

HOSTED BY



ELSEVIER

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

ScienceDirect

www.elsevier.com/locate/foar

Frontiers of
Architectural
Research

RESEARCH ARTICLE

A structural project: Redevelopment of the historic center of Wuhu[☆]



Francesco Isidori^{*}

LABICS, Via Ennio Quirino Visconti 11, Rome, Italy

Received 5 July 2014; received in revised form 15 December 2014; accepted 2 January 2015

KEYWORDS

Historic center;
Redevelopment;
Reconstruction;
Restoration;
Identity;
Collective memory;
Urban fabric;
Monuments;
Urban grid;
Typology;
Persistence

Abstract

Restoration and redevelopment are difficult when traces of things that require preservation have been minimized. Such operations are even more complex whenever a portion of an ancient city is involved. This essay describes the redevelopment project of the historic center of Wuhu through the different themes raised during the drafting of the project: from the cultural opportunity of a wide reconstruction work, to the definition of the main design strategies, and the question of memory and identity.

The results show that the field of intervention in this project is broader than that of most restoration projects, that is, an evolving city center, which is impossible to consider with traditional restoration parameters or with pure conservation. The only possibility of intervention is on the city structure, which allows the city to develop itself continuously within a well-defined system of rules.

© 2015. Higher Education Press Limited Company. Production and hosting by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

[☆]The client of this project was Vanke Co. Ltd. We were committed to design definitive illustrations of the master plan of the historic center of Wuhu between 2011 and 2012. The area was approximately 250,000 sqm. The design work was appointed to Labics (Maria Claudia Clemente, Francesco Isidori), together with Prof. Luigi Gazzola and Yang Hui. The team comprised Gaia Maria Lombardo, Chiara Capriulo, Pablo Carballal, Leonardo Consolazione, Manuela Gentile, and Piergiorgio Loconte.

^{*}Tel.: +39 0657288049.

E-mail address: francesco.isidori@labics.it

Peer review under responsibility of Southeast University.

1. Introduction

The redevelopment project for the historic center of Wuhu in Anhui Province requires the consideration of a hard set of themes and general questions and specific issues related to the project itself. The almost complete destruction of the foremost historic buildings of this town occurred during the last century. Those who intend to manage the redevelopment project face a twofold issue because of the poor conservation of the few surviving residential buildings that date back to the period prior to the 20th century.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.foar.2015.01.001>

2095-2635/© 2015. Higher Education Press Limited Company. Production and hosting by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

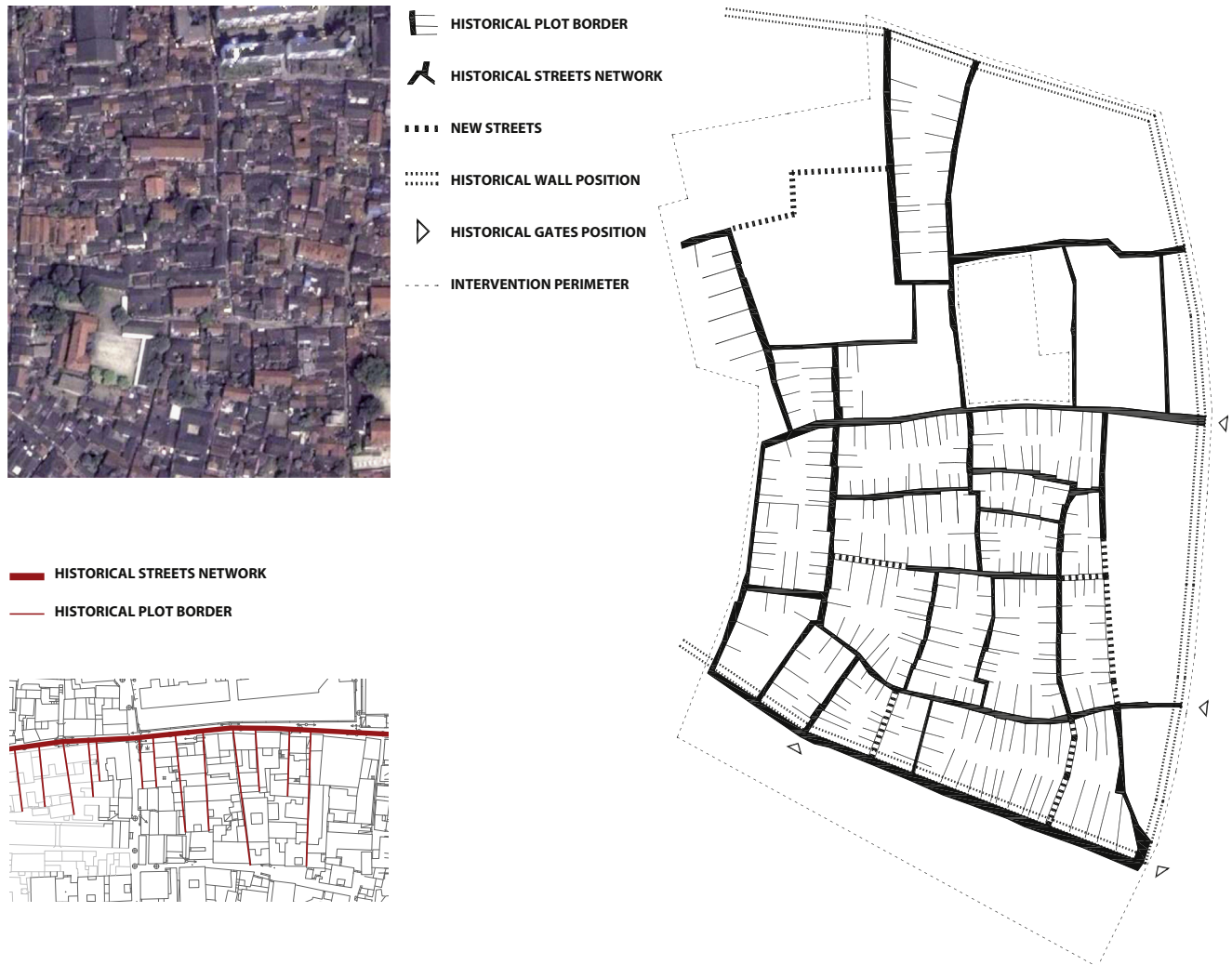


Figure 1 Illustration of the bidimensional structure of Wuhu, and an aerial image of a typical Chinese historic center.

The first issue concerns the worthiness of implementing a restoration plan if past elements are almost completely lacking.¹ The second issue involves the means to achieve such work, that is, whether to perform a reconstruction rather than a restoration.

Therefore, the following question emerges: is it sensible to rebuild the historic center, which has already been gone a century ago? Which economic, social, and political role could or should the new historic center retain? Is the reconstruction of a historic center based on very few true permanencies culturally feasible?

1.1. Role of the historic center

Obviously, providing an exhaustive answer to these unopened issues would entail long discussions. The cultural accuracy of redeveloping a historic center and the scientific criteria to be adopted to validate the redevelopment are unclear.

¹In our case, the percentage of the ancient buildings in the historic center was less than 15%.

In the closest examples, the meaning of historic center can only be reflected upon to understand the importance of the construction and definition of a city.

In the history of Western cities, historic centers obviously have continuously represented the pulsing heart, identity, memory, and development driver of cities. The center is where most intense and remarkable experiences of *urban facts* occur (Rossi, 1966). Therefore, besides the aforementioned cultural issues, the role of historic center in a city is rather essential and undeniable in the overall balance of the city itself, as marked by two aspects. The first aspect is related to the collective memory, which is a common heritage that represents the identity and sense of belongingness of people in a community. According to Bernardo Secchi, historic centers are places where “the history of entire societies and past cultures are expressed tangibly” (Secchi, 2007); this statement does not only imply the possibility of providing a historic evidence to future generations, but most importantly enables creating an essential bond that is typical of any permanent society among men, the community, and the environment. One of the reasons many contemporary outskirts are rejected by the inhabitants of these outskirts is the broken bond between men and the environment, which is typical of historic centers.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/270653>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/270653>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)