

2 Historically and Culturally Famous Cities (HCF Cities)

保护历史名城，创造美好人居¹

“Protect Historically Famous Cities, create beautiful houses”

- Wu Liangyong 吴良镛

2.1 Urban Heritage Conservation in China

The establishment of a system for the conservation of urban structures builds on a general awareness of the need to preserve cultural heritage. Traditionally, significant ancient objects in China such as artworks, calligraphy and bronzes were held in imperial or private collections while palaces, temples and architectural *ensembles*, which constitute important components of a city, belonged to the imperial court, religious orders or private owners.² First attempts to make heritage preservation a state undertaking were triggered by several factors at the beginning of the 20th century.

Primarily, increasing plundering of cultural relics by Western countries such as the sacking of the imperial palaces in Beijing after the defeat of the Boxer Uprising by the Allied Forces in 1900 and ancient tomb robberies by local warlords who sold their captured objects to non-Chinese, as well as Chinese collectors, alerted the public and Chinese authorities.³ As a consequence, the Qing government issued the *Measures for the Protection of Ancient Sites (Baocun guji tui-*

1 Wu, Liangyong 吴良镛 (Calligraphic work). In: Qiu, Baoxing 仇保兴 (2014): *Feng yu ru pan — lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu 30 nian* 风雨如磐——历史文化名城保护30年 [“Tumultuous wind and heavy rain” — 30 Years of Conservation in Historically and Culturally Famous Cities], p. [4].

2 Lai, Guolong; Demas, Martha; Agnew, Neville (2004): “Valuing the Past in China: The Seminal Influence of Liang Sicheng on Heritage Conservation”, p. 82.

3 Lai, Guolong (2016): “The emergence of ‘cultural heritage’ in modern China: a historical and legal perspective”, p. 56.

guang banfa zhangcheng 保存古迹推广办法章程) in 1909.⁴ Secondly, in the course of nation-building and modernization efforts, ancient objects and sites were declared “national cultural artifacts” under centralized state preservation.⁵

With the objective to expand its control of these objects and sites, the Beiyang Government ordered the survey and categorical registration of publicly and privately held cultural artifacts in 1916.⁶ Antiquities as defined by the regulations comprised: architecture, relics (graves, walls, ponds, springs, ancient scenic sites), stelae, stone and bronze inscriptions, porcelain, ancient plants, literary ephemera (copies of calligraphy in stone, maps, charts), weapons, clothing and ornaments, sculpture and ceremonial objects.⁷ In 1930, the Nanjing Government reinforced state control over ancient objects and sites and issued the “Preservation Regulations for Famous Sights, Ancient Sites, and Antiquities” (*Mingsheng guji guwu baocun tiaoli* 名胜古迹古物保存条例) as well as the “Antiquities Protection Law” (*Guwu baocunfa* 古物保存法), which have provided the basic framework for later legislation.⁸

At the same time a **conservation movement** focused on architectural heritage evolved, which was initiated by the former minister of internal affairs, Zhu Qiqian 朱启钤, and his foundation of the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture (*Zhongguo yingzao xueshe* 中国营造学社) in 1929. Despite this major focus on Chinese architecture, the society deliberately chose the term *yingzao* 营造 [to construct] as the name, which was preferred to *jianzhu* 建筑 [architecture] so as to include related research fields such as arts and crafts as well as intangible culture.⁹ Chinese scholarship traditionally distanced itself from “forms of practice” such as construction,¹⁰ which was not considered a high art as compared with painting and calligraphy.¹¹ In contrast, the work of the society primarily exceeded the textual study of historical records and building treatises, which was the only scholarly approach to architecture known in China at the time.¹²

4 Lai, Guolong (2016): “The emergence of ‘cultural heritage’ in modern China: a historical and legal perspective”, p. 50.

5 Carroll, Peter J. (2006): *Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou, 1895–1937*, p. 206.

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 206–207.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 286.

8 *Ibid.*, pp. 206–207.

9 Zhu, Guangya (2012): “China’s architectural heritage conservation movement”, p. 12.

10 Li, Shiqiao (2003): “Reconstituting Chinese Building Tradition: The Yingzao fashi in the Early Twentieth Century”, p. 472.

11 Lai, Guolong; Demas, Martha; Agnew, Neville (2004): “Valuing the Past in China: The Seminal Influence of Liang Sicheng on Heritage Conservation”, p. 83.

12 Lin, Wei-cheng (2011): “Preserving China: Liang Sicheng’s Survey Photos from the 1930s and 1940s”, p. 130.

Zhu initially sought a collaboration with Japanese researchers on Chinese architecture such as Itō Chūta 伊東忠太 and Sekino Tadashi 関野貞, who became founding members of the society. Both had conducted research trips to China since the beginning of the 20th century to prove the central role of Chinese (and, consequently, Japanese) architecture as representative Asian styles in architectural history.¹³ He further engaged in a scholarly exchange with Western researchers, among others, on scientific methods.¹⁴ While collaborations with Japanese researchers abruptly ended due to Japan's occupation of Manchuria in 1931, the society owed the introduction of extended scientific methods to the first generation of scholars who had trained in Western countries and Japan.

Liang Sicheng 梁思成 and his wife Lin Huiyin 林徽因 (1904–1955) returned to China from the University of Pennsylvania in 1928 and Liu Dunzhen 刘敦桢 studied architecture in Tokyo until 1922.¹⁵ Liang equally proceeded from official building treatises, particularly the Song dynasty building manual *Yingzao fashi* 营造法式,¹⁶ which had been rediscovered by Zhu and sent to him to the United States by his father, one of China's central political reformers, Liang Qichao 梁启超 (1873–1929). Then, in 1932, together with his wife and other members of the institute, he embarked on fieldwork trips to 137 counties in northern China and documented preserved buildings of various historical periods until the break-out of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937.¹⁷

Making use of their skills and experiences acquired during their study abroad (e.g. Liang was trained in the Beaux-Arts tradition),¹⁸ these pioneers of Chinese

13 Li, Shiqiao (2003): “Reconstituting Chinese Building Tradition: The *Yingzao fashi* in the Early Twentieth Century”, pp. 481–482.

14 Zhu, Guangya (2012): “China's architectural heritage conservation movement”, p. 12.

15 Li, Shiqiao (2003): “Reconstituting Chinese Building Tradition: The *Yingzao fashi* in the Early Twentieth Century”, p. 478.

16 The *Yingzao fashi* 营造法式 (Building Standards) is the oldest extant construction manual, which was compiled by Superintendent of State Buildings Li Jie 李诫 (1035–1110) in 1100 and published by the Song emperor three years later. The manual comprises units of measurement, design standards and construction principles as well as material data and information on decorative painting and coatings. See: Guo, Qinghua (1998): “*Yingzao fashi*: Twelfth-Century Chinese Building Manual”, p. 1.

17 Li, Shiqiao (2002): “Writing a Modern Chinese Architectural History: Liang Sicheng and Liang Qichao”, p. 35.

18 The Beaux-Arts education refers to methods of architectural composition originating from the French *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. These methods were taught at many U.S. universities at the beginning of the 20th century when about 50 Chinese students received scholarships to study in U.S. architectural programs. They were trained by famous architects such as Paul Philippe Cret with whom Liang Sicheng studied at the University of Pennsylvania. They then transplanted these educational techniques to

architecture made great contributions to architectural history and introduced “modern” conservation concepts to China.¹⁹ Liang was further involved in the earliest initiative for the conservation of Chinese urban heritage in the city of Beijing. After the foundation of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, a controversial debate arose on the location of the new capital. At the Beijing City Planning Conference, two major proposals were discussed: an old center plan and the West suburb plan by Liang Sicheng and Chen Zhanxiang 陈占祥 (1916–2001). The old center plan advocated an expansion in the historic city due to its function as an historic capital and the founding ceremony of the People’s Republic, which had been held in Tiananmen Square.²⁰ In contrast, the **Liang-Chen Proposal** was based on the idea to construct a new administrative center in the Western suburbs of Beijing, following planning theory (see fig. 2-1).

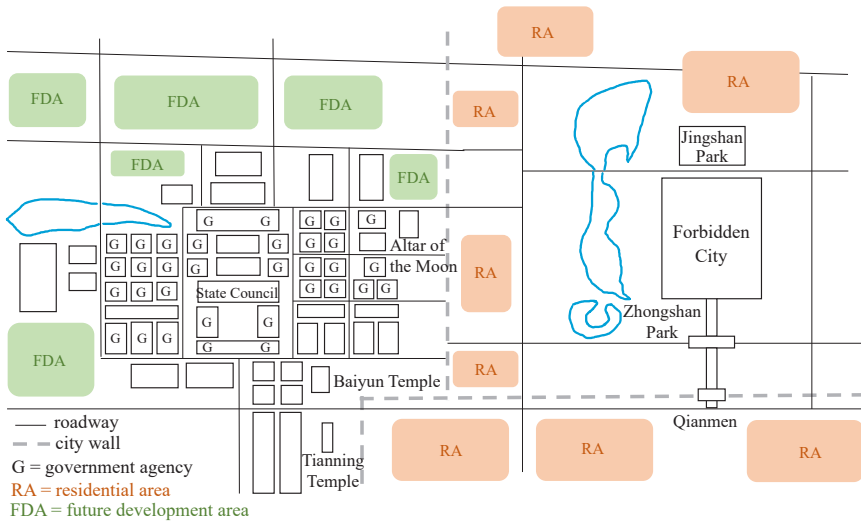


Figure 2-1. Liang-Chen Proposal.

Source: author’s draft. Information taken from: Wu, Liangyong (1999): *Rehabilitating the Old City of Beijing: A Project in the Ju’er Hutong Neighbourhood*, p. 21; originally in: *Liang Sicheng wenji* 梁思成文集 (Collected Papers of Liang Sicheng), 1986. Vol. 4. Beijing: Zhongguo jianzhu gongye chubanshe, n. pag.

China when they returned and established architectural schools in their home country. See: Cody, Jeffrey W. et al. (ed., 2011): *Chinese Architecture and the Beaux-Arts*.
19 Lai, Guolong; Demas, Martha; Agnew, Neville (2004): “Valuing the Past in China: The Seminal Influence of Liang Sicheng on Heritage Conservation”, p. 82.
20 Wu, Liangyong (1999): *Rehabilitating the Old City of Beijing: A Project in the Ju’er Hutong Neighbourhood*, p. 17.

Figure 2-1 shows the historic city with the Forbidden City in its center on the right and the new administrative center planned by Liang and Chen on the left. Their Suggestion for the Location of the Central People's Government Administrative Center (*Guanyu Zhongyang renmin zhengfu xingzheng zhongxin qu weizhi de jianyi* 关于中央人民政府行政中心区位置的建议) envisioned the arrangement of government buildings along a new central axis and the creation of closely related districts with varied functions. The main objectives to set up an administrative center to the west of the historic city were to prevent large-scale demolition and provide more spaces for future development.

The planning principles underlying the proposal derive from the *Theory of Organic Decentralization* advanced by Finnish city planning expert Eliel Saarinen (1873–1950). Liang had received a copy of *The City: Its Growth, Its Decay, Its Future*, an elaboration on this theory from his friend, the sinologist John K. Fairbank, and had met Saarinen in the United States in 1947.²¹ Equally, Chen Zhanxiang had learned about this theory from his supervisor Patrick Abercrombie (1879–1957) who worked on organic decentralization for the Planning of Greater London.²²

According to Saarinen, the dispersion of a city's population and land-use into surrounding areas in the course of urban growth needs to proceed organically in order to achieve "healthy" results. This process of organic decentralization aims at an organization of everyday activities such as living and working into functional concentrations and the subsequent decentralization of these groupings around the nucleus, while establishing adequate interrelations.²³ Alerted to problems caused by industrialization in Western cities such as overpopulation, traffic congestion and slum areas, Liang considered the theory as a solution to avoid such problems through decentralization of urban functions.²⁴

There were several reasons why the theory and design-based Liang-Chen Proposal was rejected in favor of locating the new capital in the historic center as advocated by Soviet advisors and planning experts drawing on experiences from Moscow. Primarily, it seemed much more economically feasible to make use of the existing building stock since resources were scarce and China had been greatly

21 Wang, Jun (2011): *Beijing Record: A Physical and Political History of Planning Modern Beijing*, p. 61.

22 Ibid., p. 60.

23 Saarinen, Eliel (1945): *The City: Its Growth, Its Decay, Its Future*, pp. 201, 204–205, 216–217.

24 Wang, Jun (2011): *Beijing Record: A Physical and Political History of Planning Modern Beijing*, pp. 60–61.

affected by war devastation.²⁵ Moreover, the Western suburb location was associated with negative historical events. During the occupation of Beijing in World War II, the Japanese had started to build a new urban center there and in the following Civil War, the General Command for the Suppression of Communists was set up at this site. Finally, the suggested peripheral location of the administrative center in the Western suburbs lacked the magnificence of the historic city.²⁶ Wu argues that this lack of “grandeur” in comparison to Tiananmen was a decisive weakness of the proposal and that the new city would have been more impressive with a longer north-south axis.²⁷

At the same time, the preoccupation of Liang and Chen with conservation matters becomes apparent in their argumentation to establish a new center. In their proposal, they state that an expansion of the historic city would require the demolition of more than 130,000 houses to accommodate the increasing population, and that the introduction of high-rise buildings would cause alterations to street patterns and damage to the townscape.²⁸ Moreover, their proposal included the preservation of Beijing’s city wall, which they justified with the historic and artistic value of the rebuilt Ming dynasty wall. They suggested digging openings in the wall when they would pose an obstacle for traffic and transform it into a park, enriching people’s lives with cultural heritage and natural sceneries to offer relief from work.²⁹

His advocacy for the preservation of the city wall shows Liang’s perception of the city as an entity. In an article from the magazine *Xin Guancha* 新观察 (New Observer) with the title “Beijing — An unmatched masterpiece of city planning” (Beijing — dushi jihua zhong de wubi jiezuo 北京 – 都市计划中的无比杰作), he expressed his view that the city’s value did not solely reside in individual structures (*gebie jianzhuwu* 个别建筑物) but also in the spatial order of its street network (*you zhixu de jiedao xitong* 有秩序的街道系统).³⁰ As a third aspect, he stressed the environment of cultural relic structures:

25 Wu, Liangyong (1999): *Rehabilitating the Old City of Beijing: A Project in the Ju’er Hutong Neighbourhood*, p. 18.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid., p. 19.

28 Ibid., p. 17.

29 Wang, Jun (2011): *Beijing Record: A Physical and Political History of Planning Modern Beijing*, pp. 134–136.

30 Liang, Sicheng; Lin, Zhu (ed., 2013): *Da zhuo zhi mei: Liang Sicheng zui mei de wenzi jianzhu* 大拙至美: 梁思成最美的文字建筑 [Outstanding beauty appears as great clumsiness: Liang Sicheng’s most beautiful “written architecture”], p. 159.

我们爱护文物建筑，不仅应该爱护个别的一殿，一堂，一楼，一塔，而且必须爱护它的周围整体和邻近的环境。³¹

“In taking care of cultural relic structures, we should not only be attentive to each individual palatial/temple structure, [single-story] hall, multi-story building or pagoda, but we have to take care of the entirety surrounding it and its adjacent environment.”

These ideas were far ahead of architectural and planning concepts in China and corresponded to conservation principles, as they were later codified in international documents such as the Venice Charter.³² Liang’s argument that the value of the ancient city of Beijing lies in three aspects, namely its old buildings, its spatial order and the environment of its cultural relics further laid the evaluation basis for the later concept of Historically and Culturally Famous Cities.³³

Liang’s opponents saw the city wall as an obstacle for urban development without practical utility and traffic hinderance, whereas its bricks could be used for new construction.³⁴ In the course of urban redevelopment, the historic city was adapted to growth needs and the city wall demolished by order of Mao Zedong who regarded the wall as a symbol of feudal order.³⁵ The debate on the establishment of the new capital and the preservation of the city wall show the tension between historic preservation and economic development, which characterizes the period until the 1980s.

Simultaneously with the formation of a Chinese architectural history, returning students who trained abroad introduced the research discipline of archaeology. While Liang’s approach to preserve a city in its entirety had been rejected, heritage conservation administrations were established on central and local levels in the period from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s and conservation was directed at archaeological sites and ancient architecture.³⁶ These individual sites and structures

31 Liang, Sicheng; Lin, Zhu (ed., 2013): *Da zhuo zhi mei: Liang Sicheng zui mei de wenzi jianzhu* 大拙至美：梁思成最美的文字建筑, p. 159.

32 Lai, Guolong; Demas, Martha; Agnew, Neville (2004): “Valuing the Past in China: The Seminal Influence of Liang Sicheng on Heritage Conservation”, p. 86.

33 Qiu, Baoxing 仇保兴 (2014): *Feng yu ru pan — lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu 30 nian* 风雨如磐——历史文化名城保护 30 年 [“Tumultuous wind and heavy rain” — 30 Years of Conservation in Historically and Culturally Famous Cities], p. 30.

34 Wang, Jun (2011): *Beijing Record: A Physical and Political History of Planning Modern Beijing*, pp. 137–141.

35 Bell, Daniel A.; de-Shalit, Avner (2011): *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*, p. 145.

36 Whitehand, J.W.R.; Gu, Kai (2007): “Urban Conservation in China: Historical development, current practice and morphological approach”, pp. 645–646.

later became basic components of urban conservation and their protection shows a growing awareness for conservation of cultural heritage.

A decisive step for the establishment of a national conservation system in China was the compilation of an **inventory of significant heritage structures**. In 1961, the State Council promulgated the Interim Regulations on the Protection and Management of Cultural Relics (*Wenwu baohu guanli zanxing tiaoli* 文物保护单位暂行条例) and the first batch of so-called “national key protected cultural relic entities” (*quanguo zhongdian wenwu baohu danwei* 全国重点文物保护单位).³⁷ Thereby, “national key protected cultural relic entities” designate officially protected heritage sites that are inscribed on a national level and constitute the highest level of officially protected sites (hereafter “officially protected entities” = *wenwu baohu danwei* 文物保护单位). This inventory includes six general heritage categories that form the basic framework for later heritage listings on different administrative levels: Revolutionary sites and revolutionary commemorative architecture (*geming yizhi ji geming jinian jianzhuwu* 革命遗址及革命纪念建筑物), stone cave temples (*shiku si* 石窟寺), ancient architectural structures and historically commemorative architecture (*gu jianzhu ji lishi jinian jianzhuwu* 古建筑及历史纪念建筑物), stone carvings (*shike* 石刻), ancient sites (*gu yizhi* 古遗址) and ancient tombs (*gu muzang* 古墓葬).

This inventory of national key protected cultural relic entities developed from two indices by Liang Sicheng dating back to 1945 and 1949, at the time of World War II. The purpose of these indices was to protect cultural heritage from war destruction. During the war, the first movement which engaged in the protection of heritage in war areas was formed in the U.S. by two civilian groups, the American Defense-Harvard Group and the American Council of Learned Societies.³⁸ In 1943, they established the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas, or the Roberts Commission, after its chairman Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts, and compiled a catalogue of historic monuments and artworks in public and private collections in Europe and the Far East.³⁹ One year later, in 1944, the Ministry of Education of the Chinese Nationalist Government established the Chinese Commission for the

37 Zheng, Jun (2014): “Comparison of Heritage Conservation Philosophies in China and Other Countries”, p. 51.

38 Roberts, Owen J.; American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas (1946): *Report of the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas*, p. 2.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Preservation of Cultural Objects in War Areas 战区文物保存委员会⁴⁰ with Liang Sicheng as vice-chairman.

His mission in this position was to compile a “list of monuments” in the Japanese-occupied area (*Zhanqu wenwu baocun weiyuanhui wenwu mulu* 战区文物保存委员会文物目录 “Chinese Commission for the Preservation of Cultural Objects in War Areas — List of Monuments”), which should be safeguarded in case of bomb attacks by the Allied Forces and marked on a military map in Chinese and English languages.⁴¹ This list became the first index with significant cultural relic structures, compiled for the Chinese Nationalist Government. The eight volumes comprise three categories: wooden architecture (*mu jianzhu* 木建筑), brick and stone pagodas (*zhuan shi ta* 砖石塔) and other brick and stone structures (*zhuan shi jianzhu* 砖石建筑).⁴²

The above-mentioned first batch of national key protected cultural relic entities is based on a second index entitled “Brief Index of Important National Cultural Relic Structures” (*Quanguo zhongyao wenwu jianzhu jianmu* 全国重要文物建筑简目).⁴³ In 1948, shortly before the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, the People’s Liberation Army similarly commissioned Liang to prepare an index of important national cultural relic structures.⁴⁴ This second index is based on on-site investigations of the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture as well as textual sources.⁴⁵ It comprises 465 structures listed under 22 provinces/cities divided into categories such as ancient architectural structures, stone cave temples, stone carvings and tombs.⁴⁶ The category of revolutionary sites and revolutionary commemorative architecture was later supplemented.⁴⁷

The 1945 list of monuments reveals Liang’s awareness of the value of modern architecture, namely the Church of the Saviour (Xishiku jiaotang 西什库教堂) in

40 Wang, Yunliang 王运良 (2012): “Liang Sicheng yu gu jianzhu baohu” 梁思成与古建筑保护 [Liang Sicheng and the protection of ancient architecture], pp. 11–12.

41 Lin, Zhu 林洙 (2000): “Liang Sicheng yu ‘Quanguo zhongyao jianzhu wenwu jianmu’” 梁思成与《全国重要建筑文物简目》 [Liang Sicheng and his “Brief Index of Important National Cultural Relic Structures”], p. 7.

42 Ibid., p. 8.

43 Wang, Jinghui 王景慧 (1994): “Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingcheng de baohu gainian” 中国历史文化名城的概念 [The Conservation Concept of Chinese Historically and Culturally Famous Cities], p. 12.

44 Lai, Guolong; Demas, Martha; Agnew, Neville (2004): “Valuing the Past in China: The Seminal Influence of Liang Sicheng on Heritage Conservation”, p. 86.

45 Lin, Zhu 林洙 (2000): “Liang Sicheng yu ‘Quanguo zhongyao jianzhu wenwu jianmu’” 梁思成与《全国重要建筑文物简目》, p. 10.

46 Wang, Yunliang 王运良 (2012): “Liang Sicheng yu gu jianzhu baohu” 梁思成与古建筑保护, p. 12.

47 Lin, Zhu 林洙 (2000): “Liang Sicheng yu ‘Quanguo zhongyao jianzhu wenwu jianmu’” 梁思成与《全国重要建筑文物简目》, p. 10.

Beijing, St. Ignatius Cathedral (Xujiahui tianzhutang 徐家汇天主堂) in Shanghai and the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum in Nanjing, which he had already included.⁴⁸ Another aspect found in both indices that has been maintained in the present conservation system is the division according to province and ranking. Liang ranked the structures in grade of importance, which he then marked with circles (0 to 4 circles) next to the name of a structure.⁴⁹ In the later-established national listing system, protected cultural relic structures are classified on different administrative levels (national, provincial and municipal).

Furthermore, the designation of structures as “**cultural relic entities**”⁵⁰ (*wenwu danwei* 文物单位) in the list shows his above-mentioned understanding of heritage not as limited to an individual, physical site but inclusive of its broader context. Liang understood these cultural relic structures as deriving value from their character as an entity (*quanti shang de jiazhi* 全体上的价值), which is expressed in the following remark:

就大多数的文物建筑而论，也都不仅是单座的建筑物，而往往是若干座合组而成的整体，为极可宝贵的艺术创造，故宫就是最显著的一个例子。⁵¹

“As for the majority of cultural relic structures, they are not solely individual structures, but usually are combined entities, [they] are extremely valuable artistic creations. The most remarkable example is the Forbidden City.”

The determination of “cultural relic entities” for protection and the primary creation of an inventory by Liang formed the basis for a gradual expansion of conservation efforts from individual structures to Historically and Culturally Famous Cities. But his integrated view of the city initially remained an exception and urban transformation after 1949 was primarily aimed at the construction of “new socialist cities” distinct from their historic form.⁵² Envisioning the conversion of “consumer cities” into “producer cities” in accordance with Soviet planning principles, industry was set up in urban centers⁵³ with a strong preference of economic development over historic preservation.

Concomitant with a socialist housing transformation policy aimed at the conversion of private into public housing and redistribution to multiple households

48 Lin, Zhu 林洙 (2000): “Liang Sicheng yu ‘Quanguo zhongyao jianzhu wenwu jianmu’” 梁思成与《全国重要建筑文物简目》，p. 12.

49 Ibid., pp. 8–9.

50 Translation after China Principles.

51 Liang, Sicheng; Lin, Zhu (ed., 2013): *Da zhuo zhi mei: Liang Sicheng zui mei de wenzi jianzhu* 大拙至美：梁思成最美的文字建筑, p. 159.

52 Whitehand, J.W.R.; Gu, Kai (2007): “Urban Conservation in China: Historical development, current practice and morphological approach”, p. 647.

53 Ibid.

launched by the government, the population in urban centers grew rapidly in the 1960s.⁵⁴ During the Cultural Revolution, historic preservation further reached a low point with large-scale destruction of cultural heritage by Red Guards as a result of the campaign to destroy the Four Olds (*po si jiu* 破四旧: *jiu fengsu* 旧风俗 “old customs”, *jiu wenhua* 旧文化 “old culture”, *jiu xiguan* 旧习惯 “old habits” and *jiu sixiang* 旧思想 “old thinking”). These political changes led to a period of stagnation for the development of China’s conservation system.

The Reform and Opening-Up in 1978 laid the basis for increasing real estate development, which brought conservation issues back to the forefront. Local governments of greater cities started to undertake urban regeneration in the form of large-scale redevelopment projects in order to reach planning goals.⁵⁵ These transformations of urban fabric, particularly the renewal of historic centers, strongly required a legal basis for the protection of cultural heritage.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the PRC therefore issued the Cultural Relics Protection Law (*Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法), and initiated the establishment of a national list for the protection of historic urban centers, the “Historically and Culturally Famous Cities” (*lishi wenhua mingcheng* 历史文化名城, hereafter HCF Cities). Shortly after, in 1985, China ratified the World Heritage Convention and joined the international conservation community. While the earliest inscribed sites from 1987 were the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, Peking Man Site at Zhoukoudian 周口店, Mount Taishan and the Mogao Caves, preserved urban centers were primarily inscribed in 1997 with the ancient towns of Pingyao 平遥 and Lijiang 丽江.⁵⁶

In the course of establishing an HCF City inventory, selected cities were obliged to prepare conservation plans and the government adopted a number of planning regulations such as the Drafting Requirements for Conservation Plans of Historically and Culturally Famous Cities from 1994. While conservation planning has already become an integral part of city management, Whitehand and Gu criticize that conservation methods are concentrated on conventional land-use planning as introduced by the Soviet Union, which proceeds from the assumption of a static city.⁵⁷

54 Whitehand, J.W.R.; Gu, Kai (2007): “Urban Conservation in China: Historical development, current practice and morphological approach”, p. 647.

55 Ye, Lin (2011): “Urban regeneration in China: Policy, development and issues”, p. 338.

56 “China: Properties inscribed on the World Heritage List”, UNESCO World Heritage Center, Online.

57 Whitehand, J.W.R.; Gu, Kai (2007): “Urban Conservation in China: Historical development, current practice and morphological approach”, pp. 649–650.

Moreover, when the Central Government carried out fiscal decentralization in the mid-1990s, local governments turned to the private sector and foreign investment to finance urban regeneration.⁵⁸ As a consequence, governments shifted their perspectives from alleviation of dilapidated housing as part of social welfare to fostering economic growth.⁵⁹ Therefore, they engaged in coalitions with private developers and foreign investors, which led to a commercialization of urban regeneration and the relocation of urban residents.⁶⁰ Due to economic considerations, real estate developers invested in large-scale redevelopment projects which caused the demolition of a great amount of historic built structures in Chinese cities.

More **dynamic and integrated approaches** to urban conservation have been pursued by Wu Liangyong 吴良镛, who carried out a development project according to ‘organic renewal’ in Beijing and WHITRAP (World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region 亚太地区世界遗产培训与研究中心) in Shanghai which tests, develops and promotes UNESCO’s Historic Urban Landscape approach (HUL). Wu Liangyong is an internationally renowned architect and professor of the Architecture Department at Qinghua University in Beijing, which he founded together with Liang Sicheng. He led the rehabilitation project of the Ju’er Hutong courtyard houses in the 1980s, which is regarded as an exemplary model for urban rehabilitation and was awarded the ARCASIA (Architects Regional Council Asia) Golden Prize in 1992 and the World Habitat Award in 1993.⁶¹

Wu argues for the concept of “integral architecture” and the “organic renewal” (*youji gengxin* 有机更新) of a city. These concepts show connections to the ideas and practical experiences of Yang Tingbao 杨廷宝, Liang Sicheng 梁思成 and Eliel Saarinen with whom he studied at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan.⁶² It proceeds from the assumption that the city is a living organism and that parts which continue to be useful to the city shall be maintained while those no longer suitable can be eliminated. Urban regeneration therefore is understood to be a process of gradual substitution.⁶³

58 Ye, Lin (2011): “Urban regeneration in China: Policy, development and issues”, p. 338.

59 He, Shenjing; Wu, Fulong (2009): “China’s Emerging Neoliberal Urbanism: Perspectives from Urban Redevelopment”, p. 290.

60 Ye, Lin (2011): “Urban regeneration in China: Policy, development and issues”, p. 338.

61 Xin, Ling (2012): “WU Liangyong: The Humanistic Architect of Our Time”, pp. 140–141.

62 Wu, Liangyong (2013): *Integrated Architecture*, p. 149.

63 Wu, Liangyong (1999): *Rehabilitating the Old City of Beijing: A Project in the Ju’er Hutong Neighbourhood*, p. 61.

The rehabilitation of the Ju'er Hutong neighborhood located northeast of the Forbidden City was based on a site survey on existing housing and community conditions. This survey revealed that courtyard houses were overcrowded, which had forced residents to build additional structures into the courtyards, and that environmental and sanitary conditions were very poor, with two-thirds of households having no direct sunlight and solely one water tap as well as one drain, which had to be shared by more than eighty residents.⁶⁴ While the project was aimed at the improvement of residents' living conditions, land-use intensity was a major concern in the debate on conservation and rehabilitation of the overall city. The architectural design therefore had to consider density issues and a new courtyard cluster was developed, based on a two- to three-story courtyard house prototype. In addition to achieving a higher floor-area ratio, advantages of traditional courtyard houses such as sunlight penetration, light construction techniques or private outdoor space could be maintained, and existing trees preserved.⁶⁵

Heilmann has shown how reform policies are carried out in the PRC through the particular methodology of policy experimentation. In a first step, pilot projects are set up at local test sites (*shidian* 试点). After experimentation, successful models are extended to further localities (*you dian dao mian* 由点到面, "from one point to an area") in order to examine their potential for nationwide implementation.⁶⁶ Despite the successful realization of the Ju'er Hutong project and its international recognition, the project has not been selected as an exemplary model. Follow-up rehabilitation projects in the neighborhood were halted at the beginning of the 1990s and the approach was not developed further due to "low economic returns".⁶⁷

WHITRAP was established in China as a category II center⁶⁸ under the auspices of UNESCO in 2007. With the objective to promote conservation and development of World Heritage in the Asia and the Pacific Region, WHITRAP was the

64 Wu, Liangyong (1999): *Rehabilitating the Old City of Beijing: A Project in the Ju'er Hutong Neighbourhood*, pp. 112–113.

65 *Ibid.*, pp. 124–129.

66 Heilmann, Sebastian (ed., 2016): *Das politische System der Volksrepublik China*, p. 301.

67 Xin, Ling (2012): "WU Liangyong: The Humanistic Architect of Our Time", p. 141.

68 Category II centers/institutes are hosted by UNESCO member states in order to contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's objectives. They are established and funded by these member states and are associated to UNESCO through formal agreements. Category II centers have been founded with the objective to integrate certain countries more strongly into education, training or nomination processes. See: UNESCO (2017): "Institutes and Centres (Category 2)", Online. Albert, Marie-Theres; Ringbeck, Birgitta (2015): *40 Jahre Welterbekonvention: Zur Popularisierung eines Schutzkonzepts für Kultur- und Naturgüter*, p. 132.

first international organization related to World Heritage to be founded in a developing country.⁶⁹ The center operates through three branches located in three Chinese cities. The Shanghai Centre was established at Tongji University and is in charge of the sustainable development of ancient towns/villages, architectural sites/complexes and cultural landscapes. The Beijing Centre at Peking University focuses on the protection of natural heritage, archaeological sites and the management of cultural landscapes. Suzhou Centre is hosted by Suzhou Municipal Government and conducts research on site management, as well as traditional architectural restoration, and provides technical training.⁷⁰

In 2012, WHITRAP launched a pilot program for the implementation of the UNESCO *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, which is a pioneering initiative with HUL still undergoing discussion in many member states.⁷¹ The *HUL Recommendation*, adopted by UNESCO in November 2011, is aimed at the integration of heritage conservation strategies within the broader context of urban development. It recognizes the dynamic character of cities and reacts to socio-economic changes that have been triggered by urbanization and development pressure, rapidly transforming urban areas on a global level and greatly affecting cultural heritage.⁷² Considering urban heritage as “a social, cultural and economic asset”,⁷³ the approach highlights its role for sustainable development and the opportunity for its adaptation to present social needs.⁷⁴

The HUL approach is based on landscape theory, which is used as a framework to enable planning, conservation and intervention decision-making as well as their implementation from a landscape perspective.⁷⁵ The concept of the historic urban landscape has been explained by Ron van Oers, who developed the approach together with Francesco Bandarin, as follows:

“Historic Urban Landscape is a mindset, an understanding of the city, or parts of the city, as an outcome of natural, cultural and socio-economic processes that construct it spatially, temporally, and experientially. It is as much about buildings and spaces, as about rituals and values that people bring into the city. This concept

69 WHITRAP (2012): *Shanghai Centre* 上海中心, Information brochure, p. 1, Online.

70 Ibid.

71 Verdini, Giulio; Frassoldati, Francesca; Nolf, Christian (2017): “Reframing China’s heritage conservation discourse. Learning by testing civic engagement tools in a historic rural village”, p. 320.

72 UNESCO (adopted 2011): *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, preamble, p. 1.

73 Ibid.

74 Angrisano, Mariarosaria et al. (2016): “Towards operationalizing UNESCO Recommendations on “Historic Urban Landscape”: a position paper”, p. 166.

75 UNESCO (adopted 2011): *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, appendix, p. 6.

encompasses layers of symbolic significance, intangible heritage, perception of values, and interconnections between the composite elements of the historic urban landscape, as well as local knowledge including building practices and management of natural resources.”⁷⁶

This explanation compactly summarizes the central aspects that characterize the approach. Primarily, an urban area is perceived as the result of a historic layering process exceeding the scope of an historic center or *ensemble*.⁷⁷ Instead, historic cities represent physical forms in relation to social and economic dynamics as part of an historical continuum.⁷⁸ Thereby, changes and “adaptations of values and urban forms” are not seen as necessarily contradictory to conservation but factors which need to be managed.⁷⁹

The broader urban context in which an urban area is seen includes topographic and natural features, the historic and contemporary built environment, visual relationships, elements of the urban structure, but also social and cultural practices, economic processes and intangible heritage.⁸⁰ By recognizing cultural diversity and the intangible aspects of heritage, HUL considers a place’s association of meanings, which is central to a local community’s identity and sense of place.⁸¹ Moreover, the HUL approach is a “learning approach” which, on the one hand, adheres to the values of national and international communities while, on the other hand, integrates knowledge and traditions at the local level.⁸²

The management of the above-mentioned changes relies on the integration of urban heritage conservation in general policy planning and practice in consideration of historical layers, and a balancing of cultural and natural values.⁸³ Responsible stakeholders are international organizations, the Member States’ different levels of government, but also cooperations of public and private stakeholders as well as non-governmental organizations.⁸⁴ Moreover, the approach suggests the application of various tools ranging from traditional to innovative that have been adapted to the local context.

76 van Oers, Ron (2010): “Managing Cities and the Historic Urban Landscape Initiative — an Introduction”, in: van Oers, R. and Haraguchi, Sachiko (ed.): *Managing Historic Cities*, p. 14.

77 UNESCO (adopted 2011): *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, para. 8.

78 Bandarin, Francesco; Van Oers, Ron (2012): *The Historic Urban Landscape: Managing heritage in an urban century*, p. 72.

79 Ibid.

80 UNESCO (adopted 2011): *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, para. 9.

81 Taylor, Ken (2015): “Cities as Cultural Landscapes”, p. 183.

82 UNESCO (adopted 2011): *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, para. 13.

83 Ibid., para. 21–22.

84 Ibid., para. 22–23.

The four groups of tools defined in the *HUL Recommendation* are civic engagement tools, knowledge and planning tools, regulatory systems and financial tools. Civic engagement tools aim to involve local communities in the conservation processes. In order to understand the different layers of the city, not only in terms of visual morphology but also cultural practices, the local community can contribute to identify relationships between tangible and intangible heritage.⁸⁵ Through methods such as cultural mapping, the overlapping experiences of the city from different cultural perspectives can be revealed and inform decision-making.⁸⁶

Equally, knowledge and planning tools are employed to protect the authenticity and integrity of material heritage.⁸⁷ They enable an identification of the relationships between modern and historical elements as well as the processes that shaped the historic built environment.⁸⁸ Such tools include geospatial mapping, aerial surveys, measured drawings, panoramic photographs and the compilation of an inventory of cultural resources which serve as a basis for evaluating impacts of actions and interventions on the historic urban landscape.⁸⁹

Regulatory systems refer to special acts or degrees in legal and institutional frameworks for the management of tangible and intangible heritage, which further recognize and reinforce traditional or customary systems.⁹⁰ In China, one example of an integrated regulatory measure for the conservation and management of sites on the national level is the China Principles. Furthermore, administrative rules for cultural relics protection have been greatly expanded, with 23 promulgations of regulations between 2002 and 2007.⁹¹ Finally, financial tools guarantee the financial sustainability of the HUL approach through capacity-building as well as “innovative income generating development”. These tools include global and governmental funding but also flexible financing such as micro-credit to support local enterprises and public-private partnerships.⁹²

In October 2012, WHITRAP organized an international expert meeting to discuss the development of a “road map” for the application of HUL in China.⁹³ Issues and questions formulated to guide the program concerned the three-fold

85 Smith, Julian (2015): “Civic Engagement Tools for Urban Conservation”, pp. 221–222.

86 Ibid., pp. 225, 231.

87 van Oers, Ron; Pereira Roders, Ana (2013): “Road map for application of the HUL approach in China”, p. 12.

88 Hosagrahar, Jyoti (2015): “Knowledge and Planning Tools”, p. 249.

89 Ibid., pp. 251, 257.

90 Bandarin, Francesco; van Oers, Ron (2012): *The Historic Urban Landscape: Managing heritage in an urban century*, p. 144.

91 Ibid., p. 146.

92 UNESCO (adopted 2011): *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, para. 24.

93 van Oers, Ron; Pereira Roders, Ana (2013): “Road map for application of the HUL approach in China”, p. 9.

objectives of the HUL approach, which are the management of change, the improvement of the local population's living conditions and the creation of a "virtuous cycle"⁹⁴ in urban conservation, as well as the toolkit required for application at the local level.⁹⁵ So far, WHITRAP has selected four Chinese pilot cities for its HUL program: Shanghai, Suzhou and Tongli in the Jiangnan region, and Dujiangyan 都江堰 in Sichuan Province.⁹⁶

While China's national framework for the protection of urban heritage has greatly advanced since the beginning of the 1980s, the high complexity and dynamic development of metropolitan areas pose new challenges for conservation. As a specialized approach, HUL shall provide local authorities in dynamic urban areas with knowledge and skills to guide urban regeneration and management.⁹⁷ Moreover, HUL's international concept can justify the conservation of heritage aspects that are not covered by the national conservation framework. In order to identify starting points for such an approach, it is necessary to understand the evolution and character of the Chinese national conservation system for urban heritage protection.

2.2 HCF City Concept

While the fundamental ideas underlying the HCF City concept can be traced back to Liang Sicheng, such an approach only gained acceptance with China's participation in the international conservation community and when the consequences of urbanization and economic development pressures became more visible. Resulting destructions of urban fabric through large-scale construction (*jianshe xing pohuai* 建设性破坏) fostered an awareness that it was insufficient to protect individual sites. As explained by Wang, many ancient Chinese cities have a planned structure or local characteristics deriving from their specific layout and road network.

94 The "virtuous cycle" refers to an effect where one policy and related actions trigger following community-driven conservation and regeneration initiatives which, again, reinforce the earlier. See: van Oers, Ron; Pereira Roders, Ana (2013): "Road map for application of the HUL approach in China", p. 11.

95 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

96 "The Historic Urban Landscape: Pilot Cities in China", Tongji University, Online.

97 van Oers, Ron; Pereira Roders, Ana (2013): "Road map for application of the HUL approach in China", p. 7.

Therefore, such interrelations of individual buildings with the city in its entirety need to be preserved as well.⁹⁸

In 1981, historical geographer Hou Renzhi 侯仁之⁹⁹ (1911–2013) from Beijing University, urban planner Zheng Xiaoxie 郑孝燮 (1916–2017) from the Ministry of Construction and cultural relic expert Shan Shiyuan 单士元 (1907–1998) from the Palace Museum successfully proposed the promulgation of National HCF Cities to the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference.¹⁰⁰ According to Luo Zhewen 罗哲文 (1924–2012), then working for the Cultural Relics Bureau and a former student of Liang Sicheng who participated in drafting the first listing document for officially protected entities, the designation “Historically and Culturally Famous Cities” was inspired by the “historical cities” promulgated in the Soviet Union. It was expanded by the term “cultural” as most of the selected Chinese cities were regarded as not only having a long history but additionally being related to culture.¹⁰¹

The State Council promulgated a first batch of 24 National HCF Cities (*guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng* 国家历史文化名城)¹⁰² in February 1982. There are several indicators as to why this first batch of cities was selected due to their generally acknowledged significance and need for conservation rather than according to established nomination criteria.¹⁰³ Primarily, the designation of these cities reflects the concept that relates to urban areas **renowned** as historical and cultural centers. The adjective “famous” in “Historically and Culturally Famous Cities” derives from the term *youming* 有名, literally: “to have a name”, indicating that a city is well-known for or holds the reputation of being historically and culturally significant. This characteristic further distinguishes the concept from other designations, such as the above-mentioned urban centers in the former Soviet Union and present-day Russia or the European context usually termed “historical cities”.

98 Wang, Jinghui 王景慧 (1994): “Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingcheng de baohu gainian” 中国历史文化名城的保护概念, p. 13.

99 Hou Renzhi 侯仁之 further was the main promoter of China’s participation in World Heritage conservation and the ratification of the World Heritage Convention. See: Yan, Haiming (2018): *World Heritage Craze in China: Universal Discourse, National Culture and Local Memory*, p. 49.

100 Qiu, Baoxing 仇保兴 (2014): *Feng yu ru pan — lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu 30 nian* 风雨如磐——历史文化名城保护 30 年, p. 15.

101 Ibid.

102 The first batch of National HCF Cities comprised: Chengde, Beijing, Datong, Nanjing, Quanzhou, Jingdezhen, Qufu, Luoyang, Kaifeng, Yangzhou, Hangzhou, Shaoxing, Jiangling, Changsha, Guangzhou, Guilin, Chengdu, Zunyi, Kunming, Dali, Lhasa, Xi’an, Yan’an and Suzhou.

103 Wang, Jinghui 王景慧 (1994): “Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingcheng de baohu gainian” 中国历史文化名城的保护概念, p. 13.

Furthermore, there is no definition of HCF Cities given in the promulgation document from 1982. Therein, they are solely characterized as:

...我国古代政治、经济、文化的中心，或者是近代革命运动和发生重大历史事件的重要城市。在这些历史文化名城的地面和地下，保存了大量历史文物与革命文物，体现了中华民族的悠久历史、光荣的革命传统与光辉灿烂的文化。¹⁰⁴

“... a political, economic or cultural center of ancient China or an important city for modern revolutionary movements and of great historical events. Above- and under-ground of these Historically and Culturally Famous Cities are preserved great amounts of historical relics and revolutionary relics which reflect the long history of the Chinese people, a glorious revolutionary tradition and a magnificent and splendid culture.”

In this characterization, the attribute “cultural” in the concept of HCF Cities is primarily derived from a high concentration of cultural relics in these cities, hence tangible cultural heritage. Consequently, the significance of HCF Cities is connected to their function as historical and cultural centers, a quality considered quantifiable through their amount of preserved historical and cultural relics.

A first and short definition of HCF Cities is given in the Cultural Relics Protection Law which was only adopted seven months after their promulgation. In the Cultural Relics Protection Law, they are defined as:

保存文物特别丰富并且具有重大历史价值或者革命纪念意义的城市...¹⁰⁵

“Cities which are particularly rich in preserved cultural relics and have great historical value or high revolutionary memorial significance, ...”

This definition equally specifies the significance of HCF Cities as dependent on two major characteristics: great historical value and a high number of cultural relics. The above-given indicators therefore suggest that cities in the first batch have been selected according to this general understanding of an HCF City. A

104 State Council 国务院 (February 8, 1982): *Guowuyuan pizhuan Guojia jianwei deng bumen guanyu baohu wo guo lishi wenhua mingcheng de qingshi de tongzhi* 国务院批转国家建委等部门关于保护我国历史文化名城的请示的通知 [Circular by the State Council Regarding the Request of the National Construction Committee and other Departments for Instructions on the Conservation of Historically and Culturally Famous Cities in China], Online.

105 Standing Committee of the Fifth National People’s Congress 第五届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (November 19, 1982): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法 [Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics], art. 8.

nomination system gradually developed thereafter, with nomination criteria defined on the basis of cities promulgated in this first batch. Apart from their historical value and preserved cultural relics, these 24 cities show great differences in character resulting from their natural setting, original function and development.

Before standardized nomination criteria and suitable conservation strategies could be defined, the cities' significant characteristics needed to be identified. Urban planning specialist and renowned Tongji University professor Dong Jianhong 董鉴泓 (1926–) provided one of the earliest categorizations of HCF Cities. In 1989, Dong defined seven city categories including a second batch of cities promulgated at the national level: ancient capital cities (*gudu xing* 古都型), cities with a traditional townscape (*chuantong chengshi fengmao xing* 传统城市风貌型), scenic cities with famous scenic sites (*fengjing mingsheng xing* 风景名胜型), cities with sites of modern and contemporary history (*jinxindai shiji xing* 近现代史迹型), cities with local characteristics and folk culture (*difang tese ji minzu wenhua xing* 地方特色及民族文化型), cities with special functions (*teshu zhineng xing* 特殊职能型) and common cities with historical sites (*yiban shiji xing* 一般史迹型).¹⁰⁶

The cities classified under these seven major categories can be further differentiated. For example, in the category of ancient capital cities, Beijing 北京 and Xi'an 西安 are seen as cities with a characteristic appearance of ancient capitals (*gudu fengmao* 古都风貌) while Luoyang 洛阳 and Kaifeng 开封 feature a great number of underground sites. In the category "cities with sites of modern and contemporary history", cities such as Yan'an 延安 and Zunyi 遵义 are considered significant for their revolutionary sites and other cities such as Shanghai and Tianjin for their characteristic colonial buildings and modern architecture.¹⁰⁷ Dong concludes that the two main aspects that form the specific character of a city are its historic urban structure and its characteristic appearance. In order to preserve this character, HCF Cities need to be protected as entities or by designation of protected areas instead of conserving individual sites.¹⁰⁸

In 1996, Li and Bao investigated the character of HCF Cities from a geographical perspective. Their categorization is based on the first three batches of promulgated National HCF Cities and stays close to the characterization in the promulgation document from 1982. Following their most distinct characteristics, they

106 Dong, Jianhong 董鉴泓 (1991): "Cong mingcheng leixing tan Shanghai lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu" 从名城类型谈上海历史文化名城保护 [Discussion Proceeding from Famous City Categories to the Conservation of Shanghai Historically and Culturally Famous City], p. 17.

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid.

divide the cities into six categories.¹⁰⁹ While cities with historical sites and scenic spots (*mingsheng guji lei* 名胜古迹类) are considered significant for their richness in individual sites, “ancient historical cities” (*lishi gucheng lei* 历史古城类) comprise ancient capital cities as well as former political, economic and cultural centers. The third category (*jiaotong junshi zhongzhen lei* 交通军事重镇类) refers to strategic places such as ports, for example, or places located on the Silk Road. Then, there are cities categorized according to their natural and scenic sites (*fengguang yuanlin lei* 风光园林类) as well as their revolutionary heritage (*geming jinian di lei* 革命纪念地类). The last category (*zonghe wenhua zhongxin lei* 综合文化中心类) is comparatively broad and covers cities which cannot be reduced to one distinct characteristic.

These two categorizations show that the HCF City is understood as an entity, but that its character differs from protected heritage sites which are individual sites and can be conserved as single units (*wenwu baohu danwei* 文物保护单位). Furthermore, as dynamic places, they underlie constant development. This situation becomes apparent in a statement by Luo Zhewen:

在我国现有的历史文化名城中，完全是原状保存的恐怕已是不多了，尤其是一些历史悠久、文化内容丰富的城市，历代都在改变着，今天已经没有条件全面原状保护了。¹¹⁰

“I am afraid, of the existing Historically and Culturally Famous Cities in China there are not many left which are fully preserved in their original state. Especially those cities with a long history and rich cultural content which underwent changes in every historical period nowadays do not fulfill the necessary conditions for a comprehensive preservation in their original state anymore.”

Although there are some cities such as Pingyao in Shanxi which chose a zoning approach relating to the Liang-Chen Proposal for Beijing and set up a “new city” 新城 next to the ancient city in order to preserve it as an entity, the majority of Chinese cities face a situation illustrated in the above statement which does not allow for this ideal measure. For these cities, Luo recommends a conservation approach based on the division in tiers (*cengci* 层次), levels (*dengji* 等级) and con-

109 Li, Muhan 李慕寒; Bao, Hongming 鲍洪明 (1996): “Shilun wo guo lishi wenhua mingcheng de leixing ji qi tezheng” 试论我国历史文化名城的类型及其特征 [Tentative Discussion on Categories and Characteristics of Chinas Historically and Culturally Famous Cities], pp. 98–104.

110 Luo, Zhewen 罗哲文 (2002): “Lishi wenhua mingcheng shi jianshe you Zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi de qianda zhizhu” 历史文化名城是建设有中国特色社会主义的强大支柱 [The Historically and Culturally Famous Cities are a strong pillar to build up socialism with Chinese characteristics], p. 72.

ditions (*qingkuang* 情况) for which different conservation measures shall be applied.¹¹¹ Therefore, areas with a characteristic appearance (*fengmao fenqu* 风貌分区) shall be preserved in the form of single spots (*dian* 点), routes (*xian* 线) and areas (*mian* 面).¹¹²

This approach can be observed in the subsequent differentiation and expansion of the HCF Cities conservation system to smaller units. In its initial form as a single-tier concept, the HCF City failed to successfully protect urban heritage. Major reasons for this as analyzed by renowned Chinese conservator and director of the National Famous Historical and Cultural Cities Research Center 国家历史文化名城研究中心, Ruan Yisan 阮仪三, were that the concept and its content remained unclear, the focus continued to be set on individual sites rather than the city as an entity and protection boundaries had not been clarified.¹¹³ As a consequence, the State Council determined the promulgation of a smaller protection unit, the historic and cultural protected areas (*lishi wenhua baohu qu* 历史文化保护区) on regional and local levels in 1986.

In the European context, the designation of entire historic urban areas to be protected primarily emerged in the 1960s in the course of “regeneration” projects and commercial development in the historic centers of European cities.¹¹⁴ In the HCF City conservation system, historic and cultural protected areas constitute a third tier in supplementation of the overall city and individual sites (for a schematic illustration see chapter 2.4). Historic and cultural protected areas received legal character with a definition in the Cultural Relics Protection Law in 2002. Following this definition, historic and cultural protected areas are:

保存文物特别丰富并且具有重大历史价值或者革命纪念意义的城镇、街道、村庄，由省、自治区、直辖市人民政府核定公布为历史文化街区、村镇，并报国务院备案。¹¹⁵

111 Luo, Zhewen 罗哲文 (2002): “Lishi wenhua mingcheng shi jianshe you Zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi de qiangda zhizhu” 历史文化名城是建设有中国特色社会主义的强大支柱, p. 72.

112 Ibid.

113 Ruan, Yisan 阮仪三; Sun, Meng 孙萌 (2001): “Wo guo lishi jiequ baohu yu guihua de ruogan wenti yanjiu” 我国历史街区保护与规划的若干问题研究 [Study on Problems Related to the Planning and Protection of Historical Blocks in China], p. 25.

114 Orbaşlı, Aylin (2008): *Architectural Conservation: Principles and Practice*, p. 25.

115 Standing Committee of the Ninth National People’s Congress 第九届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (October 28, 2002): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法 [Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics], art. 14.

“Towns, neighborhoods or villages which are particularly rich in preserved cultural relics and have great historical value or high revolutionary memorial significance shall be verified and announced by the people’s governments of provinces, autonomous regions, or municipalities directly under the Central Government as Historic and Cultural Blocks, Villages or Towns and reported to the State Council for the records.”

As the paragraph shows, this third tier of protected areas not only covers urban areas in cities but has further been extended to towns and villages. While the concept of HCF Towns and Villages originated from regional and local historic and cultural protected areas, they soon became protected entities managed on a national level.¹¹⁶

Since 2003, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development together with the State Administration of Cultural Heritage assess and designate “Historically and Culturally Famous Towns” (*lishi wenhua mingzhen* 历史文化名镇) and “Historically and Culturally Famous Villages” (*lishi wenhua mingcun* 历史文化名村). The Planning Regulations for HCF Cities from 2005 regulate that a protected area must have a size of at least 1 ha with a coverage of cultural relics and historical buildings exceeding 60 percent.¹¹⁷ So far, 252 Historically and Culturally Famous Towns and 276 Historically and Culturally Famous Villages have been announced.¹¹⁸

The evolution of the HCF Cities concept shows a continuous expansion of heritage conservation in Chinese urban areas and a development from spots (*dian* 点 = individual sites) to areas (*mian* 面 = protected areas), as suggested by Luo Zhewen, and in parallel to international conservation developments. As a first step, the preservation of “immovable cultural relics” (*bu ke yidong wenwu* 不可移动文物, the term for immovable sites protected by law) and thereby individual sites in a single spot was expanded to the protection of entire cities, the HCF Cities, in

116 Qiu, Baoxing 仇保兴 (2014): *Feng yu ru pan — lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu 30 nian* 风雨如磐——历史文化名城保护 30 年, p. 20.

117 *Ibid.*, p. 19.

118 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (October 9, 2017): *Zhufang chengxiang jianshebu, Guojia wenwu ju guanyu kaizhan Guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng he Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingzhen mingcun baohu gongzuo pinggu jiancha de tongzhi* 住房和城乡建设部 国家文物局关于开展国家历史文化名城和中国历史文化名镇名村保护工作评估检查的通知 [Circular of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage on Carrying out Evaluation and Inspections of the Conservation Work in National Historically and Culturally Famous Cities and National Historically and Culturally Famous Towns and Villages], Online.

order to preserve not only significant sites but also the structure of the city, its historic townscape and relations of heritage sites with their environment.

When it became clear that the unit of the city was too large to ensure effective protection in a period of large-scale urban development projects and housing construction, the concept was narrowed down to smaller units, the historic and cultural protected areas. In later development and with the formulation of conservation regulations for HCF Cities, the designation of these units in urban areas was then changed to historic and cultural blocks (*lishi wenhua jiequ* 历史文化街区).

Moreover, there are indications for a further downsizing of protection units in Chinese urban conservation to routes (*xian* 线), or more precisely, historic streets. Since 2009 so-called National Historically and Culturally Famous Streets (*Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingjie* 中国历史文化名街) have been selected. Pingjiang Historic and Cultural Block, which is a case study of this project, was among this first batch of 10 selected streets. But while HCF Cities and Towns/Villages as well as historic and cultural blocks are assessed and promulgated by national and regional government bodies, the historic and cultural streets are not (yet) part of the official national conservation system.¹¹⁹

On the contrary, the concept of historic and cultural streets emerged due to the initiative of academics and conservation experts in cooperation with the periodicals *Chinese Journal of Culture* (*Zhongguo wenhua bao* 中国文化报) and *China Cultural Relic News* (*Zhongguo wenwu bao* 中国文物报).¹²⁰ However, the Ministry of Culture and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, which are in charge of the respective periodicals, supported the initiative and approved the selected streets.¹²¹ Figure 2-2 shows the official plaque at the entrance of Pingjiang Historic and Cultural Block, confirming that the street has been approved by both government bodies.

119 Lü, Chunsheng 吕春生 (2017): “Huiwang Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingjie pingxuan tuijie huodong” 回望中国历史文化名街评选推介活动 [Review of the selection and promotion of National Historically and Culturally Famous Streets], p. 11.

120 “‘Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingjie baohu tongmeng’ chengli” “中国历史文化名街保护同盟”成立 [“National Historically and Culturally Famous Streets Conservation Union” established], (January 7, 2013), Online.

121 Ibid.



Figure 2-2. Pingjiang Road Official Plaque.

Source: author's photo, 2016.

In the five designation rounds held since 2009, 50 National Historically and Culturally Famous Streets have been designated and a professional committee has been set up by the China Cultural Heritage Society 中国文物学会 in Beijing.¹²² In contrast to officially protected heritage sites in which the application process is strongly hierarchical and national-level sites need to be proposed by provincial governments, the selection of National HCF Streets proceeds from city level and is carried out more democratically. Thereby, the selection process is based on a mechanism of direct application (*zizhu shenbao* 自主申报), decision-making through expert assessment and public vote (*gongzhong toupiao* 公众投票).¹²³

The representatives of National HCF Streets further organized themselves in the “National HCF Streets Conservation Union” 中国历史文化名街保护同盟 which strives to safeguard traditional streets as well as to conserve and develop them.¹²⁴ One example is Hefang Street 河坊街, a part of the Qing Hefang Historically and Culturally Characteristic Block 清河坊历史文化特色街区 in Hangzhou, where great-scale demolition and reconstruction was called to a halt and changed to an integrated development approach. Here, the organizing committee for the selection of National HCF Streets provided support for the “adjustment” of

122 Lü, Chunsheng 吕春生 (2017): “Huiwang Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingjie pingxuan tuijie huodong” 回望中国历史文化名街评选推介活动, pp. 9–10.

123 Ibid., p. 9.

124 (January 7, 2013) “Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingjie baohu tongmeng’ chengli” “中国历史文化名街保护同盟”成立, in: Zhongguo wenwu xinxi wang 中国文物信息网, Online.

development and the adoption of conservation measures, which enabled its inclusion as a National HCF Street in 2012.¹²⁵

The process of establishing a suitable conservation system by first listing significant entities and then determining general assessment standards, as well as the continuous development and adaptation of the concept to material realities, reflects a race against rapid new construction and renewal in urban areas. Hereby, the different listing mechanisms are aimed at creating new incentives for local governments to turn to alternative development models, as in the case of Hefang Street 河坊街.

2.3 City Assessment

Since 1982, the Central Government as well as regional governments in the PRC have established basic inventories of HCF Cities. These cities are selected on different administrative levels in designation rounds in which they need to undergo a process of nomination, examination, assessment and promulgation. As in the case of officially protected entities (*wenwu baohu danwei* 文物保护单位), this mechanism shows great similarities to the inscription of sites on the World Heritage List on an international level.

As mentioned above, the initial administrative level to promulgate HCF Cities was at the national level. Three greater batches of cities were designated in 1982, 1986 and 1994. On the basis of these 99 cities primarily established across the PRC, the State Council has continued to supplement this inventory since 2001.¹²⁶ While the first batch of National HCF Cities was selected due to general acknowledgement and the cities' reputation for their great historical significance and rich cultural relics (see chapter 2.2), the second designation round required the definition of basic evaluation principles.¹²⁷

For the second batch, a nomination mechanism was established in which provinces, autonomous regions and directly-governed cities can propose cities for inclusion. Thereby, examination and approval principles became necessary in order to prevent the HCF City becoming an empty label. In the second designation

125 Lü, Chunsheng 吕春生 (2017): “Huiwang Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingjie pingxuan tuijie huodong” 回望中国历史文化名街评选推介活动, p. 10.

126 Qiu, Baoxing 仇保兴 (2014): *Feng yu ru pan — lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu 30 nian* 风雨如磐——历史文化名城保护 30 年, p. 31.

127 *Ibid.*, p. 30. Wang, Jinghui 王景慧 (1994): “Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingcheng de baohu gainian” 中国历史文化名城的保护概念, p. 13.

round, 38 of the 80 cities nominated for inclusion were approved.¹²⁸ Furthermore, regional governments were enabled to designate significant HCF Cities on a provincial level.¹²⁹

In addition to the definition of an HCF City in the Cultural Relics Protection Law, National HCF Cities from the second batch were identified on the basis of three evaluation criteria. The first of these criteria exceeds the notion of historical significance and determines that there actually needs to be a considerable number of preserved historical relics and sites **in good condition**.¹³⁰ The second criterion highlights the difference between an HCF City and officially protected entities by requiring a characteristic historical structure and appearance in certain districts that are representative for the city.¹³¹ The final criterion addresses the distribution and scope of urban heritage and clarifies that it cannot be conserved as an individual site but that urban heritage has an impact on aspects such as the character and layout of the city.¹³² In short, these three evaluation criteria consider the state of preserved heritage, the spatial structure and historic townscape of a city as well as the scope and distribution of urban heritage.

With the adoption of the Conservation Regulations for Historically and Culturally Famous Cities, Towns and Villages (hereafter Conservation Regulations) in 2008, the State Council primarily defined binding requirements for the nomination of HCF Cities, Towns and Villages. According to Article seven, these requirements are:

- (1) 保存文物特别丰富
“a great amount of preserved cultural relics”
- (2) 历史建筑集中成片
“accumulations of historical buildings to clusters”
- (3) 保留着传统格局和历史风貌
“a maintained traditional structure and historic townscape”

128 Qiu, Baoxing 仇保兴 (2014): *Feng yu ru pan — lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu 30 nian* 风雨如磐——历史文化名城保护 30 年, p. 31.

129 Ibid., p. 32.

130 Zhao, Yong 赵勇; Li, Huadong 李华东 (2013): “Wo guo lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu de huigu he zhanwang” 我国历史文化名城名镇名村保护的回顾和展望 [Review and Prospect of China’s Historically and Culturally Famous Cities, Towns and Villages Conservation]. In: Jin, Lei 金磊; Duan, Xichen 段喜臣 (ed.): *Zhongguo jianzhu wenhua yichan niandu baogao* 中国建筑文化遗产年度报告: 2002–2012, *China Architectural Heritage Annual Review (2002–2012)*, p. 188.

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid.

- (4) 历史上曾经作为政治、经济、文化、交通中心或者军事要地，或者发生过重要历史事件，或者其传统产业、历史上建设的重大工程对本地区的发展产生过重要影响，或者能够集中反映本地区建筑的文化特色、民族特色。¹³³

“[that the city, town or village] has been a historic political, economic, cultural or transportation center or militarily strategic point; or the site of important historic events; or its traditional industries or major historic construction projects had great impact on local development; or [it] is a representation of cultural and folk characteristics of local buildings.”

While earlier criteria such as the spatial structure and historic townscape have been kept unaltered, the notion of historical significance is more accurately defined as well as the distribution and scope of urban heritage, which is formulated as clusters of historical buildings. Moreover, a first quantitative requirement is given. The article determines that cities nominated as an HCF City must have more than two historic and cultural blocks.¹³⁴

Two years later, in the course of a circular on the inspection of conservation work in HCF Cities, Towns and Villages, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development together with the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH) released a precise conservation assessment standard for National HCF Cities. In contrast to former unquantifiable formulations of evaluation criteria, the “Conservation Assessment Standard for National Historically and Culturally Famous Cities” 国家历史文化名城保护评估标准 is based on a scoring system. In this standard the significance of a city is partly assessed by means of measurable criteria. In the following, it will be analyzed how meaningful this measurement of significant characteristics is and how different criteria are weighed in the Chinese context.

The standard is structured in a quantitative (*dingliang pinggu* 定量评估) and a qualitative assessment (*dingxing pinggu* 定性评估).¹³⁵ Three quantitative factors are measured in a total of 100 points each; these are the first two requirements

133 State Council 国务院 (2008): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu tiaoli* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护条例 [Conservation Regulations for Historically and Culturally Famous Cities, Towns and Villages], order no. 524, art. 7.

134 Ibid.

135 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (February 20, 2010): *Guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu pinggu biaoqun* 国家历史文化名城保护评估标准 [Conservation Assessment Standard for National Historically and Culturally Famous Cities], in: *Guanyu kaizhan guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng, Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingzhen mingcun baohu gongzuo jiancha de tongzhi* 关于开展国家历史文化名城、中国历史文化名镇名村保护工作检查的通知 [Circular on Carrying out Inspections of

defined in the Conservation Regulations from 2008 (the amount of preserved cultural relics and the accumulation of historical buildings to clusters) plus a newly added factor: conservation and management measures. The composition of these factors is illustrated in the following figures:

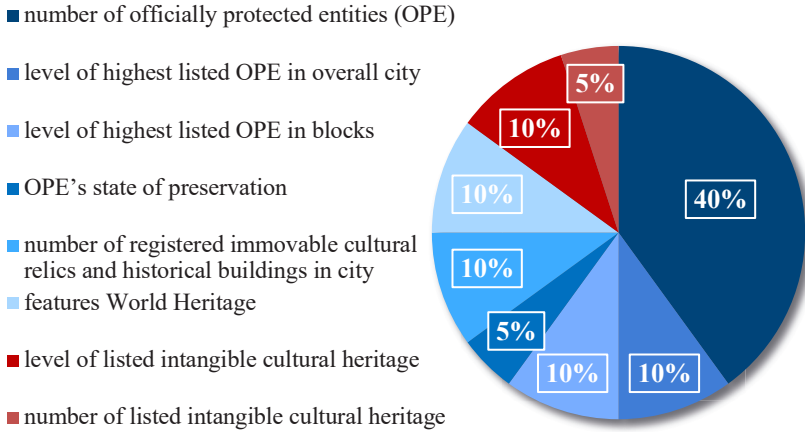


Figure 2-3. Amount of Preserved Cultural Relics (in percent).

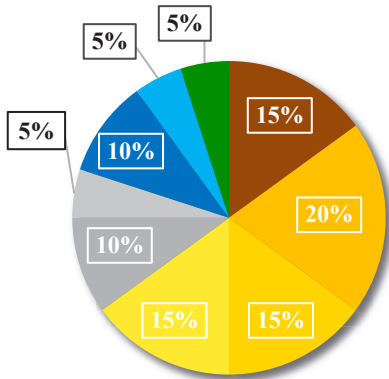
Source: author's draft. Based on data from: Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (February 20, 2010): *Guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu pinggu biao zhun* 国家历史文化名城保护评估标准 [Conservation Assessment Standard for National Historically and Culturally Famous Cities].

Figure 2-3 shows the eight criteria which compose the factor “amount of preserved cultural relics” in the quantitative assessment. This factor gives an account of heritage sites officially listed at different administrative levels in the city. It consists of six criteria related to tangible heritage (illustrated in blue) that amount to 85 percent and two criteria of intangible heritage (red, 15 percent). In addition, it can be noted that the state of preservation of officially protected entities only constitutes 5 percent of the factor, while 50 percent relate to the number of tangible sites (number of OPE + number of registered immovable cultural relics and historical buildings in city). Moreover, listing levels make up 25 percent of the overall factor

the Conservation Work in National Historically and Culturally Famous Cities and National Historically and Culturally Famous Towns and Villages], Jian gui 建规 (2010), no. 220.

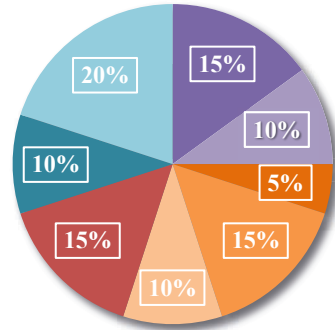
(level of highest listed OPE in overall city + level of highest listed OPE in blocks + level of listed intangible cultural heritage).

The other two quantitative factors “accumulation of historical buildings to clusters” and “conservation and management measures” are illustrated in fig. 2-4 and 2-5:



- number of historic and cultural blocks
- land coverage of core protection area in historic and cultural blocks
- land coverage of core protection area in greatest historic and cultural block
- land coverage ratio of buildings which may not be demolished to core protection area
- number of historic streets > 50 meters
- historic streets' state of preservation
- number of historical buildings in the blocks
- historical buildings' state of preservation
- number of historical environmental elements in the blocks

Figure 2-4. Accumulation of Historical Buildings to Clusters (in percent).



- formulation of conservation planning
- implementation of conservation planning
- conservation management mechanism and personnel established
- proportion of historical buildings recorded and designated
- establishment of public supervision mechanism
- formulation of conservation regulations
- funding of daily management
- inclusion of funding for conservation measures in financial budget

Figure 2-5. Conservation and Management Measures (in percent).

Source: author's draft. Based on data from: Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (February 20, 2010): *Guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu pinggu biaoqun* 国家历史文化名城保护评估标准 [Conservation Assessment Standard for National Historically and Culturally Famous Cities].

The second factor refers to the scope of historical and cultural heritage in the city and to the integrity of its structure and townscape, measured as **historical buildings**, **historic streets** and **environmental elements**. The standard defines **historical buildings** as neither having been promulgated as officially protected entities nor registered as immovable cultural relics but representing the historic townscape and local characteristics.¹³⁶ **Environmental elements** refer to components other than buildings that constitute the historic townscape of a block, such as pagodas, wells, memorial archways, docks, trees and others.¹³⁷ The traditional structure and historic townscape derive from topographical features and water systems, a traditional central axis, streets and lanes, public built structures and the layout of public space.¹³⁸

The second factor increases with the number of historic and cultural blocks as such, as well as the number of their different components that make up their structure and townscape. Moreover, land coverage of the core protection areas designated in the city's conservation plans and the share of protected buildings therein can reach a maximum of 50 percent (three criteria marked in different shades of yellow, fig. 2-4). Again, the proportion of historical buildings' and historic streets' state of preservation is comparatively small, amounting to 5 percent each.

The third factor informs on conservation measures and the management system established in the city. This factor has been newly added in comparison to earlier definitions of evaluation criteria and ensures that a city not only has historical and cultural value but also engages in the protection of its heritage. The factor comprises criteria related to planning (violet), general management (orange), regulations (bordeaux red) and funding (turquoise) with regulations accounting for a slightly smaller proportion in comparison to the other three criteria. With regard to planning, both its formulation and implementation are considered, and a violation of the plan is also reflected in the score. The national assessment standard

136 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (February 20, 2010): "Guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu pinggu biaozhun" 国家历史文化名城保护评估标准, in: *Guanyu kaizhan guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng, Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingzhen mingcun baohu gongzuo jiancha de tongzhi* 关于开展国家历史文化名城、中国历史文化名镇名村保护工作检查的通知, Jian gui 建规 (2010), no. 220.

137 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (November 16, 2012): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu guihua bianzhi yaoqiu* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护规划编制要求 [Drafting Requirements for Conservation Plans of Historically and Culturally Famous Cities, Towns and Villages], Jian gui 建规 (2012) no. 195, art. 12.

138 Ibid.

states that 10 points are gained for implementation in accordance with the plan, while, in case of violation, 15 points are deducted.¹³⁹

The qualitative assessment similarly evaluates whether the city has maintained a **traditional structure and historic townscape** as well as its **historical and cultural values and characteristics**. Concerning its **traditional structure and historic townscape**, the historical significance of the natural scenery and environment of the city are considered as well as the location of the historic city and its impact on urban planning and construction. In addition, applicants will elaborate on the state of preservation of historic and cultural blocks and structural elements such as historic streets.¹⁴⁰

The evaluation of **historical and cultural values and characteristics** includes the fourth criterion of the Conservation Regulations from 2008 on the historical significance of a city (“[The city, town or village] has been a historic political, economic, cultural or transportation center or militarily strategic point; or the site of important historic events; or its traditional industries or major historic construction projects had great impact on local development; or [it] is a representation of cultural and folk characteristics of local buildings.”, see p. 54). Furthermore, cities are valued for great richness and antiqueness of historical and cultural remains as well as representative and outstanding intangible aspects including expressions of art, techniques and crafts.¹⁴¹ Such intangible aspects can refer to local forms of art such as opera, dances and folk songs, paper-cutting, woodblock printing and stone carving as well as traditional techniques and crafts, e.g. pottery and ceramic-making skills, embroidery and brocade, weaving, lacquering or construction techniques.

The stages and development of assessment criteria for **National HCF Towns and Villages** correspond to those of National HCF Cities, whereby an assessment standard (*Quanguo lishi wenhua mingzhen (mingcun) pingjia biao zhun* 全国历史文化名镇（名村）评价标准) was already introduced in 2002¹⁴² and laid the basis for the formulation of the later standard for National HCF Cities. When the Ministry of Construction and SACH promulgated the first batch of National HCF

139 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (February 20, 2010): “Guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu pinggu biao zhun” 国家历史文化名城保护评估标准, in: *Guanyu kaizhan guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng, Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingzhen mingcun baohu gongzuo jiancha de tongzhi* 关于开展国家历史文化名城、中国历史文化名镇名村保护工作检查的通知, Jian gui 建规 (2010), no. 220.

140 Ibid.

141 Ibid.

142 Qiu, Baoxing 仇保兴 (2014): *Feng yu ru pan — lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu 30 nian* 风雨如磐——历史文化名城保护 30 年, p. 34.

Towns/Villages one year later, its basic structure included four aspects: historical value and characteristics of its appearance, preservation of its original state, scope of preserved built heritage and establishment of a conservation and management mechanism.¹⁴³

Hereby, the scope of preserved built heritage is measured by floor area of historical buildings. According to the standard, the total floor area of preserved historical buildings in towns must be more than 5,000 m² and that of villages must exceed 2,500 m².¹⁴⁴ Historical buildings therefore gain value in the standard as part of the greater block as they increase its total land coverage.

In 2004, a tentative indicator system for assessment was promulgated and refined in the following years.¹⁴⁵ Figure 2-6 shows the “Indicator System for the Assessment of National HCF Towns/Villages” 中国历史文化名镇名村评价指标体系 as applied in 2010, the same year as the above standard for cities (see next page).

As illustrated in this figure, National HCF Towns/Villages are assessed on the basis of four categories: **tangible heritage** (blue, green, grey, yellow), **continuity** (purple), **intangible heritage** (red) and **management** (violet/orange). **Tangible heritage** clearly constitutes the greatest share with 59 percent (number and level of OPE + number of historical buildings + state of preservation of historical buildings with important functions/local features + scope of OPE and historical buildings + number of historical environmental elements + number and length of historic streets + integrity and authenticity of core protection areas). It includes individual and listed sites as well as historical buildings, streets and environmental elements and covers all three manifestations: spots, areas and routes (see chapter 2.2). The categories intangible heritage and continuity, which become increasingly important on an international level, are integrated, although only amount to 11 percent (number and level of intangible cultural heritage + share of original residents in core protection areas).

143 Ministry of Construction of the People’s Republic of China 中华人民共和国建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (October 8, 2003): “Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingzhen (cun) pingxuan banfa” 中国历史文化名镇(村)评选办法 [Assessment measures for National Historically and Culturally Famous Towns (Villages)], in: *Guanyu gongbu Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingzhen (cun) (di yi pi) de tongzhi* 关于公布中国历史文化名镇(村)(第一批)的通知 [Circular on the Promulgation of National Historically and Culturally Famous Towns (Villages) (First Batch)], Jian cun 建村 (2003) no. 199.

144 Ibid., para. 2.3.

145 Qiu, Baoxing 仇保兴 (2014): *Feng yu ru pan — lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu 30 nian* 风雨如磐——历史文化名城保护 30 年, p. 34.

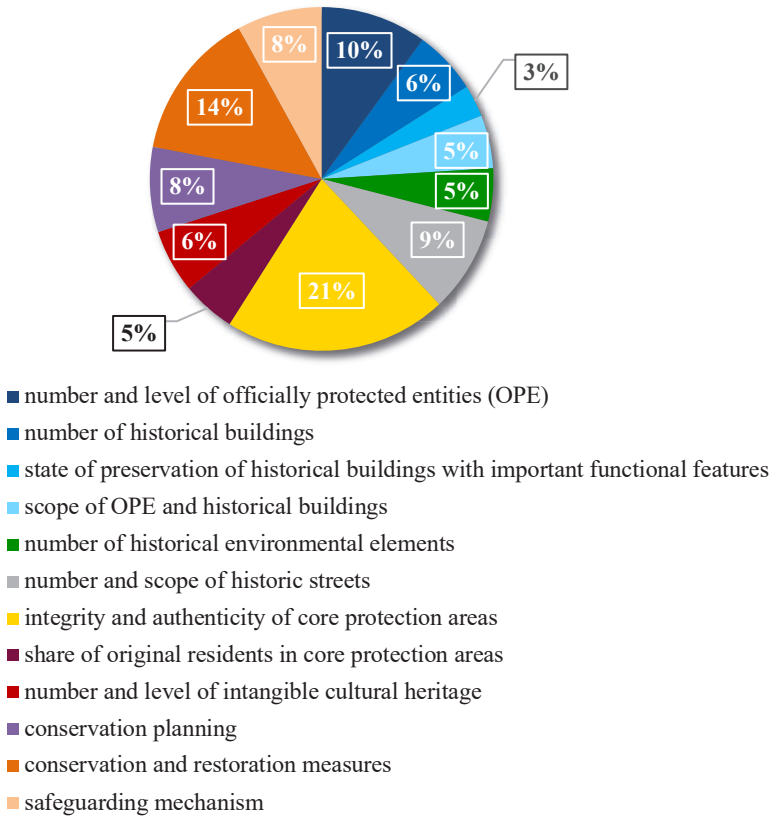


Figure 2-6. Indicators for Assessment of National HCF Towns/Villages (in percent).

Source: author’s draft. Based on data from: Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (February 20, 2010); *Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingzhen mingcun pingjia zhibiao tixi* 中国历史文化名镇名村评价指标体系 [Circular on Carrying out Inspections of the Conservation Work in National Historically and Culturally Famous Cities and National Historically and Culturally Famous Towns and Villages].

In the standard, the preservation of the original state of historical buildings (third criterion in fig. 2-6) is evaluated according to three categories. The first category requires that the original appearance (*yuanmao* 原貌) of historical buildings and *ensembles* as well as architectural details and their surrounding environment have been well-preserved.¹⁴⁶ The second category covers a state where built heritage

¹⁴⁶ Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (February 20, 2010); *Zhongguo lishi wen-*

has already been damaged and partly collapsed but its framework and some architectural details still exist and where it is:

... 依据保存实物的结构、构造和样式可以整体修复原貌 ... 。¹⁴⁷

“... possible to restore the original appearance as a whole on the basis of the structure, construction and style of material remains ...”.

A state where built heritage and its environment have already been damaged but have been restored to their original appearance is classified as category three. However, the scores of the categories only differ by one point (category 1 = 3 points, category 2 = 2 points, category 3 = 1 point) and have little impact on the total score of the town/village (3 percent).¹⁴⁸ This quantification shows that it is permissible to restore built heritage to its original state. Furthermore, the restored built heritage is considered “authentic” as long as it is based on material remains with only little difference in evaluation to well-preserved heritage.

The category of **continuity** derives from a “living heritage” approach which considers the situation of original residents in an urban area and the continuity of their lifestyle and traditions. **Intangible heritage** is also assessed quantitatively and includes traditional festivals, crafts and customs as well as widespread local poetry and lyrics, legends, opera and songs.¹⁴⁹ The final category of **management** has a considerable share of 30 percent and includes planning and its implementation, conservation and management measures as well as the overall safeguarding mechanism.

According to the China Principles, “assessment is the foundation of all conservation work” and shall comprise three elements: the heritage values of a site, its present state of preservation as well as its management context.¹⁵⁰ Having started from general examination and approval principles for the promulgation of the first batch of National HCF Cities in 1982, China successively developed a comprehensive assessment system for its HCF Cities, Towns and Villages. This system covers the above-mentioned three elements, which are assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

hua mingzhen mingcun pingjia zhibiao tixi 中国历史文化名镇名村评价指标体系 [Circular on Carrying out Inspections of the Conservation Work in National Historically and Culturally Famous Cities and National Historically and Culturally Famous Towns and Villages], Jian gui 建规 (2010) no. 220.

147 Ibid.

148 Ibid.

149 Ibid.

150 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 61.

The selection of cities is carried out in a top-down process and the assessment standard is built on three tiers: the city or town itself, historic and cultural blocks and officially protected entities. Significant tangible components of historic and cultural blocks that constitute its spatial structure and traditional townscape as revealed in figures 2-4 and 2-6 are **historical buildings**, **historic streets** and **environmental elements**. The analysis of cultural significance in the three examined projects of this study will therefore concentrate on these aspects.

In general, the assessment standards show that urban heritage is, for a great part, assessed in terms of numbers, levels and scope. Following the commentary on the China Principles, the number and quality of protected sites are “important criteria for determining the standard of conservation work” in HCF Cities.¹⁵¹ On the one hand, this creates incentives for local governments to designate protected areas, list protected heritage sites and to strive to achieve high listing levels but, on the other hand, also to potentially “improve” sites by choice of conservation measure. For example, the level of the highest listed site in a city amounts to 10 percent while the state of preservation of officially protected entities can achieve a maximum of 5 percent.

Finally, the system sets incentives to avoid large-scale demolition with subsequent reconstruction and preserve historical buildings and environmental elements, which were formerly not included in the national conservation system of officially protected entities. While vernacular architecture and historical buildings are now valued as basic components of historic clusters, there remains a risk that preservation concentrates on their outward appearance while an improvement of living conditions of residents is neglected.

Two fundamental conditions for the assessment of heritage resources included in the assessment standards are **authenticity** and **integrity**. The term “**authenticity**” originates from the Venice Charter¹⁵² and in its initial sense meant “materially original or genuine”.¹⁵³ It is a comprehensive concept and includes different aspects, such as the use of authentic materials or a property’s original design as well as authenticity in its creative process if it was conceived as a work of art.¹⁵⁴ The degree of authenticity therefore can be understood as “credibility” of a property. In terms of treatment, there is a consensus by conservation professionals that

151 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 74.

152 Albert, Marie-Theres; Ringbeck, Birgitta (2015): *40 Jahre Welterbekonvention: Zur Popularisierung eines Schutzkonzepts für Kultur- und Naturgüter*, p. 27.

153 Feilden, Bernard M.; Jokilehto, Jukka (1998): *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites*, pp. 16–17.

154 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

it does not mean “identical” such as taking measures to return the property to its original form.¹⁵⁵

Following the UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, the conditions of authenticity are met if the cultural values of properties “are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes”.¹⁵⁶ One of these attributes, ‘materials and substance’, directly relates to the physical fabric of heritage. The other attributes include intrinsic factors and have been defined as ‘form and design’, ‘use and function’, ‘traditions, techniques and management systems’, ‘location and setting’, ‘language and other forms of intangible heritage’ as well as ‘spirit and feeling’.¹⁵⁷

The applicability of the notion of authenticity in non-European cultures was a major subject of discussion at the Nara Conference on Authenticity. The resulting *Nara Document on Authenticity* marked a turning point concerning the recognition of heritage values and their relativity due to cultural diversity.¹⁵⁸ Therein, an understanding of heritage values is regarded as partly depending on an understanding of information sources as “credible or truthful”.¹⁵⁹ Such information sources include material, written, oral and figurative sources that inform on the nature, specifications, meaning and history of cultural heritage.¹⁶⁰ Jokilehto notes that “the definition of authenticity is relative to the recognition of the heritage and its values”.¹⁶¹ While the *Nara Document on Authenticity* contributed to the recognition of heritage in its diversity, it has been criticized for exculpating practitioners from the need to justify their actions in the local cultural context.¹⁶²

In China, the adoption of the *Nara Document on Authenticity* triggered discussions on the content of authenticity in the Chinese context and how the concept should be applied to conservation practices.¹⁶³ The interpretations of the term

155 Orbaşlı, Aylin (2008): *Architectural Conservation: Principles and Practice*, pp. 51–52.
Feilden, Bernard M.; Jokilehto, Jukka (1998): *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites*, p. 17.

156 UNESCO (October 26, 2016): *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, para. 82.

157 Ibid.

158 Jokilehto, Jukka (2013): “After Nara: The Process of Transculturation in Global Heritage Doctrines”, p. 328.

159 Ibid., p. 329.

160 International Council on Monuments and Sites (1994): *The Nara Document on Authenticity*, appendix 2.

161 Jokilehto, Jukka (2013): “After Nara: The Process of Transculturation in Global Heritage Doctrines”, p. 329.

162 Stovel, Herb (2008): “Origins and Influence of the Nara Document on Authenticity”, p. II.

163 Lü, Zhou (2014): “Evolution of Cultural Heritage Conservation Philosophy Through the Lens of the Revised China Principles”, p. 5.

which originates from a “Western” context (usually translated as *yuanzhenxing* 原真性, literally “original and true/real character” or *zhenshixing* 真实性, literally “true/real and substantial character”) differ greatly and a consensus has not yet been found. Lü notes that the translation *yuanzhenxing* is used by some to justify the restoration of heritage sites to their “original state”, claiming that scientific restoration carried out with original materials (applied from comparable structures of the same historical period) and traditional building techniques maintain their historical, artistic and scientific values and does not downgrade them to “fake antiques”.¹⁶⁴

This approach is related to the principle *xiu jiu ru jiu* (修旧如旧, literally “restore the old as old”; and later *zheng jiu ru jiu* 整旧如旧, literally “repair the old as old”) of Chinese architectural conservation pioneer Liang Sicheng. When he introduced concepts such as authenticity, minimal intervention and setting to China at the beginning of the 1960s, about the same time as the Venice Charter was adopted, he used this principle to advocate treatment in compliance with these concepts. Although he did not name the concepts directly, he gave explicit comparisons. For example, he compared the restoration of heritage sites to “giving blood transfusions and injections” (*shuxue* 输血, *dazhen* 打针) while one should not “put on make-up” (*tuzhi mofen* 涂脂抹粉).¹⁶⁵ He further stressed the necessity of maintaining the setting of a site just as “a red flower needs green leaves as a contrast” (*hong hua hai yao lü ye tuo* 红花还要绿叶托).¹⁶⁶

Although his writings show that Liang Sicheng attempted to advocate conservation measures that adhere to the principles of authenticity and minimal intervention, confusion arose as he initially explored two different approaches, “keeping the present condition” (*baocun xianzhuang* 保存现状) and “preserving or restoring to the original condition” (*baocun/huifu yuanzhuang* 保存/恢复原状).¹⁶⁷ Thereby, the latter meant removal of later added elements as well as replacement of missing parts to reveal the “original” condition of a site.

Consequently, as former ICOMOS Vice President Guo Zhan explains, the term *xiu jiu ru jiu* can easily be misinterpreted in case of lacking theoretical knowledge and due to the ambiguity of the Chinese-language expression.¹⁶⁸ Because some interpret the character *ru* 如 in the sense of “identical to”, this understanding is

164 Lü, Zhou (2014): “Evolution of Cultural Heritage Conservation Philosophy Through the Lens of the Revised China Principles”, p. 5.

165 Liang, Sicheng 梁思成 (1963): “Xianhua wenwu jianzhu de chongxiu yu weiwu” 闲话文物建筑的重修与维护 [Some thoughts about the reconstruction and maintenance of cultural relic structures], p. 8.

166 Ibid.

167 Lai, Guolong; Demas, Martha; Agnew, Neville (2004): “Valuing the Past in China: The Seminal Influence of Liang Sicheng on Heritage Conservation”, p. 86.

168 Guo, Zhan (2014): “Viewing the *China Principles* in the International Context”, p. 37.

used to justify the replacement of missing or damaged building components.¹⁶⁹ More far-reaching, when discussing the content of authenticity in the Chinese context, this misinterpretation of Liang Sicheng's principle has been used to argue for a site's "restoration to its original state".

While the first version of the China Principles did not include the concept, authenticity has been adopted in relation to both tangible and intangible heritage in the revised version. In terms of attributes, the concept conforms to the Operational Guidelines and covers "original materials, workmanship and design of a site and its setting, as well as [...] historical, cultural, and social characteristics and qualities".¹⁷⁰ Precise premises under which authenticity is met that restrict reconstruction of no longer extant sites are given, and determine that restored components must be distinguishable and conservation carried out *in situ*. How much "authentic" treatment is disputed among Chinese professionals was revealed by the debate on the reconstruction of the "Old Summer Palace" (Yuanming yuan 圆明园) in Beijing, which was burned and plundered by British and French Forces in retaliation for the death of hostages in 1860. Here, the suggestions for adequate treatment range from leaving the ruins of the remaining Western-style palaces as they are to a complete rebuilding of the Chinese-style architectural structures.¹⁷¹ It is important to consider that such debates are closely interwoven with political interests to foster nationalist sentiments. Concerning the first tier of HCF Cities and Towns/Villages, authenticity is further recommended as a criterion for maintaining a city's original function.¹⁷²

The condition of **integrity** evaluates the "wholeness" and "intactness" of heritage and its attributes.¹⁷³ Integrity as a concept primarily appeared in the United States National Park Service Administrative Manual from 1953 as a composite quality in terms of workmanship, location and the "intangible elements of feeling and association".¹⁷⁴ While the Venice Charter, which was based on Italian norms, understands integrity as "material wholeness, completeness or entirety", it covers a variety of aspects in the United States, seven aspects in all: location, design,

169 Guo, Zhan (2014): "Viewing the *China Principles* in the International Context", p. 37.

170 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2015): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 67.

171 Kutcher, Norman (2003): "China's Palace of Memory", pp. 30–39.

172 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2015): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 67.

173 UNESCO (October 26, 2016): *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, para. 88.

174 Stovel, Herb (2008): "Origins and Influence of the Nara Document on Authenticity", p. 12.

setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.¹⁷⁵ On an international level, it was primarily introduced as a condition for heritage resources in the first version of the Operational Guidelines in 1978.¹⁷⁶

According to the Operational Guidelines, the “intactness” of heritage relates to the “elements necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value” as well as a property’s “adequate size” in order to give “complete representation”.¹⁷⁷ As a third factor, it should be evaluated in how far a property “suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect”.¹⁷⁸ In the case of individual sites, the Operational Guidelines highlight the condition of physical fabric whereby living properties such as cultural landscapes or historic towns additionally require the preservation of their significant relationships and dynamic functions.¹⁷⁹

In Chinese, integrity is translated as *wanzhengxing* 完整性 (“completeness”). There is no indication in the translation of the term whether it refers to the “completeness” of physical fabric or which other attributes are concerned. Although there are not as many controversies related to integrity in the Chinese context as for the concept of authenticity, its application may differ from the European and American context, as will be examined in the case studies.

The revised China Principles include the condition of integrity and stress the need to conserve all significant components that reveal values associated with the site. These include physical remains but also spatial layout, the setting, roads and lanes as well as intangible heritage.¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, the conservation of the temporal dimension of heritage manifested in different layers is highlighted. The condition of integrity requires the conservation of a site’s changes over time if their vestiges are relevant to its value.¹⁸¹

Jokilehto notes that the condition of integrity is problematic insofar as that it refers to “material wholeness” and “may stress the trend to reintegration, stylistic restoration or reconstruction”.¹⁸² On the other hand, he sees it as useful to identify elements that are part of an “organic whole” and their relationships such as in the case of historic settlements. In this context, the condition of integrity could justify

175 Jokilehto, Jukka (1999): *A History of Architectural Conservation*, pp. 298–299.

176 Albert, Marie-Theres; Ringbeck, Birgitta (2015): *40 Jahre Welterbekonvention: Zur Popularisierung eines Schutzkonzepts für Kultur- und Naturgüter*, p. 27.

177 UNESCO (October 26, 2016): *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, para. 88 a), b).

178 Ibid., para. 88 c).

179 Ibid., para. 89.

180 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 68.

181 Ibid.

182 Jokilehto, Jukka (1999): *A History of Architectural Conservation*, p. 299.

the preservation of minor elements, which gain meaning as parts of an overall context.¹⁸³

The two conditions of authenticity and integrity have been included in the HCF City Conservation Regulations and shall equally be considered for the maintenance and conservation of historical and cultural heritage in HCF Cities and Towns/Villages.¹⁸⁴ In particular, they must not be harmed by construction projects inside the boundaries of protected areas.¹⁸⁵ Their integration with development becomes clear from Article 22 of these regulations, which determines that population size in the cities and towns/villages should be controlled and the infrastructure, as well as public facilities and the living environment, improved.¹⁸⁶

2.4 Conservation and Management

Parallel to the formation of an assessment system for National HCF Cities, Towns and Villages, the Chinese government established guidelines and regulations for the implementation of management systems for urban heritage on regional and local levels. These systems include **planning, conservation measures, function and usage** as well as other aspects. In the following, the theoretical foundation and determinations set by legally binding regulations shall be analyzed for topics addressed in this study. They shall further be related to professional guidelines, among them the China Principles as well as international conservation documents.

China's National HCF Cities/Towns and Villages conservation system pursues an integrated conservation approach. This is reflected in the Cultural Relics Protection Law, which regulates that local governments above county level have to formulate professional conservation plans for HCF Cities/Towns/Villages as well as historic and cultural blocks and include these into their master plans.¹⁸⁷ The Planning Regulations formulated in 2005 determine how conservation has to

183 Jokilehto, Jukka (1999): *A History of Architectural Conservation*, p. 299.

184 State Council 国务院 (2008): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu tiaoli* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护条例, order no. 524, art. 3.

185 *Ibid.*, art. 23.

186 *Ibid.*, art. 22.

187 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法 [Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics], art. 14.

be integrated into the planning of HCF Cities. Thereby, the structure of the regulations follows the **three tiers** that have already been identified in the assessment standard (Planning Regulations, para. 3.1.3). and are illustrated in fig. 2-7.

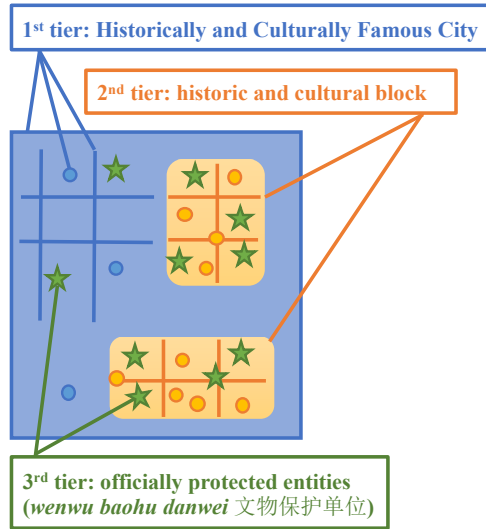


Figure 2-7. Three Tiers of the HCF City Conservation System.

Source: author's draft.

The **first tier**, the HCF City (blue), has the broadest scope and is centered on the urban structure and traditional townscape of the overall city, tangible heritage such as officially protected entities, historic *ensembles*, streets and environmental elements as well as intangible heritage such as folk customs, traditional crafts and culture.¹⁸⁸ Planning shall ensure that the structure and townscape of the city are maintained by conservation and improvement of historic areas and historic *ensembles* as well as the declaration of cultural relics and historic sites.¹⁸⁹ This tier therefore encompasses all heritage in the city in the form of “areas” (*mian* 面 = HCF City in blue, historic and cultural blocks in orange), “routes” (*xian* 线 = streets and waterways, blue and orange lines) and “spots” (*dian* 点 = individual sites).

188 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部, General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China 国家质量监督检验检疫总局 (2005): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu guihua guifan* 历史文化名城保护规划规范 [Historically and Culturally Famous Cities Conservation Planning Regulations], para. 3.1.1.

189 Ibid., para. 3.1.5.

Heritage protected as “spots” refers to tangible heritage in the form of structural and environmental elements, such as buildings, bridges, wells, docks or trees (blue and orange spots) as well as officially protected entities (green stars). Intangible heritage is protected on the administrative level of the HCF City but can also be related to an area, a route or a spot on all three tiers. This aspect will be illustrated in the sections on cultural significance of the selected case studies.

The **second tier** comprises the historic and cultural blocks (orange) in an HCF City that are characterized by a mostly intact traditional structure and an historic townscape. According to the “Drafting Requirements for Conservation Plans of Historically and Culturally Famous Cities, Towns and Villages” 历史文化名城名镇名村保护规划编制要求 (hereafter Drafting Requirements) from 2012, management shall follow principles such as the integrity of the historic townscape, the conservation of authentic carriers of historical information and the continuity of social life and cultural tradition (conservation) but also the improvement of infrastructure and the living environment (development).¹⁹⁰

Section four of the Drafting Requirements therefore determines that conservation plans shall formulate measures for the improvement of infrastructure, public facilities and the living environment in accordance with unchanged measurements of streets and a consistent townscape. Moreover, a core protection area (*hexin baohu qu* 核心保护区) must be defined for the block where historical buildings are concentrated and the surrounding area established as a construction control zone (*jianshe kongzhi didai* 建设控制地带),¹⁹¹ similar to a buffer zone.¹⁹² Inside these areas, precise requirements shall be set for aspects such as building height, measurements, outward appearance, construction materials, etc.¹⁹³

The **final tier** covers individual officially protected entities (green) inside the greater contexts of the historic and cultural blocks and the HCF City. Similar to the blocks, protection of tangible heritage is regulated through designation of site boundaries and buffer zones for every individual entity. Inside the boundaries of

190 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (November, 16 2012): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu guihua bianzhi yaoqiu* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护规划编制要求, art. 32.

191 *Ibid.*, art. 19.

192 In consideration of the *genius loci* of a heritage resource, the buffer zone is a planning instrument to protect the context of historic towns from negative impacts which could reduce their cultural values. See: Feilden, Bernard M.; Jokilehto, Jukka (1998): *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites*, p. 74.

193 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (November 16, 2012): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu guihua bianzhi yaoqiu* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护规划编制要求, art. 35.

officially protected entities, it is forbidden to carry out construction projects as well as blasting, drilling and excavation activities.¹⁹⁴ However, such measures may be approved by the government under special circumstances (*teshu qingkuang* 特殊情况) and under the premise that the safety of the protected entity is guaranteed.¹⁹⁵ Depending on the need of the protected entity, there may further be defined buffer zones (“construction control zones”) wherein construction projects have to stay in line with the historic townscape.¹⁹⁶

In addition to the demarcation of site boundaries, Article 15 of the Cultural Relics Protection Law determines that governments have to erect an official plaque for protected entities, create an archival record and establish a professional organization or person in charge of management.¹⁹⁷ This step in the conservation process is designated as “implementation of the Four Legal Prerequisites” (*si you* 四有) in the China Principles.¹⁹⁸ Furthermore, governments shall work out and implement conservation measures according to the needs of protected entities and protected buildings.¹⁹⁹

Conservation theory defines that the process of conservation is aimed at the preservation of a property’s cultural significance.²⁰⁰ Therefore, those values associated with heritage resources that are considered significant provide justification for its conservation.²⁰¹ In general, Feilden defines conservation as “keeping in safety or preserving the existing state of a heritage resource from destruction or change”, which implies maintenance, repair, consolidation and reinforcement as

194 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People’s Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 17.

195 Ibid.

196 Ibid., art. 18.

197 Ibid., art. 15.

198 The “Four Legal Prerequisites” (*si you* 四有, literally “four haves”) are a Chinese concept which can be traced back to mid-Qing dynasty and appears in earlier statutes, e.g. the *Provisional Regulations on Protection and Administration of Cultural Relics* 文物保护管理暂行条例 from 1961. It includes the demarcation of site boundaries, the erection of an official plaque, the creation of an archive for records and the designation of an organization/person dedicated to management. See: China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 101.

199 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People’s Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 15.

200 Orbaşlı, Aylin (2008): *Architectural Conservation: Principles and Practice*, p. 38.

201 Feilden, Bernard M.; Jokilehto, Jukka (1998): *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites*, p. 18.

justifiable treatments.²⁰² Concerning urban areas where conservation is integrated into management, Feilden and Jokilehto note that “a degree of gradual change” has to be accepted.²⁰³ Further treatment strategies that require justification include restoration, reconstruction and adaptive reuse.

In terms of **treatment and conservation measures** in HCF Cities and Towns/Villages, the Conservation Regulations determine that a “differentiated conservation” (*fenlei baohu 分类保护*) of built structures should be carried out in historic and cultural blocks as well as overall HCF Towns and Villages.²⁰⁴ Thereby, conservation measures shall be selected according to the type of building or structure. In the Planning Regulations, they are defined as five basic types of buildings and structures.²⁰⁵

The **first and second types** are officially protected entities (*wenwu baohu danwei 文物保护单位*) and “protected buildings” (*baohu jianzhu 保护建筑*). While officially protected entities have already been approved by governments on different administrative levels, protected buildings have not yet been promulgated as officially protected entities but are registered and approved by county-level governments.²⁰⁶ In subsequent designation rounds, these protected buildings are evaluated and may be upgraded to the status of officially protected entities. They can therefore be understood as buildings on a tentative list. Both have the legal status of immovable cultural relics and are protected by the Cultural Relics Protection Law.²⁰⁷ According to the law, their conservation measures are determined by respective construction and planning departments in consultation with cultural relics administrations.²⁰⁸

The **third type** determined in the Planning Regulations is historical buildings (*lishi jianzhu 历史建筑*). As defined in the above-analyzed assessment standard, these are buildings which neither have been promulgated as an officially protected

202 Feilden, Bernard M.; Jokilehto, Jukka (1998): *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites*, p. 61.

203 Ibid., p. 62.

204 State Council 国务院 (2008): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu tiaoli 历史文化名城名镇名村保护条例*, art. 27.

205 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部, General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People’s Republic of China 国家质量监督检验检疫总局 (2005): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu guihua guifan 历史文化名城保护规划规范*, para. 4.3.3.

206 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People’s Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa 中华人民共和国文物保护法*, art. 13.

207 Ibid.

208 Ibid., art. 16.

entity nor registered as an immovable cultural relic and represent the historic townscape and local characteristics.²⁰⁹ Historical buildings are not protected by the Cultural Relics Protection Law but are part of the construction control and core protection areas in a historic and cultural block and therefore are covered by conservation plans.

The **fourth** and **fifth types** are “non-exceptional buildings and structures” (*yibanjian (gou) zhuwu* 一般建（构）筑物), which are divided into “in accordance with the historic townscape” (*yu lishi fengmao wu chongtu* 与历史风貌无冲突) and “in conflict with the historic townscape” (*yu lishi fengmao you chongtu* 与历史风貌有冲突). The different conservation measures for these five types of buildings and structures are illustrated in table 2-1.

The scheme based on the Planning Regulations shows that there is no difference in conservation measures for the **first and second types** that are determined as *xiushan*. This term is translated as “treatment”²¹⁰ in the English-language China Principles and although its literal meaning refers to treatment in the sense of repair, it covers a variety of different interventions ranging from preservative measures to restoration. Following the definition in the Planning Regulations, *xiushan* includes “routine maintenance, protective reinforcement, reparation of the present state of a structure and major restoration”.²¹¹ The precise and appropriate measures taken are then decided in the course of every individual project and must be approved by the authorities in charge.

209 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (February 20, 2010): “Guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu pinggu biao zhun” 国家历史文化名城保护评估标准, in: *Guanyu kaizhan guojia lishi wenhua mingcheng, Zhongguo lishi wenhua mingzhen mingcun baohu gongzuo jiancha de tongzhi* 关于开展国家历史文化名城、中国历史文化名镇名村保护工作检查的通知, *Jian gui* 建规 (2010), no. 220.

210 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 107.

211 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部, General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People’s Republic of China 国家质量监督检验检疫总局 (2005): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu guihua guifan* 历史文化名城保护规划规范, para. 2.0.16.

Table 2-1. Conservation Scheme for Built Structures in Historic and Cultural Blocks.

type of building/structure		conservation measure
officially protected entities 文物保护单位		treatment (<i>xiushan</i> 修缮)
protected buildings 保护建筑		treatment (<i>xiushan</i> 修缮)
historical buildings 历史建筑		maintenance (<i>weixiu</i> 维修) and/or improvement (<i>gaishan</i> 改善)
non-exceptional buildings and structures 一般建（构）筑物	in accordance with the historic townscape 与历史风貌无冲突	preservation (<i>baoliu</i> 保留)
	in conflict with the historic townscape 与历史风貌有冲突	alteration (<i>zhengxiu</i> 整修) and/or transformation (<i>gaizao</i> 改造) and/or demolition (<i>chaichu</i> 拆除)

Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部, General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China 国家质量监督检验检疫总局 (2005): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng baohu guihua guifan* 历史文化名城保护规划规范, para 4.3.3, translated by the author.

The **third type**, historical buildings, shall be maintained and improved. As reflected in the Conservation Regulations, maintenance thereby refers to the original appearance of the buildings. According to Article 27, historical buildings in the core protection areas shall retain their original height, dimension and outward appearance.²¹² Improvement is directed towards the interior of the buildings and the installation of facilities.²¹³ The objective behind this improvement is that historical buildings shall be adapted to a modern lifestyle, as will be shown in the case studies.

212 State Council 国务院 (2008): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu tiaoli* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护条例, art. 27.

213 Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 住房和城乡建设部; State Administration of Cultural Heritage 国家文物局 (November 16, 2012): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu guihua bianzhi yaoqiu* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护规划编制要求, art. 43.

The conservation measures for the **fourth and fifth types** of non-exceptional structures depend on the outward appearance of these structures. If they are in accordance with the historic townscape, they have no negative impact on the integrity of the block or town/village and shall be preserved. If they are in conflict with the townscape, aspects with a negative impact shall be altered or transformed up to demolition.

While the China Principles proceed from the minimal intervention principle and state that “intervention should only be undertaken when absolutely necessary and then should be kept to a minimum”,²¹⁴ treatment strategies for immovable cultural relics in historic and cultural blocks not only comprise maintenance and reparation but also restoration. The term “**restoration**” has already been used in different cultural contexts and had several meanings before its definition by the international conservation community. While it was used as a general concept for the conservation of built heritage in Latin languages, it implied “period restoration” and thereby recreation of a building’s state in a given historic period in North America.²¹⁵ In England, “restoration” clearly carried a negative meaning and was considered destructive treatment following criticism by early conservationists such as John Ruskin (1819–1900) of the late 18th century restoration movement and stylistic restoration, as had been practiced by Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879).²¹⁶

In the Venice Charter, restoration is defined as a “highly specialized operation” which should aim at the preservation and revelation of a monument’s “aesthetic and historic value” and which must not be based on conjecture but follow “original material” and “authentic documents”.²¹⁷ According to Feilden and Jokilehto, modern restoration can be understood as revealing “the original state within the limits of still existing material”, in contrast to the earlier objective to “bring back” the original by means of rebuilding.²¹⁸

214 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 63.

215 Feilden, Bernard M.; Jokilehto, Jukka (1998): *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites*, p. 62.

216 For the historical development of restoration as conservation measure in a European context see: Jokilehto, Jukka (1999): *A History of Architectural Conservation*, chapters 6–8.

217 International Council on Monuments and Sites (adopted 1965): *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter 1964)*, art. 9.

218 Feilden, Bernard M.; Jokilehto, Jukka (1998): *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites*, p. 62.

The China Principles distinguish between minor restoration (*xianzhuang xiuzheng* 现状修整, literally “reparation of the present state”) and major restoration (*zhongdian xiufu* 重点修复) as two of four accepted treatment strategies (the other two being regular maintenance as well as physical protection and strengthening).²¹⁹ Minor restoration is directed at cases where no fundamental changes have happened to an original structure and it is mostly intact. In such cases, interventions comprise small-scale reparations, the rectification of components and the removal of additions without significance.²²⁰ In contrast, major restoration involves a much greater impact on original material and includes interventions of reinforcement of an entire structure, replacement of missing or damaged components as well as complete disassembly of a structure and relocation, which is classified into this category as well.²²¹

Restoration is further defined as a method to reinstate the “historic condition” (*yuanzhuang* 原状, literally “original state”) of a site. As stated in the commentary, retaining the historic condition includes a site’s present state (prior to conservation interventions or the state of a site that is considered significant after earlier treatment) but also its reinstatement based on physical remains.²²² Thereby, reinstatement comprises elements that have been buried, damaged, deformed, braced, incorrectly placed or have partially collapsed. According to the *Principles*, reinstatement is permitted in cases such as collapse or damage, when the “historic condition of a small number of missing parts” can be determined by physical remains or comparable components of the same period and in cases where reinstatement contributes to reveal a site’s values.²²³

In addition, the Cultural Relics Protection Law regulates the **reconstruction/rebuilding and relocation** of sites confronted with construction projects. These interventions of architectural conservation are controversial and seen as problematic by conservationists. However, reconstruction projects are carried out and are often supported by politicians and the public.²²⁴

In their critique of **reconstruction**, conservationists draw on modern doctrinal texts, which they argue proceed from a presumption against reconstruction.²²⁵ One

219 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 64.

220 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

221 *Ibid.*

222 *Ibid.*, pp. 72–73.

223 *Ibid.*, p. 73.

224 Stovel, Herb (2001): “The Riga Charter on Authenticity and Historical Reconstruction in Relationship to Cultural Heritage: Riga, Latvia, October 2000”, p. 242.

225 *Ibid.*

passage concerned is Article 15 of the Venice Charter which states that “all reconstruction work should [...] be ruled out *a priori*”.²²⁶ Former President of the German National Committee of ICOMOS and ICOMOS international, Michael Petzet, contends that the Venice Charter does not explicitly forbid reconstruction and that this article exclusively relates to archaeological excavations.²²⁷

As a legitimate preservation measure, he defines reconstruction in general as the re-establishment of original structures that have been destroyed as a result of accident, natural catastrophes or war, based on pictorial, written or material evidence.²²⁸ Prerequisites for such an intervention are a sound scientific basis and a careful consideration of the pros and cons. Moreover, no existing historic fabric should be lost through measures such as stabilization.²²⁹ According to Petzet, cases where reconstruction may be justified are “in order to elucidate a fragmentary monument, to re-establish the setting for extant fittings and decorative features or significant building components” and within historic complexes and *ensembles* that would be reduced or impaired by a “gap”.²³⁰

The UNESCO Operational Guidelines refer to reconstruction in the context of authenticity:

“In relation to authenticity, the reconstruction of archaeological remains or historic buildings or districts is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances. Reconstruction is acceptable only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture.”²³¹

This concern for authenticity in connection with the mission formulated in the preamble to the Venice Charter to hand historic monuments on “in the full richness of their authenticity” underlines the critical attitude of conservationists toward reconstruction.²³²

While Petzet sees reconstruction as legitimate intervention in the cases of accidents, natural catastrophes or war, the Operational Guidelines generally limit

226 International Council on Monuments and Sites (adopted 1965): *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter 1964)*, art. 15.

227 Petzet, Michael (2013): “Conservation of Monuments and Sites — International Principles in Theory and Practice”, “Denkmalpflege — Internationale Grundsätze in Theorie und Praxis”, p. 71.

228 Ibid., p. 70.

229 Ibid., p. 80.

230 Ibid.

231 UNESCO (October 26, 2016): *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, para. 86.

232 Stovel, Herb (2001): “The Riga Charter on Authenticity and Historical Reconstruction in Relationship to Cultural Heritage: Riga, Latvia, October 2000”, p. 242.

this measure to “exceptional circumstances”. The Chinese Cultural Relics Protection Law follows this example for immovable cultural relics which can be reconstructed *in situ*, “under special circumstances” and if the superordinate authority approves it.²³³

Simultaneously, the China Principles define reconstruction as an “exceptional measure” that must be approved, carried out *in situ* and must not be based on conjecture but evidence.²³⁴ More precise information is provided in the commentary where reconstruction is allowed in certain instances for “a building that preserves only its footings” and “based on textual verification of its historic condition”.²³⁵ This guideline may be applied for approved exhibition and service buildings on large-scale sites, recently destroyed structures in which the public has a strong connection, a small number of buildings in gardens or cultural landscapes which are intimately associated with the setting, a small number of minor buildings within a complex and heritage sites with a particular commemorative function.²³⁶ Moreover, reconstruction is stated as inappropriate if the ruined site has acquired significance for itself, no footings of the building exist and in the case of insufficient evidence or the existence of aboveground archaeological remains.²³⁷

While **rebuilding** can also be understood as a particular form of reconstruction, it exceeds the latter’s dimensions in terms of both intention and scope. On the one hand, rebuilding in order to “purify” a structure’s “original appearance”, similar to restoration back to an earlier state, is seen as problematic from a conservationist perspective; on the other hand, this measure can relate to overcoming a break in tradition caused by catastrophes or war.²³⁸ Petzet notes that despite their loss of original fabric, rebuilt structures can sometimes re-occupy the former position of a building in history as well as integrate historic remains.²³⁹ In this sense, reconstruction can contribute to fostering historical continuity and itself be regar-

233 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People’s Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 22.

234 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 65.

235 *Ibid.*, p. 86.

236 *Ibid.*

237 *Ibid.*

238 Petzet, Michael (2013): “Conservation of Monuments and Sites — International Principles in Theory and Practice”, “Denkmalpflege — Internationale Grundsätze in Theorie und Praxis”, pp. 80–81.

239 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

ded as construction of future historic “documents for the time of their reconstruction”.²⁴⁰ This argument for reconstruction has been discussed in the Chinese context (see the above-mentioned “Old Summer Palace” in Beijing) but also in the case of European architecture such as the Berlin City Palace (“Stadtschloss”) of the Prussian Monarchy in Germany, which was rebuilt as “Humboldt Forum” after two decades of debate since 2013.²⁴¹

The Chinese Cultural Relics Protection Law from 1982 determines that in cases where “immovable cultural relics have already been completely destroyed they must not be reconstructed but their historical remains shall be conserved”.²⁴² The law does not differentiate between reconstruction and rebuilding in terminology but employs *chongjian* 重建, which can have both meanings. *Chongjian* is also the term used in the China Principles, however, here it is annotated to mean “to reconstruct to a known historic condition based on existing remains and documentation”, because an intervention in the sense of “re-creation” (*zaijian* 再建, *fujian* 复建) was not an accepted treatment strategy.²⁴³

Similar to the intervention of reconstruction, conservationists have a critical standpoint towards **relocation** due to the loss of historical information. Modern conservation theory proceeds on the assumption that buildings have a critical relationship to their environment and surroundings that constitutes “part of the building’s historic message” and is lost if it is moved from its original location.²⁴⁴ This understanding of the relationship between built heritage and its setting is reflected in Article 7 of the Venice Charter:

“A monument is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it occurs. The moving of all or part of a monument cannot

240 Petzet, Michael (2013): “Conservation of Monuments and Sites — International Principles in Theory and Practice”, “Denkmalpflege — Internationale Grundsätze in Theorie und Praxis”, p. 81.

241 Kutcher, Norman (2003): “China’s Palace of Memory”, pp. 30–39. Parzinger, Hermann (2011): *Das Humboldt-Forum: „Soviel Welt mit sich verbinden als möglich“; Aufgabe und Bedeutung des wichtigsten Kulturprojekts in Deutschland zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts*. Berlin: Stiftung Berliner Schloss — Humboldtforum, p. 23.

242 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People’s Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 22.

243 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 105.

244 Petzet, Michael (2013): “Conservation of Monuments and Sites — International Principles in Theory and Practice”, “Denkmalpflege — Internationale Grundsätze in Theorie und Praxis”, p. 81.

be allowed except where the safeguarding of that monument demands it or where it is justified by national or international interest of paramount importance.”²⁴⁵

Resulting from this objective to strive for a minimal loss of historical information, the construction material of a building is decisive for whether relocation can be applied as a legitimate conservation measure. Petzet notes that wooden buildings are “particularly suited” for relocation other than massive buildings due to the nature of their construction and for technical reasons.²⁴⁶ If relocation is applied as a measure for genuine conservation, the building has to be moved to a comparable setting, preferably close to its original location, and carried out by means of authentic materials as well as techniques of craftsmanship and scientific documentation.²⁴⁷

The Chinese Cultural Relics Protection Law from 1982 states that in general, sites shall be conserved *in situ* but in cases where immovable cultural relics have to be relocated or demolished, this measure must be approved by the superordinate authority.²⁴⁸ Thereby, officially protected entities may not be demolished and have to be relocated.²⁴⁹ These regulations also apply to historical buildings. They shall be conserved *in situ* and work units that carry out construction work in their surroundings shall determine conservation measures for approval.²⁵⁰ Historical buildings may only be relocated or demolished in cases of public interest (*gonggong liyi* 公共利益) and if approved by respective authorities.²⁵¹

According to the China Principles, relocation may be applied as a final measure in cases of “uncontrollable natural threats” or “major development projects of national importance”.²⁵² In addition, this intervention is allowed when changes to

245 International Council on Monuments and Sites (adopted 1965): *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter 1964)*, art. 7.

246 Petzet, Michael (2013): “Conservation of Monuments and Sites — International Principles in Theory and Practice”, “Denkmalpflege — Internationale Grundsätze in Theorie und Praxis”, p. 81.

247 Ibid.

248 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People’s Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 20.

249 Ibid.

250 State Council 国务院 (2008): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu tiaoli* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护条例, art. 34.

251 Ibid.

252 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 63.

the natural setting have made protection *in situ* difficult or “historic remains have become isolated and have lost their historic context”.²⁵³

In terms of **funding**, the responsibility for treatment and maintenance of officially protected entities lies with the party holding the property rights. In the case of publicly owned entities this applies to the party holding the right of use. Local governments shall provide subsidies if the property or use right holder is unable to fulfil this duty.²⁵⁴ According to the Conservation Regulations, regional governments above county-level can further provide subsidies from conservation funds for the maintenance and treatment of historical buildings.²⁵⁵ And the China Principles determine that if income is generated from the economic utilization of a heritage site, a fixed proportion of this income must be used for its conservation.²⁵⁶

Concerning the **function and usage** of urban heritage, there are clear regulations for immovable cultural relics. Primarily, publicly owned immovable cultural relics cannot be mortgaged, and their ownership cannot be transferred.²⁵⁷ This regulation emerged as a result of historical experience, more specifically, a practice of local governments to permit travel agencies to operate in immovable cultural relics in the late 1980s, which led to the damage of sites because these agencies lacked knowledge and skills for proper conservation.²⁵⁸ Under the premise that they are not operated as business assets, they can be opened as museums and for sight-seeing purposes or used as repositories.²⁵⁹ Other forms of usage have to be approved by the authorities of the respective administrative level.²⁶⁰ Moreover,

253 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 85.

254 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 21.

255 State Council 国务院 (2008): *Lishi wenhua mingcheng mingzhen mingcun baohu tiaoli* 历史文化名城名镇名村保护条例, art. 33.

256 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 74.

257 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 24.

258 Lü, Zhou (2014): “Evolution of Cultural Heritage Conservation Philosophy Through the Lens of the Revised China Principles”, p. 8.

259 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 24.

260 *Ibid.*, art. 23.

the original state of immovable cultural relics must not be altered for usage and they cannot be damaged, transformed, demolished or new structures added.²⁶¹

More general guidelines for the function and use of heritage sites have been formulated in the primary China Principles from 2000. Article four states that usage must be consistent with the values of a heritage site. Furthermore, “heritage sites should be used in a rational manner (*heli liyong* 合理利用) for the benefit of society”.²⁶² Accordingly, the commentary on the China Principles further specifies that public access to the site should be provided.²⁶³

The **social benefit** of a heritage site is seen as deriving from its scientific research function, its social function and its aesthetic function. Accordingly, a site’s major contributions to social life are the enhancement of scientific knowledge and aesthetic value, which have to be considered in its form of use. Acceptable usage as part of the social function of a site comprises commemorative places for historic events or figures, centers of education, tourist venues “where history and culture are the main themes”, recreational places or places related to traditional customs and continuing religious practices.²⁶⁴

Under certain prerequisites, the use of heritage sites for the creation of **economic benefit** is permitted. These prerequisites include that sites are not rented out as real estate or commercial premises, their historical values are not distorted in order to draw visitors and they are not otherwise exploited for purely commercial gain.²⁶⁵ The commentary also illustrates how the social benefits of a site may generate economic benefits. Accordingly, social benefits of sites increase the prominence of a locality, which attracts greater numbers of visitors.²⁶⁶ On the one hand, this is seen as fostering commercial, service as well as other industries while, on the other hand, also leading to rising land prices.²⁶⁷ Moreover, non-tangible assets may derive from the site, such as cultural markets or intellectual property rights.²⁶⁸ This effect can be very well observed in the third case of this study (see chapter 5).

While the primary China Principles set a strong focus on the social and economic benefits of heritage sites, this is relativized in the revised version. Article six,

261 Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People’s Congress 第十二届全国人民代表大会常务委员会 (April 24, 2015): *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohu fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法, art. 26.

262 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p 60.

263 *Ibid.*, p. 73.

264 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

265 *Ibid.*

266 *Ibid.*

267 *Ibid.*

268 *Ibid.*

which addresses usage, states: “Use of a site for the benefit of society is important, but such use should not diminish the site’s values”.²⁶⁹ This aspect has also been included in the definition of a site’s “appropriate use” (in the primary version translated as “rational use”). Moreover, in the case that a site has lost its original function and under certain premises, such as significant components not being damaged or changes being reversible, it can be adapted for modern usage (adaptive reuse).²⁷⁰

One of the earliest **international charters** to address function and usage of historic towns and urban areas was the Washington Charter from 1987. It proceeds from the assumption that historic towns and traditional urban areas embody cultural value and seeks to adapt them to contemporary life through an integration of conservation and restoration with development.²⁷¹ Conservation shall be included into economic and social development policies as well as urban planning in order to protect such qualities as the urban street pattern, the formal appearance of buildings or the functions of the town/area and the relation to its surrounding setting.²⁷²

Simultaneously, the charter acknowledges that new functions and activities can enrich an area if they are compatible with its historic character as well as contemporary elements, which respect the existing spatial layout and are not in conflict with their surroundings.²⁷³ Thereby, adaptation to contemporary life is understood in terms of installation and improvement of public service facilities as well as improvement of housing.²⁷⁴

In 1999, ICOMOS further recognized the importance and need for protection of built vernacular heritage in reaction to an increasing “homogenization of culture” and global socio-economic transformations. In the Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage, vernacular is seen as an “integral part of the cultural landscape” that should be preserved as groups of buildings representative for a region including traditions and intangible heritage associated with it.²⁷⁵ Thereby, changes are seen as an important feature of this type of heritage and adaptive reuse of vernacular structures is accepted if they maintain their integrity, character and form through consistency of, for example, appearance and building materials.²⁷⁶

269 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2004): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 63.

270 *Ibid.*, p. 104.

271 International Council on Monuments and Sites (1987): *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (Washington Charter 1987)*.

272 *Ibid.*, art. 1, 2.

273 *Ibid.*, art. 8, 10.

274 *Ibid.*, art. 8, 9.

275 International Council on Monuments and Sites (1999): *Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage (1999)*, *Principles of Conservation*, art. 3–5.

276 *Ibid.*, art. 4–6.

The revised China Principles primarily address the special conditions of living heritage as described in the two above-mentioned charters. Article 44 determines that sites whose historic function is an integral part of their value and have retained this historic function should be “encouraged to continue that function”.²⁷⁷ The commentary clarifies that this condition is found in HCF Cities and Towns/Villages as well as cultural landscapes that underwent development and have adapted to modern ways of life.²⁷⁸ In these cases, “special effort should be made to protect the original function” and “special attention should be given to avoid the transformation of a residential precinct into a commercial district, as this seriously diminishes its values and authenticity”.²⁷⁹

These latter notes of caution certainly reflect experiences of local conservation practices in China where conservation has been used as justification for the commercialization of urban districts or entire villages and incredible conservation practices designated by scholars as “Disneyfication”.²⁸⁰ In the following, the establishment of local conservation systems, their compliance to national and international principles and their effectiveness as part of the three-tiered HCF City conservation system shall be analyzed by example of three pioneering cases, Suzhou Pingjiang Historic Block, Tongli Ancient Water Town and Shanghai Tianzifang.

277 China ICOMOS (Chinese-language document); Agnew, Neville; Demas, Martha (English-language translation ed., 2015): *Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 中国文物古迹保护准则, *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China*, p. 103.

278 Ibid.

279 Ibid.

280 See for example: Botz-Bornstein, Thorsten (2012): “Hyperreal Monuments of the Mind: Traditional Chinese Architecture and Disneyland”, p. 12.

