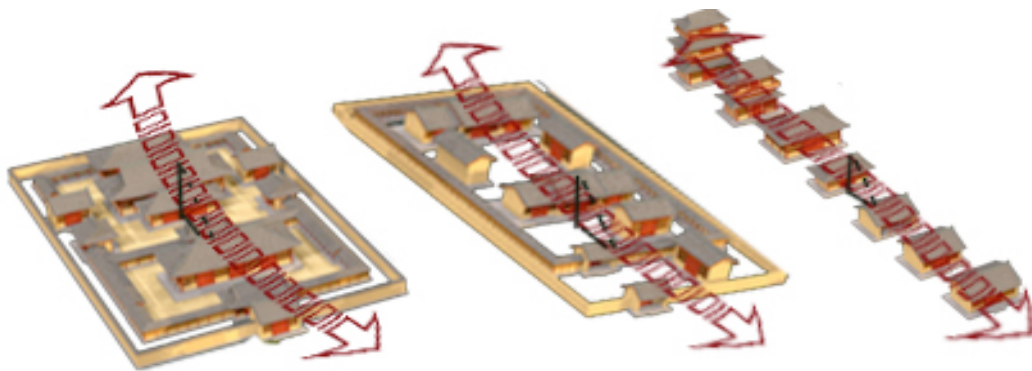


Figure 4-8: axis and various order embodies in yards forming and buildings organization

Affiliations between soft space and solid space of Chinese historic center at various levels express the articulation of construction logic. The social ritual, symbolic function and Confucius’ laws play a chief role in elements allocation and organization, leading to integrated and homogenous space. This “immaterial thing” can be interpreted as a derivation for space reinterpretation and representation. It provides a new perspective in the conservation method based on affiliation-oriented intervention. Following the affiliation, the stable space relationship is the core for the space reorganization because the “soft space” triggers the whole fabric representation.

Soft space plays an essential role in affiliation-oriented intervention. Firstly, it has a position equal to the solid space. Secondly, during space transformation, it is not easy to destroy, and it lasts longer than solid ones<sup>318</sup>. Even when solid space is deteriorated and

<sup>318</sup> Zhou Lan, Dong Wei. *Nanjing historic cultural space network study*. (a special topic of Nanjing Historic Culture City Conservation Plan), Report. Nanjing Planning Bureau, Southeast University, 2005.01.

disappeared, soft space stays comparatively stable and consistent. It is easy to fix its original image by archaeology and historic documents. The soft space is a subject and a reference for fulfilling prior space relationship. Then we can fix the bulk, location, height, ratio and colors of the solid building.

#### 4.1.3 Application of affiliation-oriented intervention case in China

Taking Xi'an Daming Palace conservation plan as an example, the whole Palace, built in Tang Dynasty left only the ruins. Exact site of every element, such as palaces, courts, walls, lakes and gates were evacuated. If just keeping the ruins as they were, we could not imagine how they were like but rammed status, and the affiliation is wholly disappeared. By study of historic description in literature, and analysis of social grade of each element, we can deduce every solid space image on the basis of its yards' information. In the plan, firstly, all the "open space"<sup>319</sup> were identified by their boundary and size. Then main axis, secondary axis, and corridors were fixed. Thirdly buildings around yards and garden were represented in the same type, height and form but with apparent differences.

Some use ghost or special structure with exact dimensions according to the Tang construction logic; some use modern material but in a grey color, and some use brunch to show their layouts. In this way, all the space connections were represented. We can learn the exact site feeling and image when in various yards, see figure 4-9, 4-10320. Solid space and soft space fulfill the space relationship and layout in accordance with historic documents. In this way it can show the precise feature.

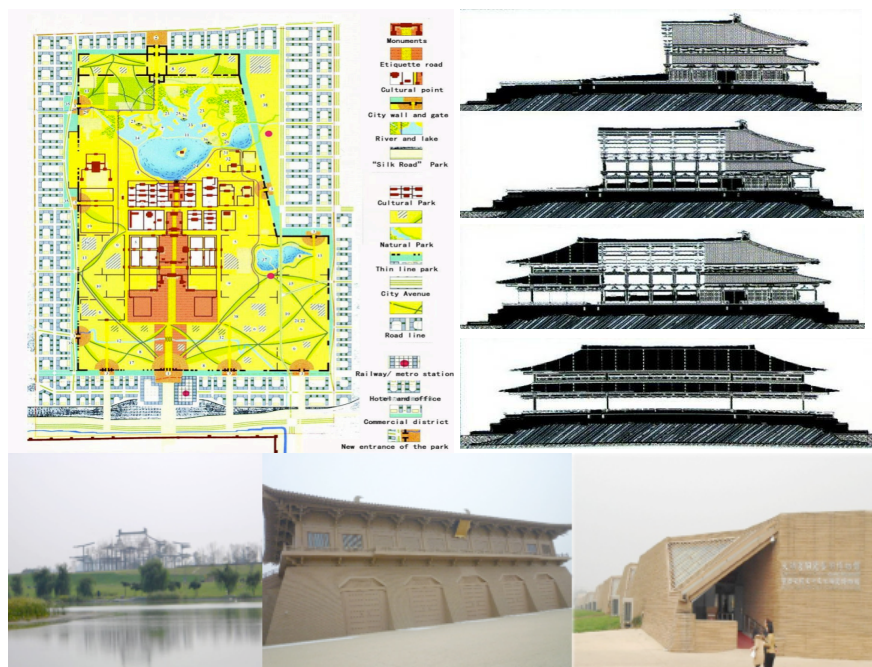


Figure 4-9: top-left, the conservation plan in Daming Palace; top-right, palaces intervention ways in exact dimensions and types. Bottom, the real image of interventions.

<sup>319</sup> Here is no exact word to use, as the courtyard is not open for the public, they are just accessory to palaces.

<sup>320</sup> Liu Kecheng, *Xi'an Daming Palace National Site Conservation Area and Site Park Master Plan*. Culture Heritage Conservation Intervention, 2011.01.



Figure 4-10: top-left, the site of Daming Palace; top-right, the proposal of Japanese professionals, keep it like a “ruins” zoo; bottom, the applied rebuilding proposal

With the alteration of both the intrinsic properties of the form and the extrinsic circumstances of participation, the experience has been converted into a pale and impoverished reflection of its original quality, just as J. Fitch said<sup>321</sup>. Original immaterial connections which are embodiment of social ritual and governance can lead to feasible restoration and conservation. Immaterial social relationship can be a hint rather than a result to lead to space representation. Affiliation-oriented approach cares about the outer space relationship representation. It acknowledges the change of buildings but try to represent original space image. The affiliation-oriented intervention can be applied into all levels of conservation, merged with typo-morphology methods, see figure 4-11.

<sup>321</sup> Fitch J. M., *Historic conservation, curatorial management of the built world*. McGraw-Hill,1982, p.5.

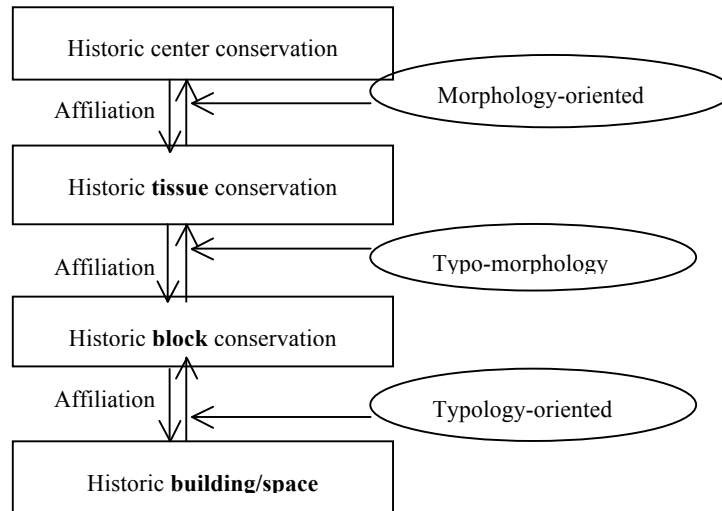


Figure 4-11: the affiliation-oriented intervention

#### 4.1.4 Brief conclusion

The concept of affiliation-oriented intervention serves as a focus for the orientation of conservation thought. It stems from the Oriental philosophy emphasis on “connection” and as an embodiment of it. Against the background of great destruction of solid space, while soft space keeps steady, the affiliation can provide basic principles for precise space form allocation. From a social ritual and feudal governance perspectives, using soft space as a platform, it aims at maintain, restore and conserve the space relationship.

As a supplement to solid-space-oriented intervention modes, the affiliation-oriented intervention is not a pure restoration or rebuilding. The first aim is to keep the exact relationship laying under the complete form while following its construction philosophy. Various space connections can be represented by innovative solid space types under existing immaterial logics. Its second aim is to make live an elaboration of traditional space pattern in Chinese logics. We can intuitionistic feel the solid space under what principles. This way does not bring to hurt to the authenticity of the ruins but provides a live function for it with evident differences. A study of our ethic behaviors and historic documents should be brought with more reflection on the balance between modernity and tradition.

#### 4.2 Procedure redesign of Chinese conservation system

Besides technical intervention ways, conservation “procedure justice” is more important, especially in Chinese authoritarian governance system. The great loss of historic built environment shows the great defects of the current Chinese conservation governance and management system. In this section, “**procedure justice**”<sup>322</sup> idea is introduced to optimize the extant conservation procedures to carry out a process of redesign. In public policies making, every actor should deal with equal chance in the social and economic

<sup>322</sup> Procedural justice is the idea of fairness in the processes that resolve disputes and allocate resources. It is the basic principles applied in the administration of justice and legal proceedings, and also into illegal contexts to resolve conflict or divide benefits or burdens. It concerns the fairness and the transparency of the processes by which decisions are made. See, Rawls J., *A Theory of Justice*. Harvard University, 1971.

competition.

With regard to historic conservation, there are three basic parts to be considered: technical intervention models, legislation and standard, and governance system. There is a need of “Correcting Concepts (正名, zhengming) which is a necessity in Chinese Confucianism knowledge improving. “Correcting Concepts” has two aspects: the first is to redefine the terminology in various laws and regulations; the second part is to confirm the various interventions modes. Technical intervention tools have been discussed in section 4.1. Furthermore there is a need to establish cases database, following the western “Stare Decisis” way, setting references to prevent deviating methods. Especially with regards to legislation, punishments need to be more strict and harsh. It will be discussed in the procedure redesign.

Among these three parts, the most important is the prior two application mechanisms. Scientific and practical governance organization is the support for aims. The governance malpractice definitely leads to disaster, like what happen in Datong. In the name of conservation, great part of the authentic context and historic elements are being destroyed and it continues today.<sup>323</sup> On the base of the current conservation governance, there emerge the following three aspects to improve.

#### **4.2.1 conservation system deepening -- from “city-wide” to “center-wide”**

The first aspect of conservation system is associated with its subjects. HCC should move from a rude honorary title to a concrete concept with substantiated contents. Mechanic hierarchy identified subjects should solidify from extensive “city-wide” to intensive “center-wide” built environment. On one hand, the conservation policy drivers’ should draw back from general but helpless “city-wide” to a practical “center-wide” one. On the other, conservation subjects should expand from a just generic identification of the operational field to the all-standing elements in historic center area.

“Historic center”<sup>324</sup> conception should be erected by extending the planning insight from vital nodes and selected buildings to all built environment. Hence, the hierarchy of conservation subjects should pass from a mechanical HCC–HCD–HB (Center- district-building) to a comprehensive and “all-involved” one, see figure 4-12. Current Chinese top-down HCC refers to the whole city superficially, actually dealing with just “identified” elements. Historic center refers to historic cites’ walled area, historic towns “old part” and whole historic villages too.

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<sup>323</sup> Datong, is a very important historic city. But in last few years, its mayor, Geng Yanbo, who is very diligent and profound dedication. Under his order, the whole city carries out “conservation and rehabilitation project”. In the name of conservation, large scale of historic houses were demolished, while the wall was fake. It bring catastrophe to historic beings. Every step he implemented is lawful as the council approved. So we can see the conservation procedure cannot prevent such random development substitute real conservation.

<sup>324</sup> “Historic Center” is borrowed from Italian conservation system. Several Italian historic city centers were designated as world heritage by UNESCO, like those of Florence (1982), Naples (1995), Rome, (1980), San Gimignano (1990), Siena (1995), Pienza (1996), Urbino (1998). See <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/IT/>. Until now, Chinese conservation approach accounts only a part of its historical territory and built area, but it still hold unpractical “city-wide” conservation system, even in some historic centres having the potential to become a World Heritages, like Jingzhou, Pingyao etc.

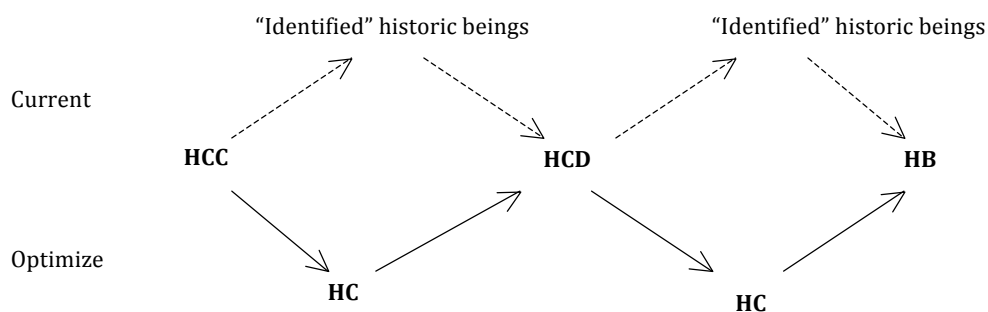


Figure 4-12: Optimizing the insight of historic centers conservation approach

As it is the fundamental modification, let's give a more detailed explanation. According to the official definition, only a city including at least 2 HCDs, each of which with more than 1km<sup>2</sup>, can be designated with HCC title. Literately, historic areas account various in different cities, from only 10% to maximum 40%<sup>325</sup> of the whole constructed areas. It is so ridiculous that most alienated modern fabrics are under historic title. There are no special guides for other "unselected" districts under the conservation plan; furthermore these unhistorical areas bring out negative influences to the adjacent historic ones.

The conflict between the title historical designated and non designated buildings lead to confusion between redevelopment and conservation, and give an excuse for promoters to ignore the historical aspects. Like a griddle, but with too much leaks and holes, it sacrifices more than it saves. So, in order to avoid such mistakes, the conservation areas should have fixed boundary, not as whole broad city area but limited areas with thoroughgoing elements. There are a vital historic center and several scattered centers, including former walled areas and their buffer area, the outer districts or areas or villages as scattered centers.

Every building, plot, block, tissue and district in historic center should be studied and analyzed. According to status of built elements, it is necessary to designate each element exact type. The Subject types of historic center include **historic block**, district, **semi—historic block** district, **semi-modern block** district and **modern block** district. The designation process should be: if historic buildings and related elements accounts for more than 40% of the whole, it can be designated as historic block district; if it takes from 20% to 40% plus more than 20% traditional buildings, it can be named as semi-historic district; If there are less 20% historic buildings or more than 40% traditional buildings, it can be officially acknowledged as semi-modern district; while if there are less than 10% historic elements, it is modern districts, see figure 4-13.

This is a way to apply a typological reading on account of a quantitative way. By this way, all the elements in the historic center are studied to know their values within the area. The types' attribution gives a clear criterion for the evaluation, more objective than the

<sup>325</sup> This number is calculated on the basis of every city's historic districts area/ whole historic center area \*100%.

honorary official designation. A flexible designation process plus bonus-penalty process would provide specific guide for their results.

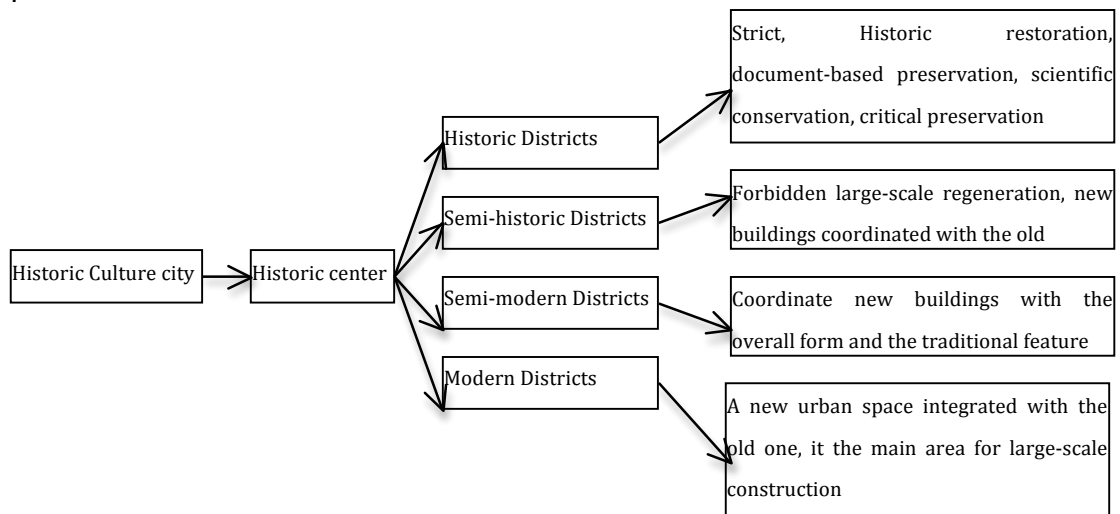


Figure 4-13: Urban types in historic center and their intervention principles

More in detail, it is possible to propose intervention strategies aggregations on the basis of urban types. In historic areas (block, plot, district), conservation methods are strictly applied into historic districts, forbidding any demolition and destruction. Each building, plot or block is the basic unit for intervention, applying “historic restoration”, “document-based preservation” or “scientific conservation” methods.

Semi-historic districts aim to “transform” the existing into historic one, creating comprehensive historic feature prevalence. Historic or traditional building (block, plot, district) follows the same policies as the historic ones. Interventions are directed to prevent any large-scale demolition. Any construction is not allowed to change extant status quo without a reference to a specific historic document. In semi-modern areas, interventions serve to maintain the overall structure, context, and critical feature. All the new buildings aim to contribute to form a harmonic feature rather than an antagonistic isolation. In modern area, intervention should take consideration of city’s pattern and structure, preventing negative influence on historic areas.

Accompany with subjects change from abstract “city-wide” to concrete “center-wide”, from extensive “structure-oriented” to intensive “fabric oriented”, conservation becomes more strict and feasible. More important, conservation is not contradicting the extant system, the HCC, HCB, HB and their coordinated areas, and is able to provide further more guides for their physical updating. The method of reading the “Historic center + types subjects” composition can close the present hasty practices focusing on an integrated perspective rather than an abstract and mechanic one..

#### 4.2.1.1 New City system-historic center, quasi-historic center, modern city center

On the basis of a full-scale center, historic urban types expand from identified ones to the whole historic built environment. On account of the criteria of identification, every historic

component can be categorized into the following types: historic center, quasi-historic center, and modern city center. There is a basic strategy: historic center should prevent degenerating to quasi-historic center, and quasi-historic center should avoid degenerating to modern city center.

There are overall strategies for Historic center. On one hand the city should encourage to develop suburb area and to establish multi-center space system, in order to abate the development stress. On the other hand, using the development benefit (2% of the whole land earn of every year) could optimize the communication system, improve the public facilities, and invest in the regular maintenance of historic areas. Three space pattern types can be stressed: historic area should be implied the strict intervention methods; semi-historic center aims to maintain the domain feature and elements. Large-scale construction only can be applied in the modern center.

In each type center, historic districts and quasi-historic should be empowered the priority in the construction. Now the government has enough public resource in conservation. As a kind of real estate investment, one of the third main factor in Chinese economic, it can contribute the economic growth.

#### 4.2.1.2 Historic area conservation – buffer area, coordinated area

In Chinese current conservation system, buffer area and coordinated area are required to identify the context to be protected. Therefore, there is no special regulation for these two areas of intervention, but only empty concepts. Actually, this distinction is without consequence. Even if there is no buffer area and coordinated area in Italy, we can see that the built environment can be conserved as well.

Anyway, aiming to protect the historic beings in an integral perspective, buffer area and coordinated area can positively abate the close neighborhood influence. More importantly on the way of develop the historic area in a conservative way, the buffer area and coordinated area can play an important function for the creation of integrated facilities and infrastructures, giving a social and economic positive contribution to make historic area more vital.

#### 4.2.2 A governance reorganization based on a “Procedural Justice”

The actuality proves that present abstract mechanism of conservation planning produces serious dysfunctions. Along with Chinese transition from the backward feudal to modernity, “substantive” justice stressing on results rather than on process becomes prevalent. Utilitarianism always aims at results, and we have not make perception of our defects in mechanism per se. The raw procedure, usually initially using “temporary regulation”<sup>326</sup> is always an immature governance mode, and often leads to frustrating effects. Though we hold “practice is the sole criterion for testing truth”, but the reflection is always tardy in

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<sup>326</sup> See the legislation part in section 2 of chapter 1. We find there are numerous temporary regulations performing for half a century without a substantial improvement. The contemporary governance setting always follows administrative power distribution but does not serve for justice distribution.



“going the river with touching stone” course. Chinese governance performs impetuously preferring rapid and provisional way but it lacks of reflection of the operational setting. Because of lack of reflection the administrative power distribution fail in serving for justice distribution. In such a raw management there are four main defects: no fixed limits to control the side effect in empowering leaders and policy makers; powerful construction departments face to weak culture departments; historic properties having minor right and weight than the modern one; public resources, especially the private resource are restrained.

In such an authoritarian society, every actor is supremely skilled at exploiting any loopholes in laws and regulations. Nowadays, it is the time for us to review the procedure to mend the negative results.

“Process before results”. The rightness of procedure is the only way to evaluate whether public policy implementation is successful or not. The procedural justice<sup>327</sup> can provide an equal background for each actor to negotiate and communicate. In this course, any actor can be independent, responsible and rational along with the administrative body to form the judge. The unequal and irrational can be corrected through a duty and right distribution design. Procedural justice can guarantee the equality and transparency, inasmuch as justice must not only be done, but must consist also on how to handle with, to know what point to reach. With regard to conservation planning, there is a need to introduce a procedural justice into this typical authoritarian mechanism to perform a sensible and realistic conservation governance.

Procedural justice addresses a procedural design. Once introduced into conservation management, we can improve our existing conservation administration way to gain historic conservation justice. Procedure justice helps weak historic built environment to gain an equal position. With regards to the four defects above discussed, procedural design can set across-the-board control, which can prevent the dictatorial decisions<sup>328</sup>; it can constraint the rough operations of construction department, and highlight a supervision role of culture department; then it can give a useful background to achieve a balance between public resource and private resource, encouraging private resource to enter into the playground, preventing space gentrification and enhancing public supervision.

The procedural approach includes three main parts: players’ role,

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<sup>327</sup> See Galligan D., *Procedure*. Dartmouth Publishing C. Ltd, 1992. And Pincoffs E., “*Due Process, fraternity, and a Kantian Injunction*”, in Pennock J. and Chapman J. (ed.), *Due Process*, Nomos 18. New York Univ. Press, 1977. Lucas J., *On Justice*. Oxford Univ. Press, 1980. Summers R., “*Evaluating and Improving Legal Process--A Plea For ‘Process Values’*” in *Cornell Law Review*, Vol. 60, Nov. 1974, No. 1. Rawls J., *A Theory of Justice*. V Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971.

<sup>328</sup> Though new government has been set for almost 70 years, Chinese administration has the intrinsic feature “rule of man”. Mechanism entrusts absolute power to officers, by which higher officers’ orders are more important than legislation, council decisions and public opinions. In this typical authoritarian society, any western experience should be applied in a feasible way— the methodology rather than the method, suiting for its context. What we do is to challenge someone with his own weapon, using all-standing step setting to fix every boundary for each step. The given steps and stated boundary, can make good use of the powerful resource, while help check abuses.

professionalism-oriented role and integrated implementation, see figure 4-14. The following points tries to explain its main function.

**A - Education step.** A fundamental work to carry out, is a training work about historic values and intervention ways in both schools and jobs. Against the prevalent background based on modern architecture and functionalism, student/planners are lacking of knowledge and skills to treat with historic beings. The shortage of respect to heritage and misinterpretation of historic theories is common in planners. Owing to education, correct concepts, various layers values and respect to heritage should be prompted in every conservation participant, especial in construction players. The popularization of respect of heritage, along with a critical understanding of present city is a needful change that could transform the prevalent destruction model to a conservative one. Furthermore the value of heritage should be altered from only “economic” to a multi-factors value. All the planners without related certification should be forbidden to compile conservation plan and design historic related issues.

**B - Authentication step.** Cultural Department is the only department empowered to evaluate and designate every built element in historic center. Hence, historic center has a fixed boundary, while every building/plot/block should be designated as fixed types at master plan level. Once any elements are in the designation, it has a two years’ priority, forbidding any destruction and intervention. Then culture department gives basic intervention principles, see figure 4-13. Principles will be performed in an official Regulatory Plan<sup>329</sup>, embodying some fixed criteria. Some more “stare decisions” should be introduced as references in criteria setting.

Culture department has the power to propose some conservation priority elements in every project. Consequently, the Regulatory Plan, in charge by the Construction Department gives special criteria and policy. Professionals and Experts Committee, which is nominated by the council, is responsible for public budget distribution, technical guide, criteria evaluation and plan publicity. The Committee members should have qualification in conservation, should involve culture department represents, construction department presents, university professors. Furthermore they can give a veto with one vote anonymously or publicly based on their professional responsibility, to prevent unreasonable decisions. Every year, 1% of each city’s GDP should be compulsorily invested into historic conservation work.

**C - Plan compiling step.** On the base of the official designation, the Construction Department is entrusted to compile the conservation plan and to carry it out. It compiles the plan following the fixed intervention principles, solidifying the criteria in the Regulatory

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<sup>329</sup> Regulatory Plan is an official plan layer in Chinese urban planning system, low-ordered than the Master Plan, higher than the Detailed Plan. It gives fixed construction criteria on every plot, block and districts. Criteria include aspects as mass, density, height, length, colour and etc. The Regulatory plan always aims to develop but has not special consideration on the conservation. For example, it gives the fixed construction criteria, under which the Construction Department can replace an original building by a new or destroy some fundamental feature.

Plan, and fixing certain intervention modes according to status quo. A stare decisions databank is the reference for their compiling and implementation.

**D - Implementation step.** Public budget holds the main role in conservation, furthermore it is open for the market capital and encourage community's private investment. The whole implementation is executed by qualified bodes, chosen in bid way. The whole performance is supervised by a Public Committee, who has the right of veto with one vote. The members of Public Committee contain representatives of Culture department, Construction department, Council, local Community, NGOs, planners, volunteers and businessmen. More important, historic center has a great deal of economic value which will be sacrificed to the public in conservation. It will be compensated in areas outer historic center, which can be embodied in Regulatory Plan.

**E - Assessing step.** The Public Committee carries out evaluation on whether the procedure violates the basic principles/criteria, assessing results in a quantitative way. They will give their judgment on authenticity and intervention tools application. Every member of the Committee has the exercise a veto with only one vote on all projects anonymously.

**F - Bonus-penalty step.** A true conservation plan should have a specific bonus-penalty content. Compared to weak penalties in various laws, public committee should pass stricter and clearer ones. Any degeneration, such as the ratio decrease, authenticity loose will give punishment to the main leader of the government. 200%-300% of the whole project investment is attainable. Moreover, the bonus has to play a positive way. It can encourage ambition of local inhabitants to save their home, inspire volunteer to safeguard the principles, support professions to create innovate plan.

#### **4.2.3 Brief conclusion**

To sum up, the conservation procedure redesign has three parts, see figure 4-14:

- 5C-role of players;
- TPP of professional-oriented responsibility division;
- IPIAB, the five embodiment steps.

Every player has a fixed responsibility and a power boundary. The professional-oriented source distribution aims at establish a technocracy background, as an antidote to the side effects brought by authoritarian governance. Facing to authoritarian governance, **technocracy** (or the public technical-board-oriented approach) claims for experts should govern their field totally appears as a reasonable way. Some technicians who are actively involved in the heritage saving can play a concrete role rather than officers. The duty distribution setting prevents any willful "rule of man". The five embodiment steps regulate a forthright process guaranteeing the success of technocracy. In all conservation policy steps, procedural justice should be implied.

Besides these three parts of the planning process optimizing, the most important thing is to launch dialectic recognition of the various layers of values of heritage as a precondition for any further policy organization and implementation.

New central Communist Party General Secretary Xi called on the respect for the “Old City” as a container of the ethic image and monument for nostalgia. It is the right inception to disseminate the scientific conservation practice.

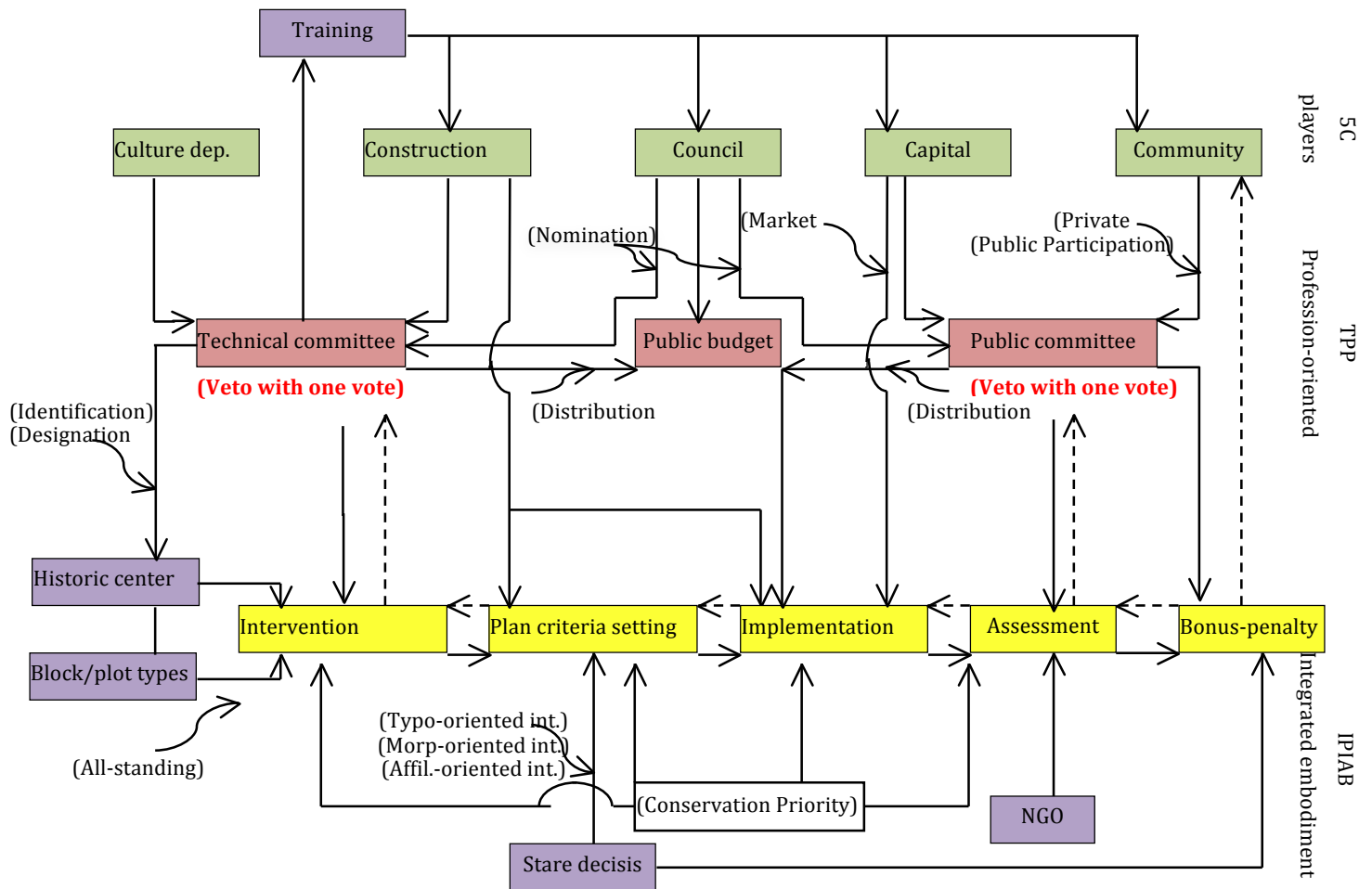


Figure 4-14: Improving the present Chinese governance model of conservation planning with some strategic innovations

## **Epilogue and expectation**

## Epilogue and expectation

During my three years' Ph.D study, what are occurring in China almost make me have an apocalyptic view of historic built environment conservation. A great many of precious historic heritage are experiencing disappearance by development projects, disasters, artificial "restoration" and other reasons. I can list a small of recent events: Dukezong historic center in Yunnan were fired on 11/1/2014; Lijiang experienced a fire on 12/03/2013; part of Fenghuang historic center was lost in a fire hazard on 11/03/2013; a historic building was burnt in Ningbo Nantang on 13/12/2013, then in the name of conservation, the whole district were shattered for "preventing fire disaster"; a Qing Dynasty's residence building were torn down on 08/01/2014; Ningbo Ling Bridge was wrecked in its "conservation"; furthermore Xi'an plans to invest ¥ 38 billion to "represent" E'pang Palace; Shanxi Qishan invested ¥ 2.8 billion for a "Zhou Dynasty Culture District" in the name of conservation; half of Shuzhou historic center have been replaced since 2011; Datong historic center have been replaced completely under his mayor's "conservation"; Beijing Diji District was completely substituted in the name of "dilapidated and conservation" plan since 2005, see figure 5-1.

The prevalent phenomenon of aberration in conservation testify that historic conservation stay at initial level and in a series of dilemmas. When I propose these cases, I feel pained and helpless.

All these disasters are occurring when we call for "maintaining our ethic treasure". Ridiculously, in such an authoritarian society, the top leader call for a conservation in Zhengding, which draws great attention from all levels of leaders. The plan comes out immediately, but once again, it becomes a development plan. Chinese people can gain great success in industrialization and modernity but they aren't able to save their historic treasures.



Figure 5-1: the transformation of Daji District in Beijing. Left is 2002 image, and right is 2013 one

## 1 Some attainments

I think there are three main attainments in this study. The first is the work of comparison of main aspects and related issues between Italian and Chinese historic conservation system. An all-inclusive overview of evolution of conservation offers the possibility to contextualize our original initiatives. Italy's successful attempts suggest Chinese to raising

public awareness for cultural heritage protection and allocation resources in an effective way. Owing to the comparative perspective, misinterpretation of conservation theories and aberrant practices are brought to light. It discloses the bad practices, the lack deprivation of effective legislation, the need of active participants and useful technical tools. It tries to expand the conservation subject from of the few “identified” historic elements to an integrated historic built environment.

The second progress is to carry out a comprehensive study of scientific intervention modes, like the typo-oriented and the morphology-oriented intervention mode. Furthermore, it advances a way which gives an eye to Oriental context: the affiliation-oriented intervention mode, i.e. a way based on Chinese space construction logic. If well worked out, it could be an innovative approach in space intervention which can be provide a platform for leading western conservation methods into “planned-whole” connections.

Last but most important, the procedural justice’s support to conservation governance, as a procedure redesigning a theoretical frame for scientific management. A procedure that is more important from the methodology level than just for a single case, because it can change the conservation process from only a reactive system to a preventive regulation.

With regards to defects of my study, firstly, the English expression is too poor to express hundred-percent ideas. Then the redeployment of extant historic conservation system is a theoretical model, with none practical supervision. Only social practice can be the criterion of truth. Feasible quantified measurement criteria have not been studied into this model. The decision model is too rough to imply, which should be discussed further.

## **2 Expectations**

In my future studies I want to strongly introduce a more deep interpretation of technical tools and successful experience into Chinese practice. Then in view of my calling for, the idea of Chinese “center-wide” conservation deserved to be established as soon as possible. More important, I want to carry out this theoretical model into some cities to check it and optimizing it<sup>330</sup>.

What I have pointed out about the experience in Western society cannot be applied directly in Chinese world. It has been proved in the last 30 years that some theories were not suitable for Oriental context or there was some shortage of theory. Actually the present status quo is more complicated than ever in Chinese urbanization. The failure of our conservation system reminds us that the methodology is more important than the experience per se. It's ever better to teach fishing than to offer fish. What we have to do in the future is to erect a feasible and effective Chinese conservation system, though the time is limited.

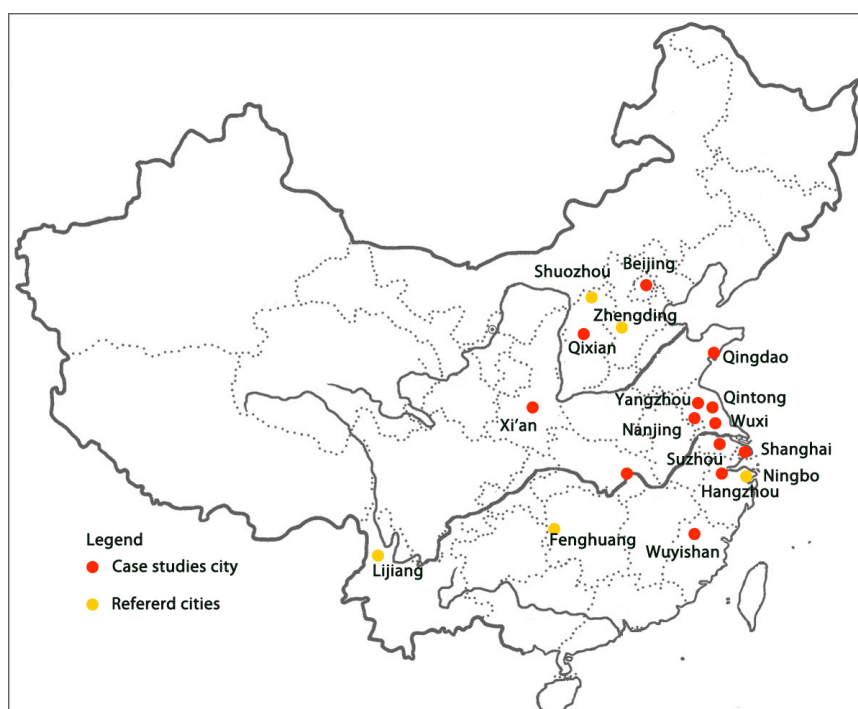
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<sup>330</sup> In the panel discussion with the Prime minister Li Keqiang on 19, Jan. 2014, Feng Jicai advised to carry out superstructure design to protect our ethic traditional culture. See [news.sohu.com/20140119/n393760786.shtml](http://news.sohu.com/20140119/n393760786.shtml).

## Abbreviation

AHC	abb.	Australian Heritage Commission
ANCSA	abb.	Associazione Nazionale Centri Storico-artistici
CER	abb.	Comitato per l'Edilizia Residenziale
CS	abb.	Centri Storico, Historic Center
GDP	abb.	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	abb.	Geographic Information System
HB	abb.	Historic Building
HC	abb.	Historic Center
HCC	abb.	Historic Culture City
HCD	abb.	Historic Culture District
ICOMOS	abb.	International Council of Monuments and Sites
IFHTP	abb.	International Federation for Housing and Town Planning
INU	abb.	Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica
NGO	abb.	Non-government organization
PdF	abb.	Programma di Fabbricazione
PEEP	abb.	Piano di Edilizia Economica e Popolare,
PPCS	abb.	Piano particolareggiato centro storico
PRC	abb.	Peoples' Republic of China
PRG	abb.	Piano Regolatore Generale
PTC	abb.	Piano Territoriale di Coordinamento
RMB	abb.	Ren Min Bi. Chinese money unit
UNESCO	abb.	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## The site location of cases and referred cities





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