



The World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO



**THE HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPE (HUL) PROGRAMME
at WHITRAP & Tongji University, China and CNR-ICVBC, Italy**

**CHINA AND ITALY BILATERAL PROJECT
FOR THE EXCHANGE OF HERITAGE CONSERVATION EXPERIENCES
Tongli (CH) and Priverno (IT) Comparative Research on the Application of the HUL
Approach**

中意遗产保护经验交流项目：历史性城镇景观方法在同里和普里韦尔诺应用的比较研究

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Organizers:

- *World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region (WHITRAP) under the auspices of UNESCO. Shanghai, China*
- *Tongji University's Advanced Research Institute for Architecture and Urban-Rural Planning. Shanghai, China.*
- *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR), Institute for the Conservation and Valorization of Cultural Heritage (ICVBC). Rome, Italy.*

Partners:

China:

- *Tongli Local Authorities*
- *World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region (WHITRAP) under the auspices of UNESCO. Shanghai, China*
- *Tongji University*

Italy:

- *Priverno Local Authorities (Latina);*
- *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche – Istituto per la Conservazione e la Valorizzazione dei Beni Culturali, Roma (CNR-ICVBC)*
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Aim:

To promote a comparative research project (between China and Italy) on small historic towns through three major critical lenses extrapolated from the HUL approach: integrated landscape, built heritage, memory and identity .

The towns of Tongli and Priverno have been identified as pilot cases (involving local stakeholders) in order to develop strategies for management and conservation, useful also at a broader regional and national level. This will be developed through two main activities: comparative research and visit of local authorities' delegations to each country.

Tongli and Priverno: small historic towns

Tongli



Tongli Town is located on the southern outskirts of Suzhou, about an hour drive from Shanghai, and is one of the six famous ancient towns in the region of the Yangtze River, known as the “Venice of the East”, due to its ancient canals. In the heart of this historic town is located the Tuisi Garden, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Due to its importance on Chinese history, its historic architecture and engineering systems of communication and transportation of water canals and bridges, Tongli is acknowledged as one of the Chinese National Cultural Heritage Relics. These canals and historic buildings are well preserved and witness to the different historical layers from the Song Dynasty to the Republic of China (i.e. from the late 10th century up to 1949). Tongli is geographically surrounded by five lakes, while a river passes through that divides this town into several segments. Because of the challenges of its geographical location, with difficulties of accessibility and communication, and a lack of natural resources, many of the historic structures have been preserved, but at the same time this leads to obstacles for further development.

The city's intangible culture and traditional practices are represented through four main elements: the tea culture; the “Wujiang Bridge Walk”, for which is used a traditional Qing Dynasty Suit to walk over the bridge in important ceremonies such as marriage, birthday, baby full moon, etc.. The remarkable fishing technique due to its antiquity and particularity, based on the use of cormorants. Tongli's food production of aquatic nature, among others these are water shields (aka dollar bonnet, *Brasenia schreberi*, an aquatic plant), water chestnuts, lotus roots and other aquatic plants.

Priverno



Priverno is located in a strategic position within the Lepini mountain complex, overlooking the valley of Amaseno, in the Lazio region. Less than a 100 km distant from Rome, the antique city of Privernum (312 BC – 455 AD) played a very important role during the Roman Empire, as the archaeological remains give evidence, because it was situated on the consular street of Appia, through which all traffic with the Mediterranean was taking place.

Under the name of Piperno a new city was built during medieval times on the hilly territory of “Monti Lepini” (XI th C.) in a more easily defensive location against the Saracen pirates’ incursions. The medieval city grew in close relationship also with the near-by famous Fossanova Abbey, a Cistercian monastery dating back to 1135 -- where the great theologian St. Thomas Aquinas died in 1274 . The city’s different names Privernum, Piperno, Priverno, narrate and give evidence together with the city’s wall, towers, medieval streetscape, fresco churches, renaissance palaces, major piazzas and the archaeological museum, of its long and stratified history.

The city’s intangible culture and traditional costumes are celebrated with three events yearly: the Via Crucis procession in Easter; the “Palio del Tributo” in June, evoking the predominance of Priverno in 15th -16th century on nearby communities, with a horse race along the city’s major street covered by sand; the medieval feast in the Fossanova Abbey, in August, with costume processions and local dances, chants and food. In parallel the city’s interrelation to the territory is evident in the different “trade routes” and “routes of traditional professions” such as of snow collectors, house builders, spigolatrici, strammari, that unite the use of local materials and traditional skills with the history of local people, thus acknowledging and exporting their traditions.

Project activities

1. Research

Within the framework of the HUL approach three principal elements for theoretical development and analysis in both towns will be researched:

- a) Memory and identity
- b) Build Heritage:
- c) Integrated Landscape:

The background research would be based on the analysis of these two towns' urban conservation practices (conservation processes background, systems of conservation and conservation and development planning and policies), economic forces (industries and development relationships and influences) and sociocultural aspects (change of the population and their quality of life, and other sustainable approaches for conservation).

The research will be developed locally and with the insights from the local stakeholders' visits, utilizing the following tools

- Literature, cartography review, other historic documentation
- Mapping of the city's cultural and community resources (cultural mapping)
- Interviews to experts, local authorities and other stakeholders

2. Visit of local authorities delegations to each country.

The participation of the correspondent local authorities in this project is fundamental. They represent the principal stakeholders responsible for the improvement of heritage conservation management and practices in the respective cities, therefore they will give direct insight to the research and to its implementation. For that, in each of the national delegations encounters, local communities as well as national and international organizations will accompany these visits and workshops.