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# Rebuilding from the countryside. Huiyang as a “Green City” of the future.\*

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\*The paper is the result of the joint discussion of the authors. The individual parts have been edited as follows: Maurizio Meriggi is responsible in particular of the text “1. Danshui-Qiuchang: Huiyang’s forma urbis.”, Federico Acuto of the text “2. Rebuilding from the countryside: a planning strategy of Huiyang hybrid landscape”. References to the text are enlisted at p. 244, in the section: *Chinese Official Planning documents and literature on Chinese rural planning referring to the Present Research; Reports on the Present Research by Politecnico di Milano*; 245-247, *Hakka Settlement: Culture, Architecture, Interiors and Landscape*.

## 1. Danshui-Qiuchang: Huiyang’s forma urbis.

The *Qiuchangzhen Map*, from 1979, accurately shows Huiyang’s city *forma urbis*. In the map, the south-eastern part is a city with a compact shape, Danshui - literally “clear water” - from the name of the river that borders it and which flows from the south - from Longgang, the north-eastern district of Shenzhen - to the north, up to the capital of Huizhou Prefecture. The Danshui river is a tributary of the main river of the Guangdong Province and before confluence in Huizhou collects as well the water from another tributary, the Xizhi river flowing from east, from Huidong.

The western and northern part of the city is made up of a group of villages called Qiuchangzhen - literally “town” (zhen) of Qiu “commune” (chang).

This dualistic structure reflects the territorial organization that characterizes the Chinese rural territory which has been defined by the American historian and anthropologist G. W. Skinner (Skinner, 1964-65; 1997) as an “urban-rural continuum”.

His studies describe a model of distribution of economic activities and institutional and social performance in the form of a continuum between city and countryside, which fades from the urban centres of the imperial administration to the network of exchange centres (standard market town) around which the villages are distributed (Table 1).

The network of imperial administrative centers is structured hierarchically, according to a top-down scheme that follows the hierarchy of the hydrographic network (from main rivers to their tributaries), from provincial capitals to prefectural cities, county capitals and military garrisons, fading into the network of small and medium-sized rural marketing centres, the seat of the small local nobility (family clans), to whom local government is delegated, and which controls the development of agricultural production, land use and manufacturing.

The network of market towns is the expression of a bottom-up hierarchy articulated in: minor market (trading places in points of high accessibility), standard market with its market community in the surrounding villages (standard market community), intermediate market towns in the provincial capitals also acting as tax offices, and regional and inter-regional markets in the prefecture and provincial capitals (central market city).

Skinner noted that the marketing community is the basic territorial unit of the Chinese countryside (Table 1) each of which gathers a variable number of villages which, according to statistics collected by Skinner in Chinese territory during the 1940-1950s, must provide no less than 6,000 buyers; when this number exceeds 12,000-13,000 units, a new market is established.

This structure has survived until today almost intact in situations less affected by the transformation processes of recent decades, having been transferred to the territorial building of the People’s Republic of China of the rural “communes”.

This happened through a simple translation of the terms in the system of territorial organization of the “municipalities” of the structure of the rural-urban continuum. Standard market town centers and family clan local government became “rural communes”; the villages included in their territory have become “production brigades”; the residences with their family temples became “teams”.

Evidence of this process can be found in the reading of the official cartography and in the presence of Maoist slogan graffiti in the villages whose ancestral temples were transformed into community meeting places.

In the case of the double settlement of Huiyang we recognize in the center of Danshui - which was a minor administrative center for the collection of taxes - an intermediate market city, with the market at the bridge over the Danshui river from where two roads branch off to Zhenlongzhen-Dongguan-Guangzhou (the provincial capital), to the northwest, and for Huizhou (the prefectural capital), to the north. Along these roads are located in the territory of Qiuchang the two minor markets of Wei Bu, to the northwest, and of Niu Lang Jing near the village of Xing Ling, to the north. Around each of them there are five to six villages that host their market communities.

The map identifies the boundaries of the villages with a dash-dot (see Figures 1-2), which include portions of agricultural land and watercourses, well-long aggregates and foothill aggregates of other simpler housing typologies.

The hills are partly covered by woods which host the cemeteries of the villages, made up of villages of urn-houses (Tables 8b-c).

As we have seen here in the essay by Chen Zhen

On the opposite page:  
Qiuchangzhen “Commune”  
Map, 1979 (Source: Huiyang  
Municipal Archive).

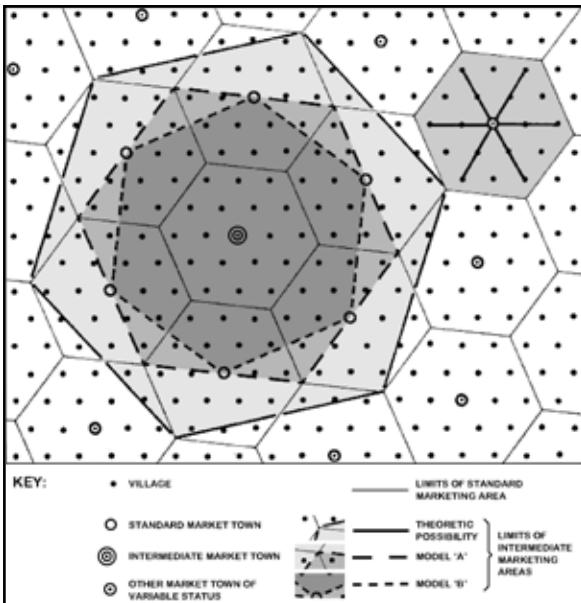






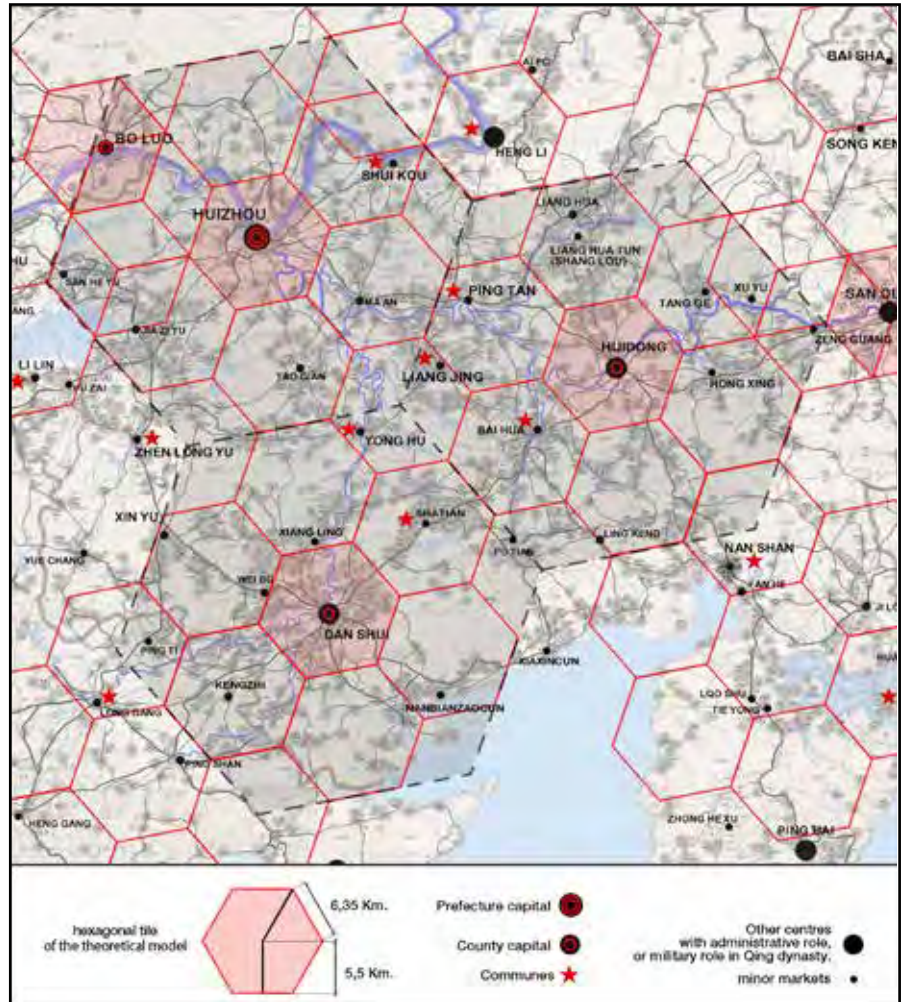
**Table 1**

Basic structure of Chinese urban-rural continuum. "Model of the Chinese standard marketing area as a stable spatial system, together with three possible models of intermediate marketing areas" (© Meriggi, 2018, from Skinner, 1964).



**Table 2**

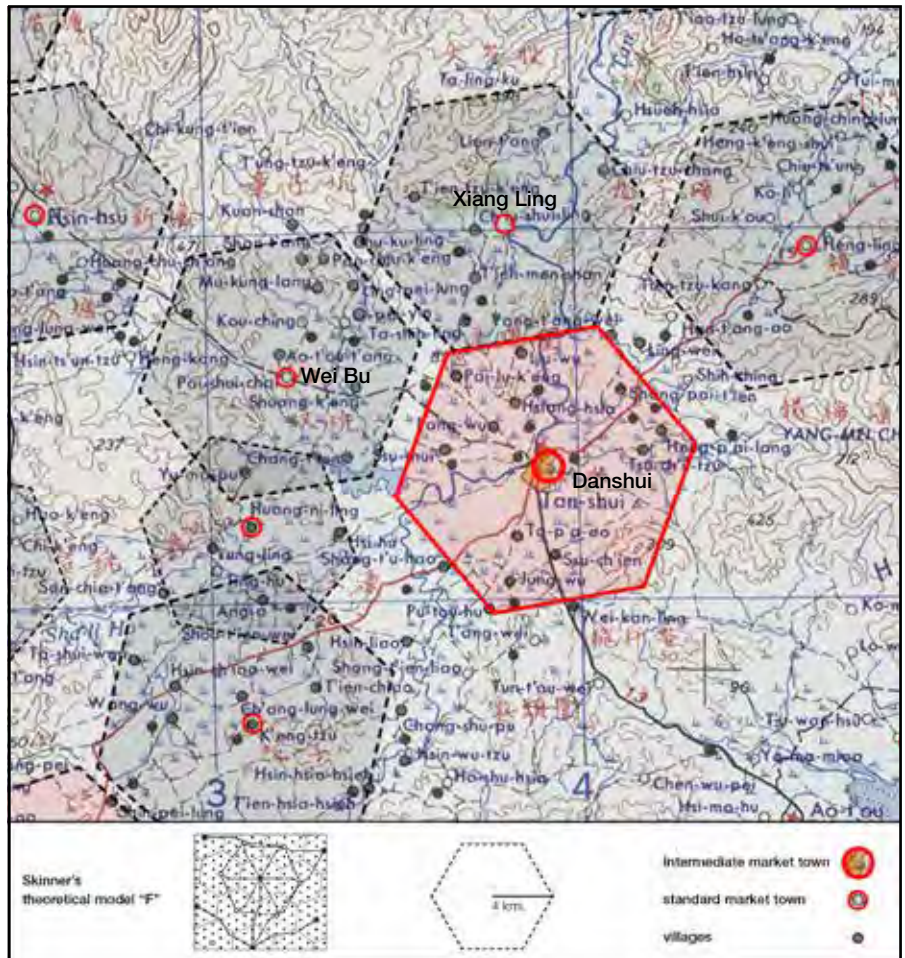
Huizhou Prefecture's urban-rural continuum structure. Application of the Skinner's standard marketing area model in the urban-rural continuum of Huizhou territory. The three centers of Huizhou, Huiyang, Huidong form an equilateral triangle of side 33 km (© Meriggi, 2018).



**Table 3**

Rural marketing network in Danshui (Huiyang) area. Example of intermediate market in the Prefecture of Huizhou, Huiyang County, Danshui Valley, Dong River basin. The market community is divided into two originally administratively distinct parts: Danshui Commune, in the center of the floodplain of the Danshui River in continuity with the Longgang and Pingshan market catchment area in the west (today Shenzhen district), and with those of Huidong to the east; Qiuchang Commune in the northwestern part, in the hilly area at the foot of the central massif, located at the mouth of the valleys connecting to Huizhou following the Danshui river at north and to Dongguan (via Zhenglong zhen) at northwest. Given this geographical position and the density of the settlement, the structure of the intermediate level market community takes on an arrangement associable to Skinner's "F" model with the central market located in the town of Huiyang at the

end of the bridge over the Danshui river, surrounded in all directions from secondary markets. The territory of the Qiuchang Commune consists of a dozen villages with numerous sub-villages made up of agglomerations of weilong of various size and small units located at the foot of gentle hills, and on the slopes of the central massif. Here are the two minor market communities with a basin of 4 km radius. – Wei Bu, to the west on the road to Zhenlongzhen, and Xiang Ling, to the north located at the river port located on a bend in the Danshui river at the point of intersection with the road that follows the course of the river up to Liang Jing. Sources: extract from U.S. Army map of China, 1:250,000, Army Map Service, Corps of Engineers, Washington D.C., 1954 (© Meriggi, 2018).







**Table 4**  
Villages boundaries in Huiyang city. Black: built up area after the 1979 map of Qiuchangzhen "Commune" Map, 1979; dark brown: built up area in Huiyang Map 1998; light brown - built up area forecasted in Huiyang Master Plan 2007-2020, update 2012 (Elaboration Z. Chen, 2013).

(pp. 76-82), the villages made up of Hakka residences, of the weilong type (see the detailed redrawings here at pp. 38-55), are arranged following the rules of Feng Shui according to which the orientation of the family temples (*citang*) inside the residences is fixed on the basis of the disposition in the surrounding landscape of watercourses, hills and cultivated plains (Table 8c).

The other aspect underlined by Skinner is the urban character of standard market towns, to carry out services and activities usually located in towns such as local government. This aspect must be connected with the so-called "ritual revolution of the sixteenth century," thanks to which the Emperor granting the local nobility the permission to erect family temples (*citang*) of the ancestors for the same Confucian rites honored by the Emperor to his ancestors, effectively elevated this class to the role of local government administration. This power consisted mainly in the census of the local population, in the collection of taxes and in the social control of the communities through the clans. But alongside these activities of this type we must also consider another classic urban activity carried out in these rural areas such as higher education, imparted in the Confucian Academies, which allowed access to positions in the Imperial Bureaucracy.

In the territory of the municipality of Qiuchangzhen we find several of these elements: the presence of

prestigious and influential family clans - such as the Ye (see Here: Tan Zhu, p. 189), the minor markets of Niu Lang Jin and Weibu, the Confucian Academy of Ting Xiu Shu Yuan.

Huiyang, today the second urban center of the prefecture after the capital Huizhou, is located in one of the three vertices of a territorial scheme in the shape of an equilateral triangle (Table 2), with the other two vertices in Huidong and Huizhou (at a distance of about 33 km from each other), with sides almost coinciding with the valleys of the Danshui River, flowing through Huiyang, and the Zhizhi River flowing through Huidong, and navigable up to their confluence near Huizhou in the Dong River, the main river of the province, also navigable up to its mouth near Guangzhou (provincial capital). Huiyang and Huidong are intermediate market centers while Huizhou is the central one. At the center of the triangle is the standard market town of Liang Jing. The other market centers are arranged homogeneously around the three vertices.

Going down the scale (Table 3), in the territory of the "commune" of Qiuchang there are 12 villages gathered around the two minor market centers: Niu Lang Jing, in the village of Xiang Ling, located along the Danshui river and the main road to Huizhou, and Wei Bu located on a tributary of the Danshui River and along the main road to Zhenlongzhen-Dongguan-Guangzhou. Each of the villages is variously made up of hamlets in turn with clusters of weilong and other simpler types lining the main roads. From Danshui, the roads branch off to Dayawan Bay in the south (following a canal derived from the Danshui River), and the road to Huidong in the east.

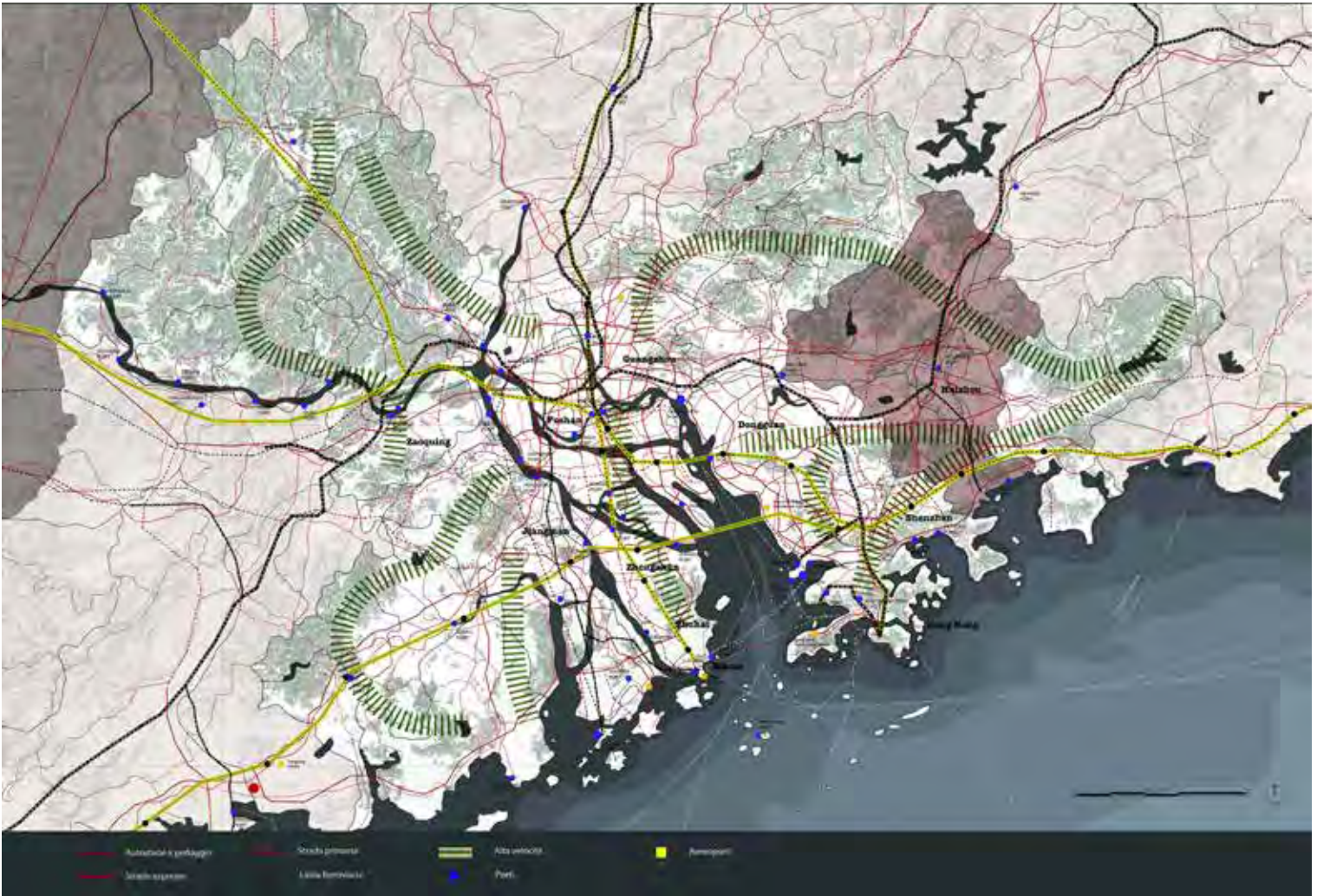
The territorial structure of Huizhou prefecture thus perfectly reflects both Skinner's model of the rural-urban continuum built on the hierarchy of market centers and the model of the distribution of centers of the Imperial Administration with respect to the hierarchy of the river's hydrographic network.

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The following notes give an account of a project to enhance the vast Hakka architectural and landscape heritage in Huiyang located in the territory of the Qiuchang "commune", where the 2007-2020 Master Plan concentrated a large part of the future urbanization of the city (Figures 2, 11).

In this part, on the western side of the Danshui river valley, urbanization is planned in two areas with distinct characteristics: in the western area, towards Shenzhen, in extension of the already existing industrial urbanization in the villages of Cha Yuan, Qiuchang, Wei Bu, Gao Lin, Xing Tang and Xi Hu; in the northern area, currently mainly agricultural, of the villages of Ling Hu, Tie Men Shan, Zhou Tian, Xiang Ling, where most of the Hakka weilong are still present surrounded by the original still intact landscape elements of water, hills and cultivated plain, regulated from *Feng Shui*.





**Table 5**  
Green Corridors and Main Transport Infrastructural Skelton in PRD.  
*The comprehensive Regional Eco-security system of the Greater Pearl River Delta Township" and the PRD accessibility network.*  
Green dotted tracks: green corridors; black dotted line: railways; yellow dotted line: high-speed railways; red: highways, express roads, primary roads; blue dots: ports; yellow square: airports.  
Sources: Construction Department, Guangdong Province - Development Bureau et al, 2009  
(Elaboration: J. Lin, L. Parenti, S. Vismara, K. Zodo, 2013).



**Table 6**  
Green and Blue networks in Eastern PRD: Huizhou Prefecture hubs.  
*Huiyang is located on the blue corridor of Danshui River, between the East Coastal and East Central Massive green corridors*  
(Elaboration: M. Meriggi).

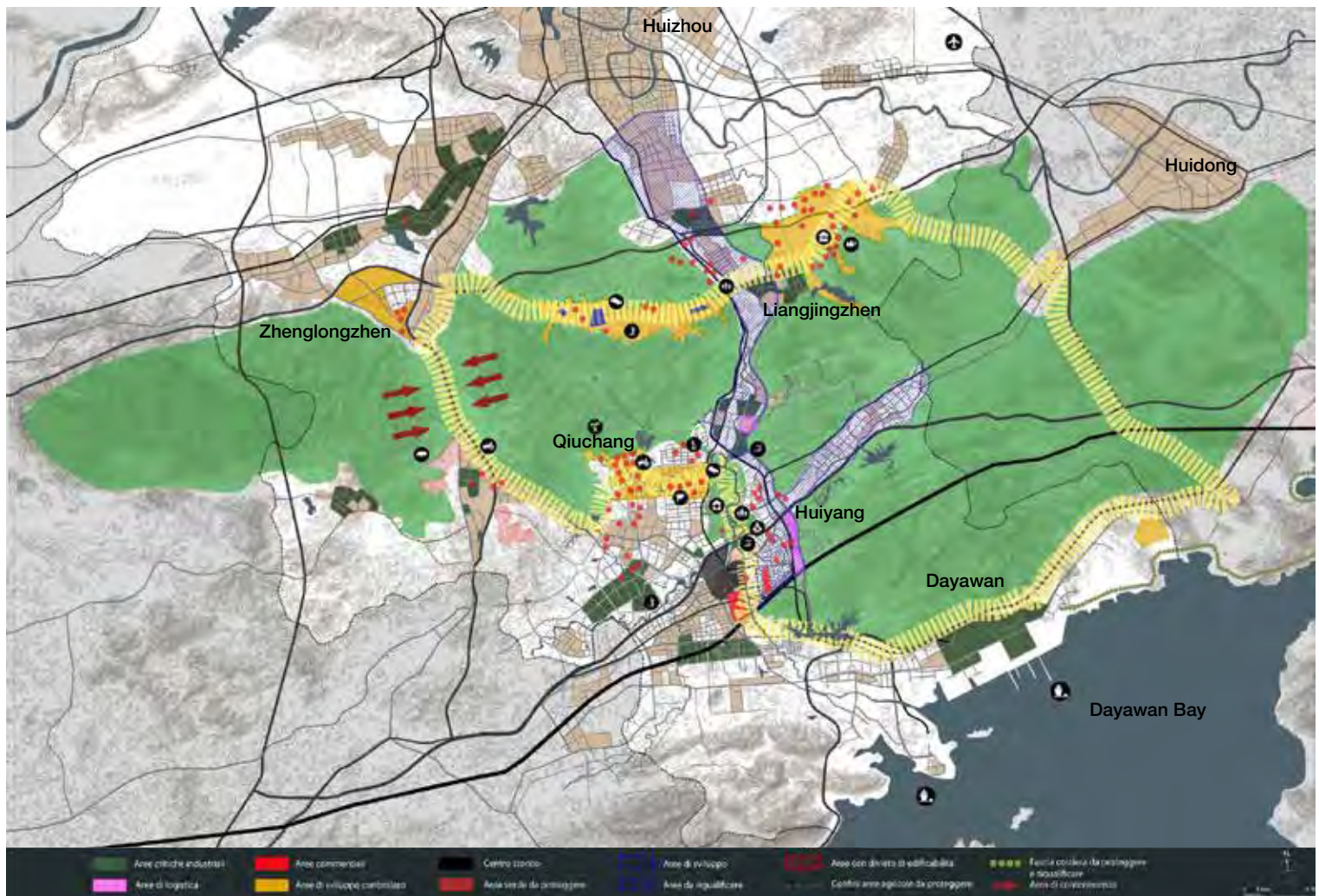
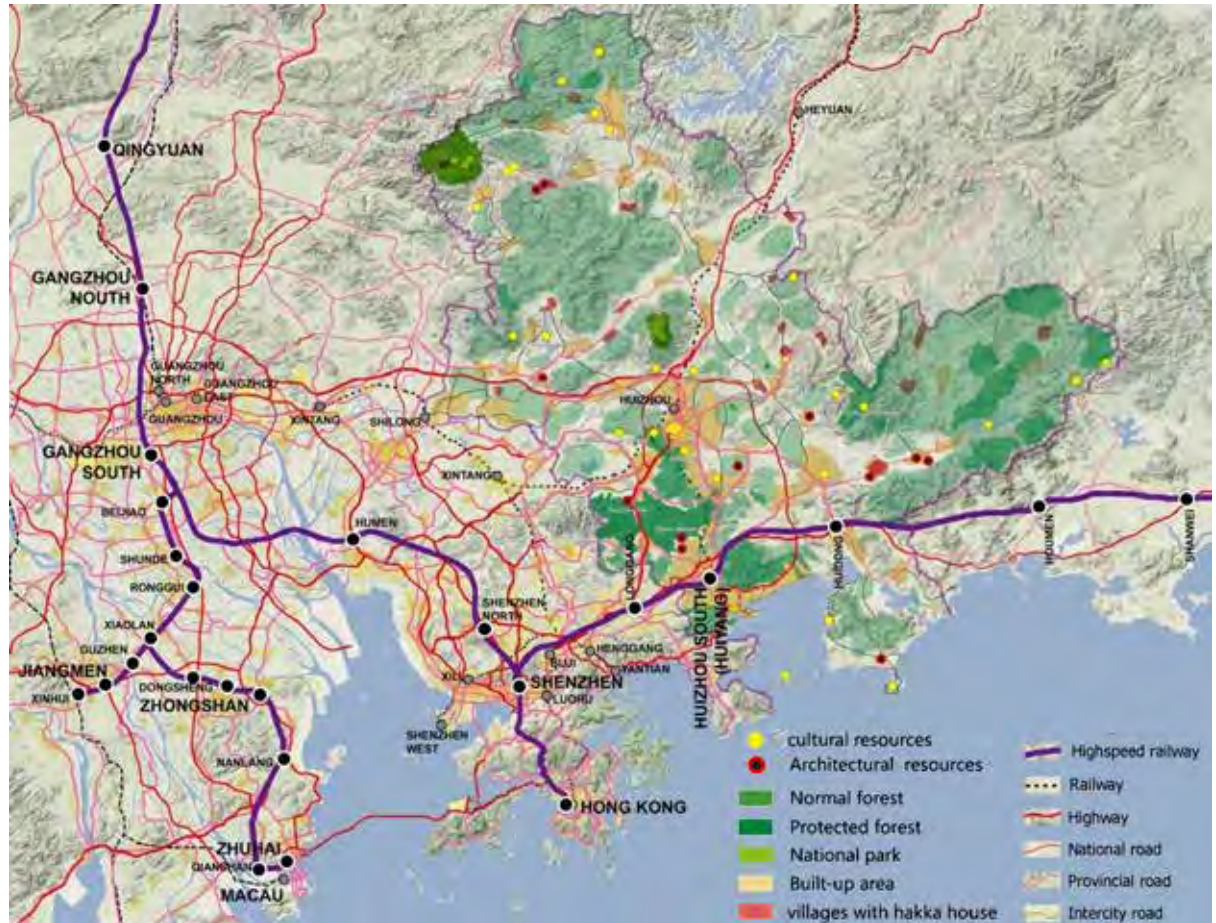


**Table 7**

PRD East "Green City" in Huizhou Prefecture. Huiyang is connected through high-speed railway (Huizhou South Station) to the main centres of the Bay Area of PRD. It is the entrance gate to the "Green City" of Huizhou Prefecture. It is rich of extended natural resources (national parks and forests) and historical cultural resources (Hakka villages) for tourism development (Elaboration: V. Donato, Z. Chen, S. Recalcati, A. Terenzi 2010).

**Table 8**

Anti-polar System of the Hakka Settlement among the three Major Centers of Huizhou Prefecture. Development strategy of Hakka heritage concentration centers in Huizhou prefecture through a system of park ways between Qiuchang-Zhenglong/Liangjing - west antipolar, historical heritage and Huyang/Dayawan Bay/Huidong - east antipolar, forest parks (Elaboration: J. Lin, L. Parenti, S. Vismara, K. Zodo, 2013).







a



b



c



d

**Tables 9a-d**  
 Hakka Heritage in Xing Ling, Tiemenshan, Zhoutian, Weibu villages.  
 a. Contradictions with preservation issues of Hakka residences in Huiyang 2007-2020 Master Plan; landscape units of Hakka residences;  
 c. Feng shui elements: hydraulic system, ritual hills, axes of ancestral temples orientation, ying forces (white) and yang forces (red).  
 d. proposal for a central park in the area of Hakka residences in Tie Men Shan/Ling Hu territory (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).

On the opposite page:  
**Figures 1-8**  
 Scenic spots from the proposed Huiyang “Park way” (Photomontages by Luo Yuanhang, Qui Jinjin, Wang Weiyan, Zhao Dongming, 2013).

**2. Rebuilding from the countryside: a planning strategy of Huiyang hybrid landscape.**

The 2007-2020 Master Plan followed the phenomenon of in situ urbanization, common to other areas of the Pearl River Delta described by scholars in the years 1990-2000 as an aggressive and intensive urbanization of agricultural hinterland territories located in the peripheral areas of the cities which form the agglomeration (Gulding, 1992, 1997; Friedman, 2005).

The spatial and socio-economic transformation of these hinterland settlements in southern China had been defined by G. E. Gulding as a hybrid landscape “(...) no longer clearly urban or rural (...) but a fusion of the two” (Gulding, 2001 :14).

Mike Davis (2004), reporting 1990s Gulding’s studies comparing South China cases of rural transformation with Indonesian desakotas (Gulding, 1997), asserted that a new form of human settlement was forming in China as a blending of rural and urban (Davis, 2004). In the areas observed by Gulding in Dongguan and Shenzhen in the 1990s, this fusion with the rural

has today almost completely disappeared but in the case of the Huiyang district the two “rural” and “urban” components of the “hybrid landscape” in 2009, when our research began, they were still present and distinguishable.

At that time, several official documents on PRD development by the Guangdong Provincial Government, considering it “the most competitive metropolitan area of the world” pointed out the following strategic issues:

- “1.Regional natural environment protection (...) a regional eco-security framework for protecting and managing the sea bank area and the water system (...)
- 2. A Low-Carbon economic system (...)
- 3. The improvement on function organization (...) a more effective functional multi-elements structure aimed to mutual benefit and balance among production, life and eco-effect (...)
- 4. The more convenient and compact development cities. It should insist on a compact





1



2



3



4



5



6

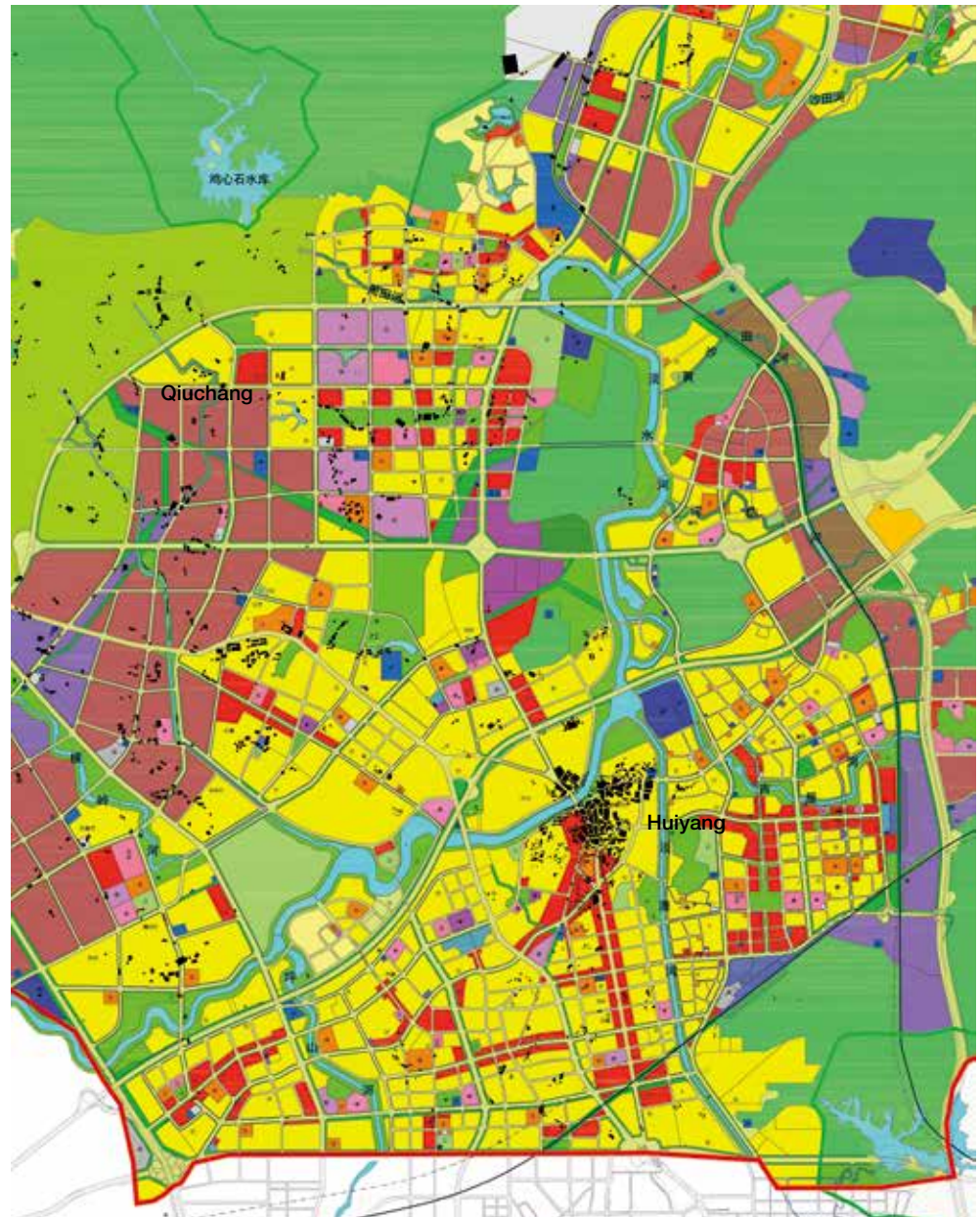


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8





development based on the existing construction. It should pay attention to the regeneration on existing areas, meanwhile it should control tightly the new regional construction projects (...)

5. Regional humanistic and relax area net system (...) project for the town, blocks characterized by the South-China culture, Hakka culture, immigrant culture, English and Portuguese cultures; sustainable utilization of water resources; construction of an open and humanistic water bank system; a special respect on public function development and landscape design in water bank area; unification the public green system in different level, as the regional, suburban, urban and community level to be a continual green areas system. (...)

6. Unified regional sustainable transportation system (...)

7. The creative industrial region.”  
(Guangdong Provincial Government, 2009).

*Qiuchang commune territory in Huiyang master Plan 2007-2020 and its remedial proposal for Hakka heritage preservation (2010-2011).*

The Huiyang Master Plan 2007-2020 was in several aspects in contradiction with the above issues set by the Guangdong government document on the PRD, especially with respect to the point of enhancing and preserving the architectural heritage of the Hakka culture, which is mainly in Huiyang concentrated in the territory of the Qiuchang “commune”.

Here, the plan forecasted to expand existing industrial complexes in Wei Bu Marketing Community Territory, and some new industrial areas and residential and office blocks in Xiang Ling Marketing Community Territory, while maintaining farmland only in the village territory of Zhoutian, indicated in the Master Plan as an agricultural park.

The most critical contradiction was in Tie Men Shan village where the foreseen road network of the new settlement was overlapping some of the buildings of the most notable Hakka residences ensembles (Table 8a).

**Table 10**

Extract from Huiyang Master Plan 2007-2020, with (in black) the historical residences in the territories of former “communes” of Qiuchang and Danshui (Base source: Huizhou, Municipal Bureau of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, 2007; elaboration by the authors).





## HUIYANG GREEN CITY PLAN



**A area**  
Tie Men Shan and Ling Hu Villages  
Agricultural Park area.  
Restoration of Hakka residences  
New construction are not allowed



**B area**  
Zhoutian Village  
Agricultural Park area.  
Restoration of Hakka residences  
New construction are not allowed



**C area**  
Cha Yuan, Wei Bu and Gao Ling Villages  
Local parks and communal facilities in Hakka villages and residences



**D areas**  
Development areas with medium and low density of the urban fabric respecting the land morphology and facilities in Hakka villages and residences



**E areas**  
Natural Park

Our proposal in 2011, considering the general framework of the issues enlisted in the official document about PRD development (synthetically illustrated in Tables 4-7), was started from the geographical distribution of historical villages of the urban-rural continuum in the territory of future urbanization, using it as the skeleton of the form of the future city and whose core would have been a central park in Tie Men Shan and Ling Hu villages (Table 8d).

*The 2012 version of Huiyang Master Plan and the development of the plan for Hakka architectural heritage preservation (2012-2015).*

The scheme proposed by the Politecnico di Milano team in 2011 was partially considered by Huizhou Municipal Bureau of Housing and Urban-rural Development in the update of the Master Plan in 2012, by establishing a conservation area forming a green block in the middle of Tie Men Shan village including the three large Hakka residences (Table 11).

In 2012 a new scheme was developed by Politecnico team introducing the project of a “park way” (Table 9)

as a scenic road crossing Huiyang agricultural landscape with Hakka residences (Figures 3-10) and the natural landscape along the Danshui River.

The proposed scheme consists of a wide green belt from southeast to northwest crossing the urbanized area, centered on a parkway and part of the Danshui River, surrounded by urban parks and agricultural areas including in its boundary a large number of Hakka residences with their agricultural land areas.

This “green corridor” was intended to connect the parallel eastern and central-eastern coastal “green corridors” of the PRD eco-security plan (Tables 4-5) using the Danshui River valley as a “blue corridor”.

The southern terminus of the “green belt” is the Huizhou South High-Speed Railway Station, which is regarded as the entrance area to the “green city” of Huizhou Prefecture (Tables 6-7), where an integrated transportation network audience was expected.

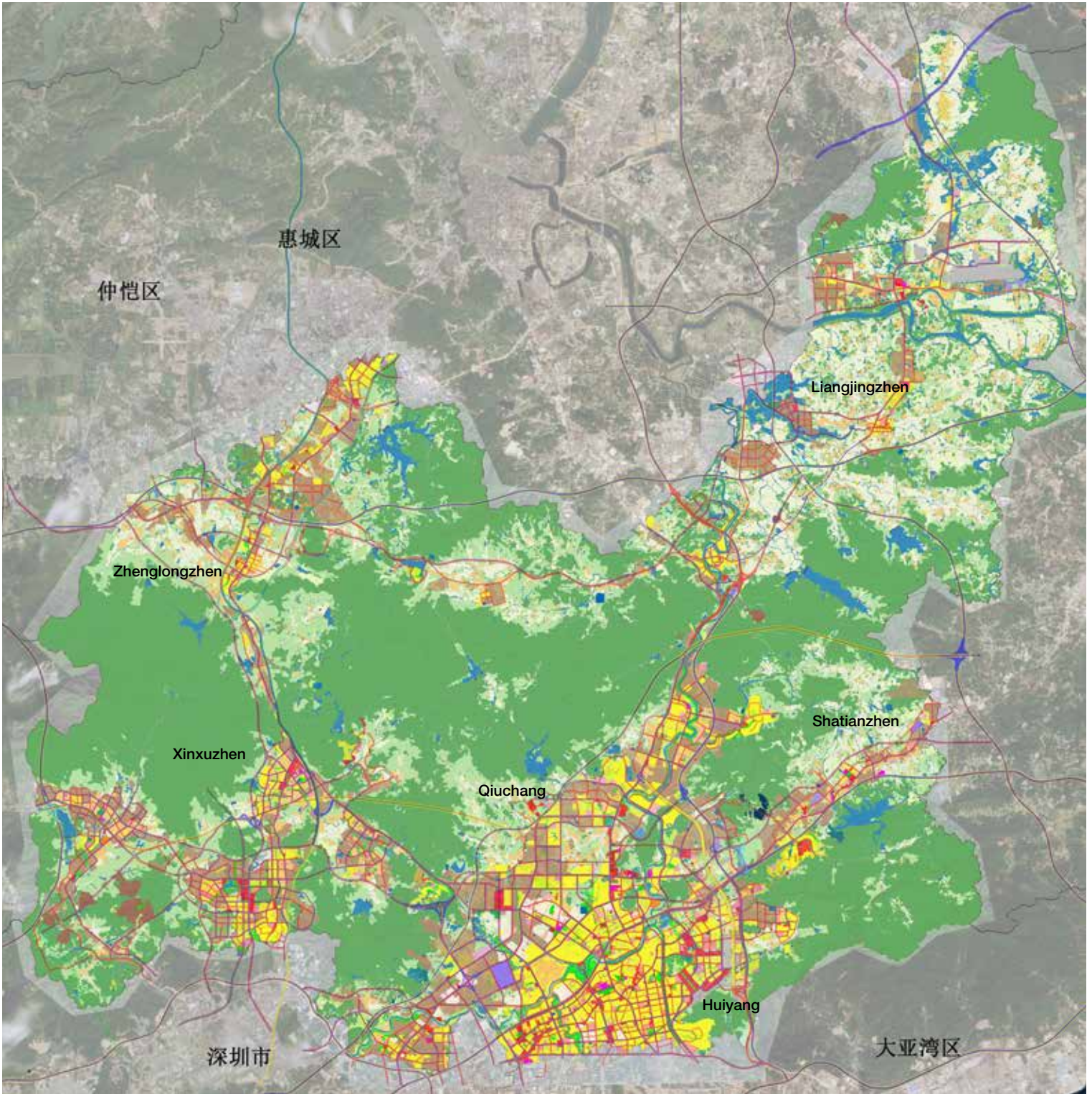
Regarding the protection and enhancement of Hakka heritage in the scheme, were established macro-areas A-E (Table 9).

The most restrictive conservation rule areas are in

**Table 11**

Huiyang Green City Plan.  
Route of the park-way between the coastal mountain ridge (to the south) and the central massif ridge (to the north) of the eastern PRD, with macro areas collecting landscape units with Hakka heritage (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2013a).





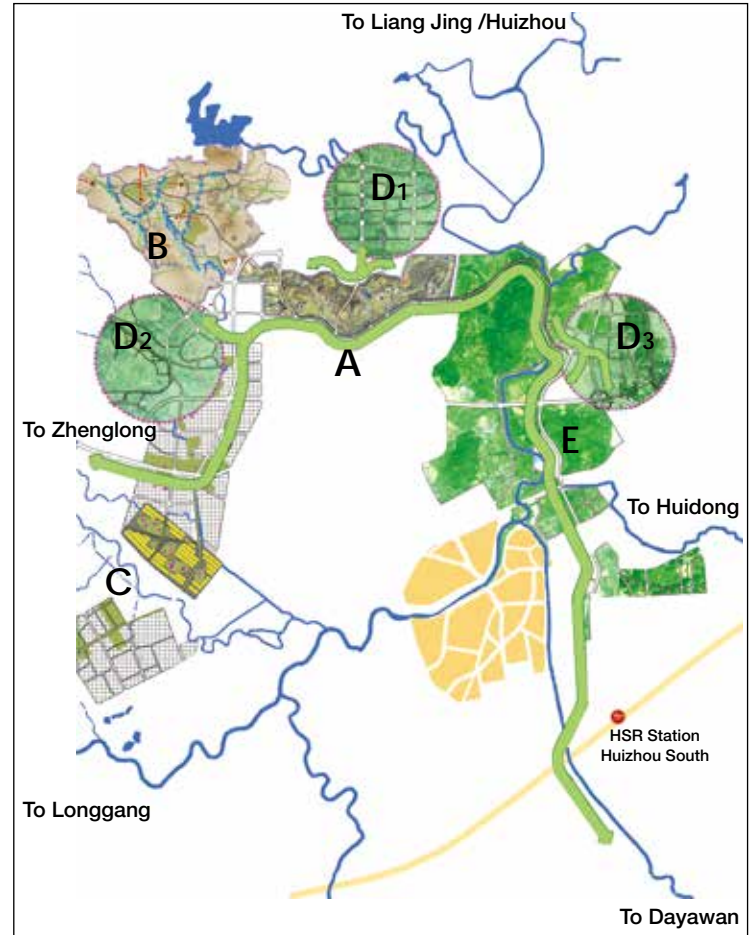
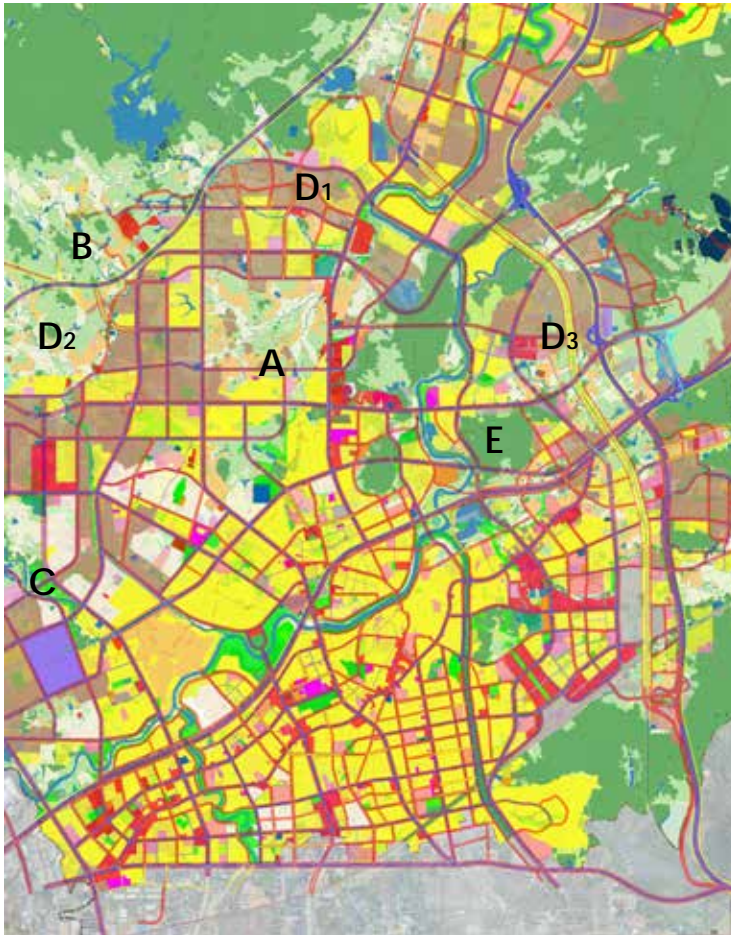
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**Figure 9**  
 Huiyang District Master Plan 2021-2035 (Source: Huizhou, Municipal Bureau of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, 2021).

Xiang Ling villages, which collect agricultural land with the most important Hakka residences (A and B macro-areas). The natural areas along the Danshui River valley on the east (E macro-area) side should be governed by a similar regime. Areas with less restrictive conservation rules than the rural landscape are located in additional satellite zones (D macro-area). In the already densely urbanized industrial sectors (C macro-area) on the west side of the city, it has been suggested that the shape of the buffer zone surrounding the residences be modeled to form a continuous green corridor with public services in the historic residenc-

es and hamlets (see here: Nifosi, Secchi, at pp. 104-105). Considering the large number of residences in Huiyang Territory of significant heritage value, a conservation strategy to make each of them into a museum as happened for a few selected large wellogs in Longgang (see: Meriggi, 2017b: 113-115), was inapplicable. This means that only tourism cannot finance and support their preservation and enhancement. To this it must be added that almost all of the Huiyang residences have been abandoned by the original Hakka communities. What seems to be more realistic is to keep the Hakka





residences and their rural environment as part of the public facilities foreseen by the Master Plan.

In 2013 the Polytechnic team drafted a new document assuming the methodology of dividing the territory in which most of the Hakka residences were present into “landscape units” corresponding to the territory of the single villages of the macro-areas A-E which we have already mentioned.

For each “landscape unit” a detailed plan should have been drawn up, balancing the presence of new buildings and activities with the conservation of the rural landscape.

In this way, we assumed as a design program Goulding’s and Davis’s “vision” of a new kind of settlement as a hybrid between urban and rural.

The projects collected in the next pages follow the subdivision into macro-areas A-E.

They were elaborated between 2011 and 2015 assuming a strategy and a detailed program corresponding to the characteristics of any “landscape unit” - i.e. the landscape matrix of any territory considered and the forecast of the 2012 Master Plan.

These projects are an attempt to find a form of compromise between conservation issues and urban design issues of the future city.

They are all based on the assumption that the urban design of the future city can be developed by interpreting traditional landscape elements of Hakka heritage, such as we might find in Huiyang and other cities in eastern Guangdong (see: Meriggi, 2017b).

*2021-2037 Huiyang Master Plan*

The new Huiyang Master Plan, released in 2021, took into consideration several elements of Our research. The main aspects regarding the conservation of Hakka heritage are:

- the establishment of a large “central park” in the territory of the municipality of Qiuchang in the villages of Tie Men Shan and Ling Hu (macro-area A), which surrounds all Hakka residences and villages;
- an extension of the agricultural park of Zhu Tian (macro-area C) to the south in the village of Cha Yuan (macro-area D<sub>2</sub>);
- a more careful location of the public structures and park areas in correspondence with the villages of Cha Yuan and Wei Bu (macro area C);
- a first attempt to connect all areas of the park and the protected area with each other through a sort of ring road that goes from the high-speed railway station to Tie Men Shan, and from there to the villages of Cha Yuan and Wei Bu.

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**Table 12**

The macro areas macro areas collecting landscape units with Hakka heritage following the Huiyang Green City Plan in Huiyang District Master Plan 2021-2035 (Source base: Huizhou, Municipal Bureau of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, 2021; elaboration by the authors).

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**Table 13**

Huiyang Green City Plan. Schematic map with identification of macro areas collecting landscape units with Hakka heritage (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2013a).



# Preservation project and urban restructuring. Hakka villages in the context of Huyang Master Plan.\*

Chiara Nifosi,  
Marialessandra Secchi

\*The paper is the result of the joint discussion of all authors. The individual parts have been edited as follows: Marialessandra Secchi, "1. Between permanence and change", "2. Hakka landscape in the Huizhou region.", "3. Landscape, identity and the right to the city.", "4. The agency of the preservation project."; Chiara Nifosi, "5. The role of tourism within the Huyang general master plan.", "6. Strategy and Method", "7. Framing the context.", "8. Three main design topics for Huyang master plan.", "9. Actions and opportunities."

1. E.N. Rogers, *Architettura, misura e grandezza dell'uomo [Architecture, measure and greatness of man]*, ed. by S. Maffioletti. Padova: il Poligrafo, 2010, p. 560.

2. The two different processes have been characterized from the point of view of land use transformation as follows: "Taken together, a city-centred urban sprawl at the top and a dispersed rural-based industrialisation at the bottom appear to be the two concurrent processes of urbanisation that have contributed to the recent expansion of non-agricultural land use in the context of a rapidly urbanising and globalising regional economy." in George C. S. Lin, 'Reproducing Spaces of Chinese Urbanisation: New City-based and Land-centred Urban Transformation', *Urban Studies*, August 2007 44: 1827-1855.

3. The administrative uncertainty relates to land propriety status. Whose the land? is the main question of conflictual and uncertain answer. This uncertainty is giving way to frequent protest. See 'China's farmland. This land is my land', *the Economist*, Feb 14th 2008 < <http://www.economist.com/node/10696084> > [accessed 03/06/2023.]

4. On the recent processes of China suburbanization confront the general overview given in Thomas J. Campanella, *The Concrete Dragon*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008.

"...to destroy without a reason it is criminal, but to preserve without a reason is coward. To build and to destroy are meaningless words if they are depleted of the moral content of culture"<sup>1</sup>.

The proposal for a tourism plan in the fast developing context of Huyang district considers as a main goal the preservation of the landscape and agricultural villages: a diffused heritage built during the centuries and marked by the presence of the Hakka population.

The preservation project is focused not on the fast pace of transformation processes but and on their diversity and disparity.

The bottom up chaotic development of the existing urban fabric, and the top-down planning of the regional-scale city are very different transformation phenomena equally leading to a radical erasure of past artefacts and landscapes: villages, canals, agricultural land, but also hills and woodlands are razed to make room for the new residential and industrial settlements.

Fragments of rural landscape remain as evidence of a past society and lifestyle. But will these remnants talk to anyone?

A large scale project perspective offers the opportunity for a reflection on the emergent characteristics of preservation issues in the construction of a Chinese "ordinary" metropolis.

The radicalism of the urban situation offered by the Chinese city explicates a different role which architecture and urban planning can play in dealing with conservation issues, bringing back, in a very different context, some of the ethical stances of the last century architecture culture.

## 1. Between permanence and change.

The city of Huyang, at the periphery of the Pearl River Delta region, is undergoing a very fast and intense transformation process.

At a first glance, what strikes the most in this quick construction of the city is the contrast between two different processes where two very different images of the city are confronted<sup>2</sup>.

On one side we can find the Asiatic model of the rich and successful city (Shenzhen, Taipei, Seoul, etc.), characterized by an aggressive modernity, structured on a large scale grid of well cared roads,

lined with tall buildings and marked by the corporate skyscrapers.

The tall buildings on the front of the urban blocks act as real walled cities as they enclose the more exclusive (or future middle class) residential intervention on their inside.

The introverted character of these huge urban blocks is not simply the outcome of globalization as they can also be seen as a Chinese interpretation of the contemporary city which differs, from a morphological point of view, from its reference models in the western cities.

So if the residential enclaves are similar to some western residential enclaves, the overall structure of the city looks quite different.

This is the image of a city made of grandiloquent public spaces characterized by an abundant endowment of infrastructures: the high speed train line will connect Huyang to Shenzhen in just half an hour and will be ready in two years; the construction of 5 regional subway lines is foreseen in the next years connecting Huyang to Huizhou; the highway network is expanding day by day.

The careful design of large scale "public spaces" matched by the attention with which roads and side-walks, in their form and in the dimension, are designed as a tool to support an urban fabric of vast proportion and of a regional scale, is the result of a planning effort ordering the territory for a "multitude" still to come.

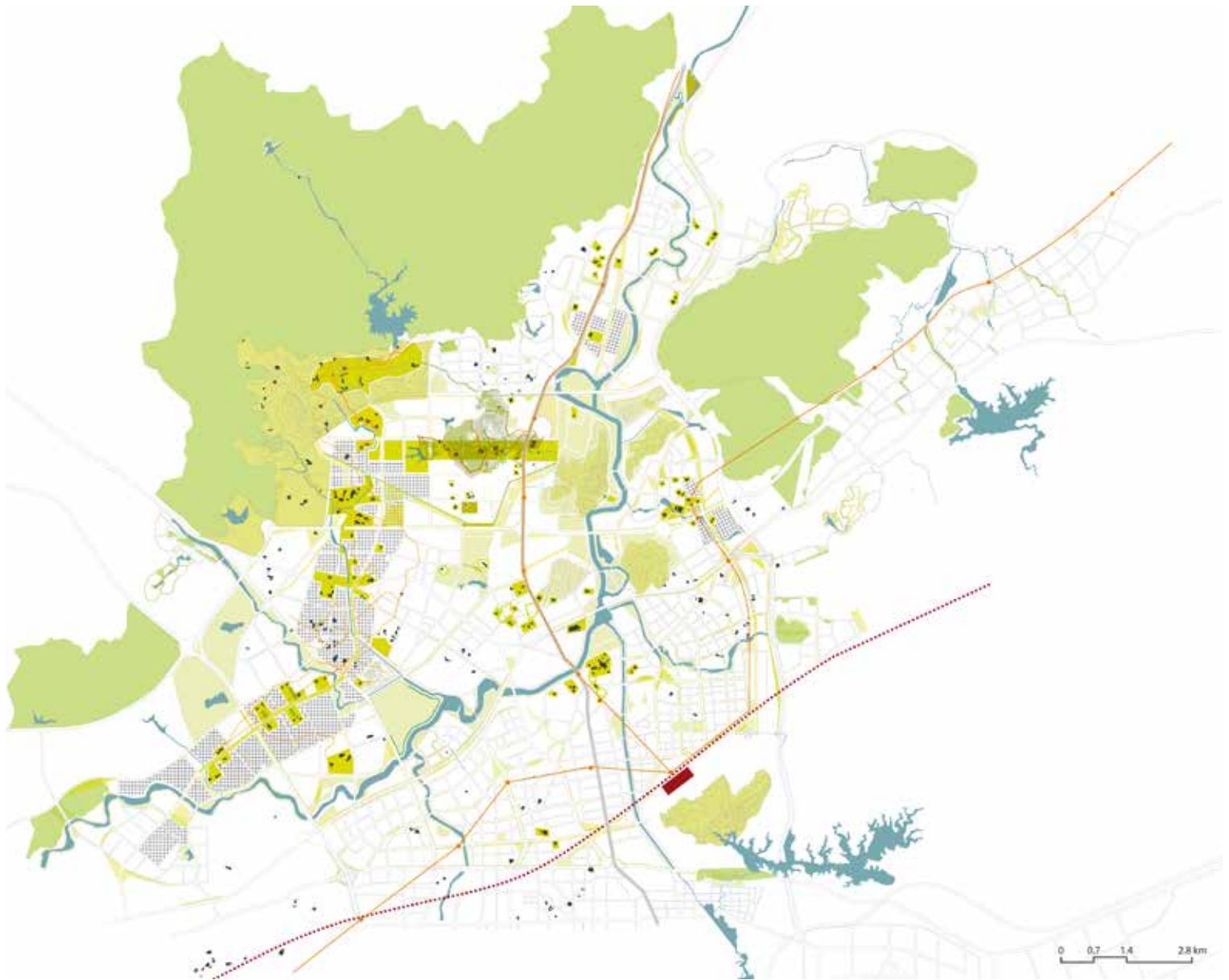
Opposite to it, the existing city has been recently built on a certain administrative uncertainty made of already decaying buildings piled up along a bare fabric of urban streets<sup>3</sup>.

This completely new urban environment is marked by the systematic construction of the space for production - building or more complex industrial settlements- within the land of old agricultural villages. It is an apparently chaotic and decentralized, "bottom up" model of urbanization, profiting of the relative autonomy of villages in disposing of their own territory.

As an immediate consequence the agricultural land and its structure, the landscape that is the outcome of a long voluntary construction process, pay for this transformation.

It is along the canals, or the visual axes of the feng shui that the conflict between the diverse models of



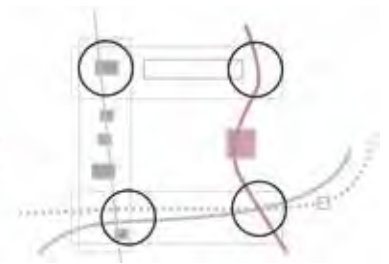
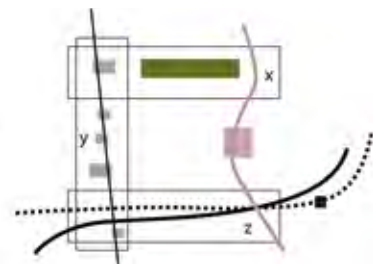
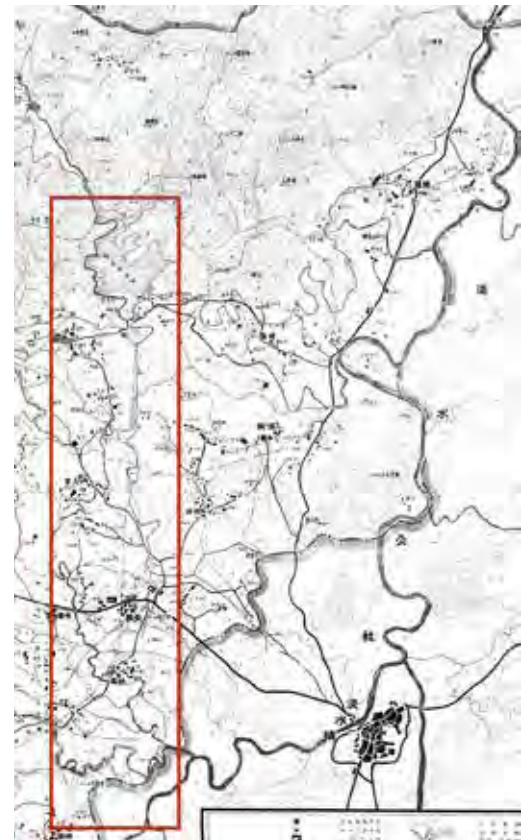


the city is the more evident. But urban agricultural villages are at the same time the cause and the victims of this form of “bottom up urbanization”, where industry workers, usually young people, coming from the northern countries, live their life in the dormitories that are part of the industry<sup>4</sup>. The villages, whose communities have been dispersed, have leased out their land to the industry entrepreneurs. The village officials (frequently part of the family clan who was the ancient owner of village) have gone to Hong Kong and live their lives on the revenues of the leased grounds. At the same time the “household- responsibility” policy intended to give the land to individual farmers is at the origin of the “bottom up” pervasive development of semi-detached, two or three storeys building on single plots of agricultural land. This particular use of the land of the former community, is destroying not just the villages, which presence seems more and more anachronistic every day, but the very possibility to recover the logic and

the meaning of a territorial system, which was defined by the villages. What remains, on these sites is the crude reality of a strong spatial injustice paired by the even stronger hope for an individual social improvement well represented by the dream of owning a flat being built on the opposite side of the road. The issue is well known to local architects and urban planners, that are in charge of the planning process and are frequently overwhelmed by the ineluctable fast pace transformation. Against the present scenario the demand for a tourism plan capable to face the issue of agricultural landscape preservation and namely the preservation of the Hakka villages sound paradoxical. Which public will this tourism plan be meant for? What to preserve? Which meaning to be given to what is preserved? How to deal with the “environmental pre-existence”? What appears more interesting is maybe just the radicalism with which we are confronted with some relevant questions on the use of the past in urban

**Table 1**  
Preliminary Tourism Master Plan. A Comprehensive Image (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).





a

b

c

d

**Tables 2-3**  
Preliminary Tourism Master Plan. *Three Thematic Strips:* 1. The university settlement and the residential habitat; 2. The industrial strip; 3. the river and the recreational system.

The form of the industrial strip in Huiyang historical map of 1979 (Source: *Politecnico di Milano*, 2011).

**Tables 4a-d**  
City Form and Strategic Invention.

a. An overall image of the master plan structure;  
b. Considering the differences between the three thematic strip: x- the university settlement and the residential habitat, y- the industrial strip z- the river and the recreational system;  
c. Different interventions and diverse functional programs within the three thematic strips;  
d. Interchanges;  
(Source: *Politecnico di Milano*, 2011).

and territorial project: first of all the responsibility of architecture and urban planning in giving answer to the “experience of modernity” that doesn’t appear to be overruled by the emergence of globalization processes, but seems to be radicalised instead.

## 2. Hakka landscape in the Huizhou region.

Landscapes and territorial imageries are the product of populations and groups which inhabit them. However groups and populations can’t be considered as fixed entities, and this is the more evident in the present case study, as society is probably more than ever in a process of fast transformation, with a massive migration of young population towards the city under construction.

Which is the Hakka traditional landscape? Which, if any, is the territorial imagery underlying the actual process of city construction, and what is the role of the new migrant population, can they be considered as “groups” in shaping the actual city and landscape?

In the Huizhou and Huyang region the agricultural landscape has been historically structured by the presence of the Hakka villages, whose localization and settlement criteria were rooted in the feng shui

design attitude.

The Hakka rural villages are here less monumental if compared to the ones in the province of Fujian and they can’t be considered as an international attraction for tourism: constructing a mythical “Hakka Homeland” to be offered on the international tourist market doesn’t sound very realistic nor appropriate. Nonetheless, the hypothesis of the tourism/leisure exploitation of the Hakka cultural heritage, should not be undervalued provided that we reconsider the role and the value of tourism and leisure in this context.

In a metropolitan region of potentially 40 million inhabitants at a fair distance, the Hakka villages don’t really need an international public to be considered as an attractive resource.

Rather they can be understood as a local resource addressed to a “local” resident population.

They will be the perfect destination for a Sunday trip and discovering, but also offer the base for the construction of a more general leisure system, where tourism and leisure time are mixed up with the discovering of a distant but recent past.

It is this unapparent cultural distance that could make these villages significant to the population



5. Ibidem.

6. On the issue of the detachment of the tourist gaze and its prerogative to worn out or to replace the pre-existing semantic values of places confront: J. Hurry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and travel in contemporary societies* (London: Sage, 1990). However more recently a debate about the role "ordinary" tourism as a practice reconfiguring our experience of modernity has been raised, suggesting a more complex pattern of relations between tourism and everyday life - as, for example, in the practice of cottaging - when confronted with the issue of authenticity or identity. See: D. Willams, B.P. Kaltenborn, 'Leisure Places and Modernity. The use and meaning of recreational cottages in Norway and the USA' in D. Crouch (editor) *Leisure/tourism geographies. Practices and geographical knowledge*. London, Routledge, 1999, pp 214-230.

7. R. Koolhaas, 'The Generic City', in OMA, R. Koolhaas, B. Mao, *S,M,L,XL*. Rotterdam: 010 Publisher 1995, p. 1248.

8. The notion of "approximative identity" is conceived by Davide Sparti, as a continual call for social recognition: identity is thus always "in formation" and dependent from the context of social relations. See: D. Sparti, *Soggetti al tempo. Identità personale tra analisi filosofica e costruzione sociale [Subject to time. Personal identity between philosophical analysis and social construction]*. Milano Feltrinelli, 1996), cited in F. Remotti, *L'ossessione identitaria*, Bari: Laterza, 2010, p. XX.

9. Ibidem.

10. M. Berman, *All that is solid melts into air. The experience of modernity*. New York, Simon and Shuster, 1982.

of the enlarged metropolis, a distance which can prevent villages to be perceived through the lens of poverty alone, as the remains of a discarded way of life characterized by the "stigmata of poverty"<sup>5</sup>.

### 3. Landscape, identity and the right to the city.

The preservation of landscape and of the diverse strata of the land palimpsest are usually considered as the protection of the specificity of a territory and by extension the affirmation of its population cultural identity.

We are used to trace an immediate association between the call for an identity and the past that we share, which is made visible through monuments, artefacts and landscapes.

The relation between the man made land and a society who shaped it becomes evident in the range of semantic values which are attached to specific land form.

Artefacts but also spatial systems and settlements criteria are seen as embodying the very "essence" of a populations' identity. In this case it is the rural settlement logic and criteria derived from a feng shui attitude towards landscape to be at stake, but also the ancestor temples of every single buildings and their role in marking the land.

But which will be the value of an identity conceptualized this way for those who don't really share the same past history, as is the case of the young migrants of the Guangdong Province?

"Local" resident population, the new inhabitants of the region don't belong to this place, these temples are not their ancestors temples, they don't speak the same language as they have just arrived from the northern rural countryside.

They are not rooted in these places, they can't recognize their own identity in these villages. What can they recognize as their own place, how can they escape being an indistinct "multitude", offered as a bare tool to the fast growing industrial production? They live the life of the fast growing city with the feeling not really to belong to it, this kind of identity, focused on the past deposit, will become simple exclusion for them. And they will never have the privilege of a completely distant gaze as is the case of the international tourist<sup>6</sup>.

Their present aims and needs don't seem to be matched by a demand for landscape preservation.

If considered this way the identity issue seems to lead to a dead end.

As much as the demand for and identity coincides with a claim for the past we share, as much the tension of modernity becomes conflictual.

This tension has to face the construction of the new city with the affirmation of an "essence" historically given and thus unchanging, that can be appropriated by a part of the population excluding the rest and offering itself as an object of contemplation for the eventual tourist, an identity that can be exploited till its complete falsification.

The call for identity, through preservation becomes

a trap. The trap consist in the sheer opposition between the necessity of preservation and the values and needs of the present<sup>7</sup>.

Our hypothesis is that the identity issue could be set up on a different perspective, confronting with preservation demand and with the possibility to recover the presence of past within the construction of the new city in a way to enlarge the idea of citizenship. If we consider the presence of the new population in the city we can easily observe a demand for "recognition" as a living part of the city, a need which could maybe rely on the construction of a new and "approximative" and weak identity enabling people to be seen as part of society<sup>8</sup>.

Identity is usually a cultural construct tying an already solid group together allowing the call for rights or prerogatives, while what is in more need here is the possibility for a group recognition of a population which is a multitude of isolated young men and women<sup>9</sup>.

The hypothesis developed in the design proposal is that access to tourism, the rediscovery of the agricultural land heritage and leisure time, as well as, or even more than other collective activities, can perform an active role in the construction of new and diverse kind of group recognition and in affirming a new level of citizenship.

The presence of the past can play the role of a physical support whose use and discovery connect and create new groups of citizens out of a multitude of migrants.

Nostalgia is obviously here to be considered inherent to the tension of modernity<sup>10</sup>, but it is not necessarily leading to "falsification"; and its relation with present values and needs is one of the main topic the project is addressing.

### 4.The agency of the preservation project.

The design proposal for the "tourism" plan of the city of Huyang and its surrounding territory, is the opportunity to stress three points which appear to be crucial in landscape preservation.

The first remark concerns the discussion of the slippery nature of the concept of identity when considered in a strict sense.

The research for "identity" in the evidences of past actions and lifestyles is potentially a very conflictual one as it foster an understanding of identity as an "essence" that can be objectified and thus preserved, supporting a process of musealization which in the end, as has been frequently noted leads to falsification.

Moreover the emphasis on identity acts as a factor of exclusion, and frequently results in the difficulty to re-appropriate the deposit of the past in any viable way.

This means. in fact. exclusion of people from identity - as the exclusion of the migrants from the city - but also the exclusion of land and existing artefacts from the process of transformation, leading to ruins. In this context a different idea of the monument is



not needed, but a different attitude of the project. The question has to shift from what is worth preserving, to why and for who.

Or even better what will be the “utility” and the agency of preservation in the construction of the land confronting with present values and actions.

It is clear that while these all could be considered as implicit questions in any piecemeal transformation with scarcity of means - as historically was most of the pervasive construction of the agricultural territory - it becomes a matter of planning responsibility in a context of over-abundance of technological means, where any simple construction act can imply the disappearance of vast past landscapes at a very fast pace.

A second remark regards a reflection about the processes of construction of a more just urban space. The “bottom up” process of development of the existing Chinese city, which result in a fragmented and heterogeneous urban fabric, doesn’t produce any more opportunity to address the inhabitants right to city if confronted with the “top down” planning process articulating the regional scale grid.

A structure of pulviscolar private operations produces a chaotic but nonetheless highly unjust urban space.

While in the European context the presence of “bottom up” processes of urbanization has been too frequently considered solely as a signal of a more democratic society where individual aims and desires are maybe over-represented; here the focus is more clearly on the new social disparity which individual actions are producing at expense of collective appropriation of landscape, wearing out a common good: the land, its structure and semantic value.

The preservation project of old villages and landscapes can offer the opportunity for a better re-appropriation of collective space in the city; but it will only perform relevant effects if understood as a formal coherent space system, pervasive and nonetheless legible at larger scale.

Past artefacts and traces, considered not just as objects on the ground but as complex settlements, are frequently the background on which to articulate a discourse about the overall form and image of the city.

The reclaiming of a large extension of the contemporary city through a preservation project challenges architecture to re-address the project on the city in its overall dimension and in its physical form, a possibility frequently denied confronting with the large scale and the fragmentary but pervasive nature of city transformation processes.

Finally, the issue of preservation has to be seen in the perspective of a discussion on the space of the city as a common good.

This can be considered as a more general matter in the opposition between “development” and preservation.

The preservation of “environmental pre-existence”, has to be considered as a work which incrementally

redefines city space structure.

The possibility to reformulate an idea of welfare state, as an idea of public well-being, has to reconsider access to urban space and the enlargement of a notion of citizenship as a starting point.

The preservation project that we propose for the Hakka settlements in Huyang offers the palimpsest image as a way to deal with the construction of welfare through the continual reworking on the contested space of the city.

## **5.The role of tourism within the Huyang general master plan.**

The project strategic proposal consist in a series of structural and organic actions allowing to increase the tourist industry in the territory of Huyang and to generate new employment opportunities for new citizens, through the implementation of a Tourism Development Plane.

The centroid of the world tourism is shifting towards emerging countries.

In China, the forecast annual growth in tourism is 16%, while in other countries the average is 5.8%.

As in all industries, the tourism development goals can be achieved only on the basis of a structural plan that allows growth not only in size but also in terms of competitiveness and attractiveness.

Globalization forces local systems to enhance their distinctive features in comparison to what is produced elsewhere, highlighting the need to define a role for the territories facing new forms of competition. In this scenario the focus on the cultural resources becomes all the more strategic, in order to keep alive and enhance the “territorial heritage”. The city of Huyang has just developed a very ambitious and extensive General District Master Plan. However up till now this Master Plan does not take into account the preexisting Hakka settlements, that represent historical memory and also today a tourist potential.

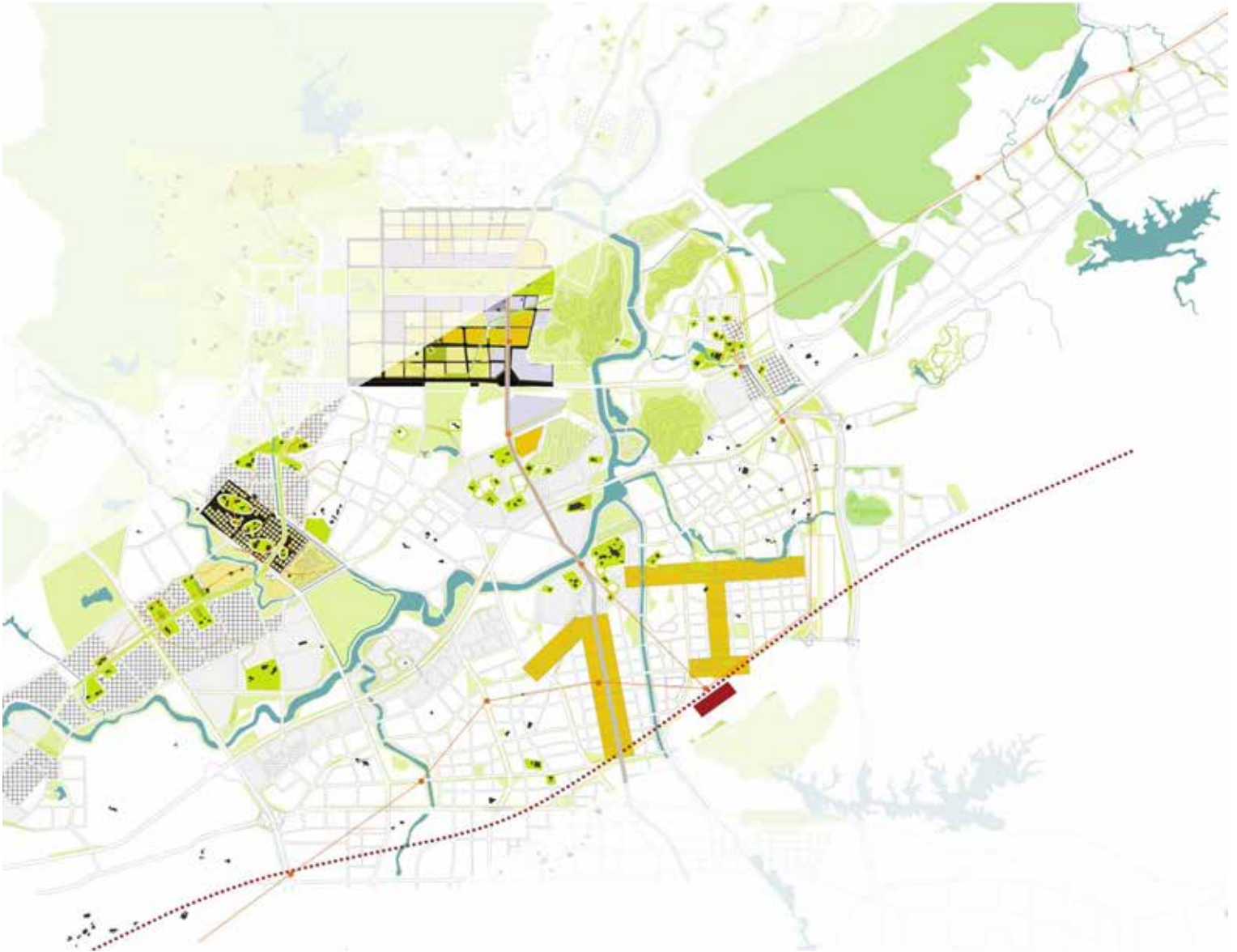
Interest in the city’s urban events lies therefore in the forecast of being “refounded” by mean of the new plan and in the attractive potential represented by the Hakka settlements.

The planned redevelopment of Huyang’s urban system and its infrastructure system’s strengthening has revealed the need to start thinking about the relationship between the built environment and the rural areas.

Due to its important strategic position in the territorial framework, Huyang seems to claim high landscape sensitivity urban projects, in order to first strengthen the rural production and second, to modernize the infrastructural nodes connected to the highway-rail network, especially structuring its turistic potentiality.

For the first issue it should be noted that, in many parts of China, a rapid and often uncontrolled by the Plans building growth has reduced the country to enclaves between buildings, overturning the original relationship between solids and voids.





**Table 5**  
 The Recreational Strip:  
 a New System of Public  
 Spaces. It integrates  
 the Hakka Villages in a  
 Recreational Environment,  
 with Sports and Leisure  
 Facilities is also fit to link  
 different part of the City and  
 Diverse Centers, including  
 the New Center of High  
 Speed Train Station (Source:  
 Politecnico di Milano, 2011).

This new status, which must be dealt with without anti-urban nostalgia, looks at the Hakka's system as an exercise of great interest to test new settlements' hypotheses.

As for the second issue, Huiyang's massive infrastructure network tries to establish new hierarchies and new relationships.

The objective of refounding the city through the infrastructure network, should be taken into account together with the hypothesis of transformation along the river and with the input modes of the new equipments in the general redesign of urban green. A general regeneration of this area should most certainly strengthen the equipments' and services' system across the residential parts.

Their preservation will require some changes to the overall General Masterplan.

To what extent and for what purpose is what this project will attempt to show.

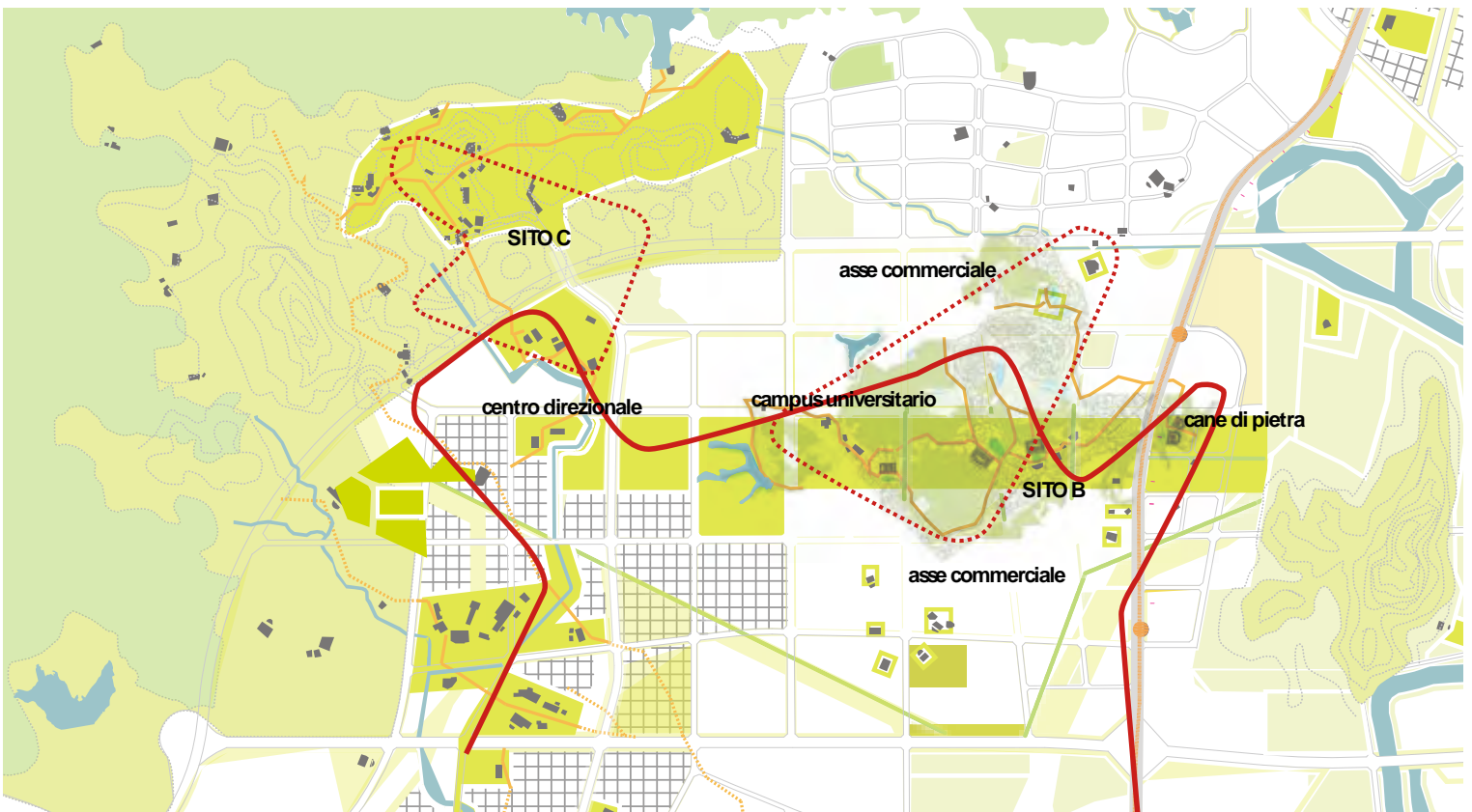
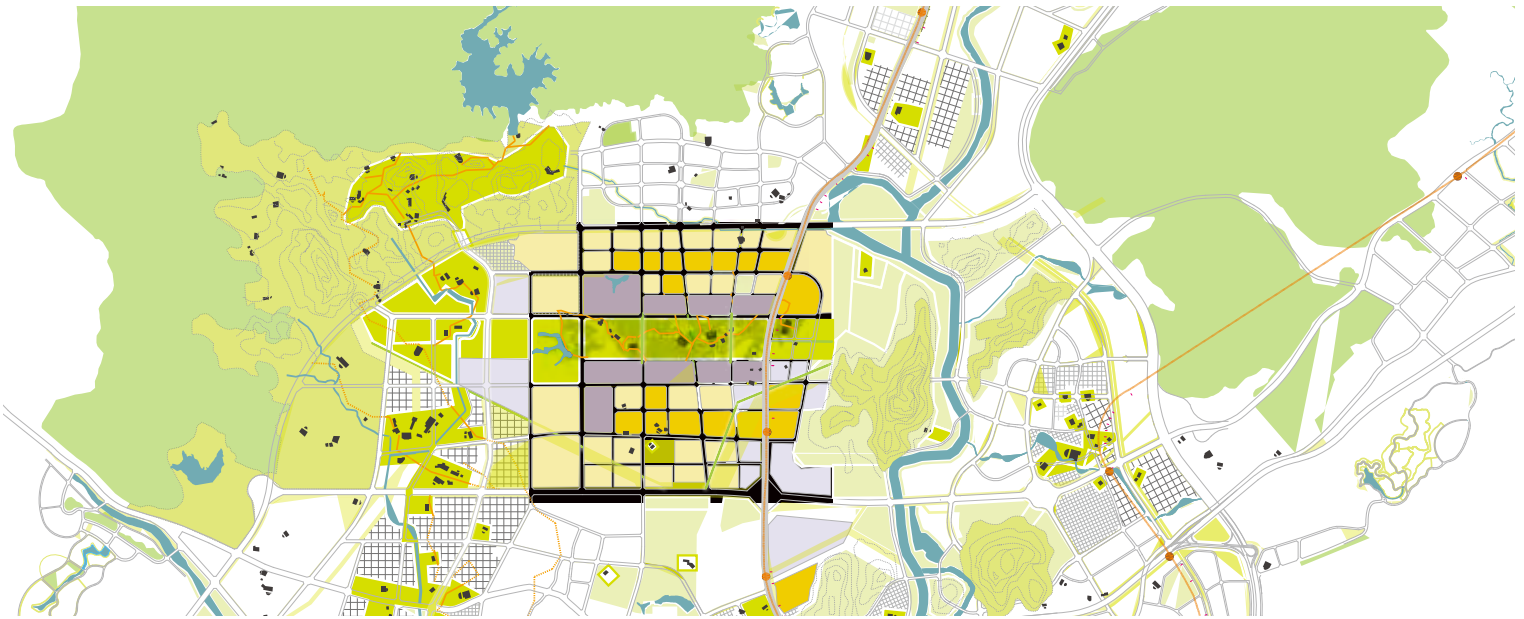
The proposed project strategy however does not intend to replace the new General Master Plan with a different scheme, it rather aims at overlaying a series of considerations about the role that the preservation of the historical and touristic assets of the Hakka sites may have in the construction of Huiyang's new public space.

The ideas put forward for the Hakka villages preservation and site development fit in the new General Master Plan's medium and long term's scenario that represents the district administration's intention to



**Tables 6-7**

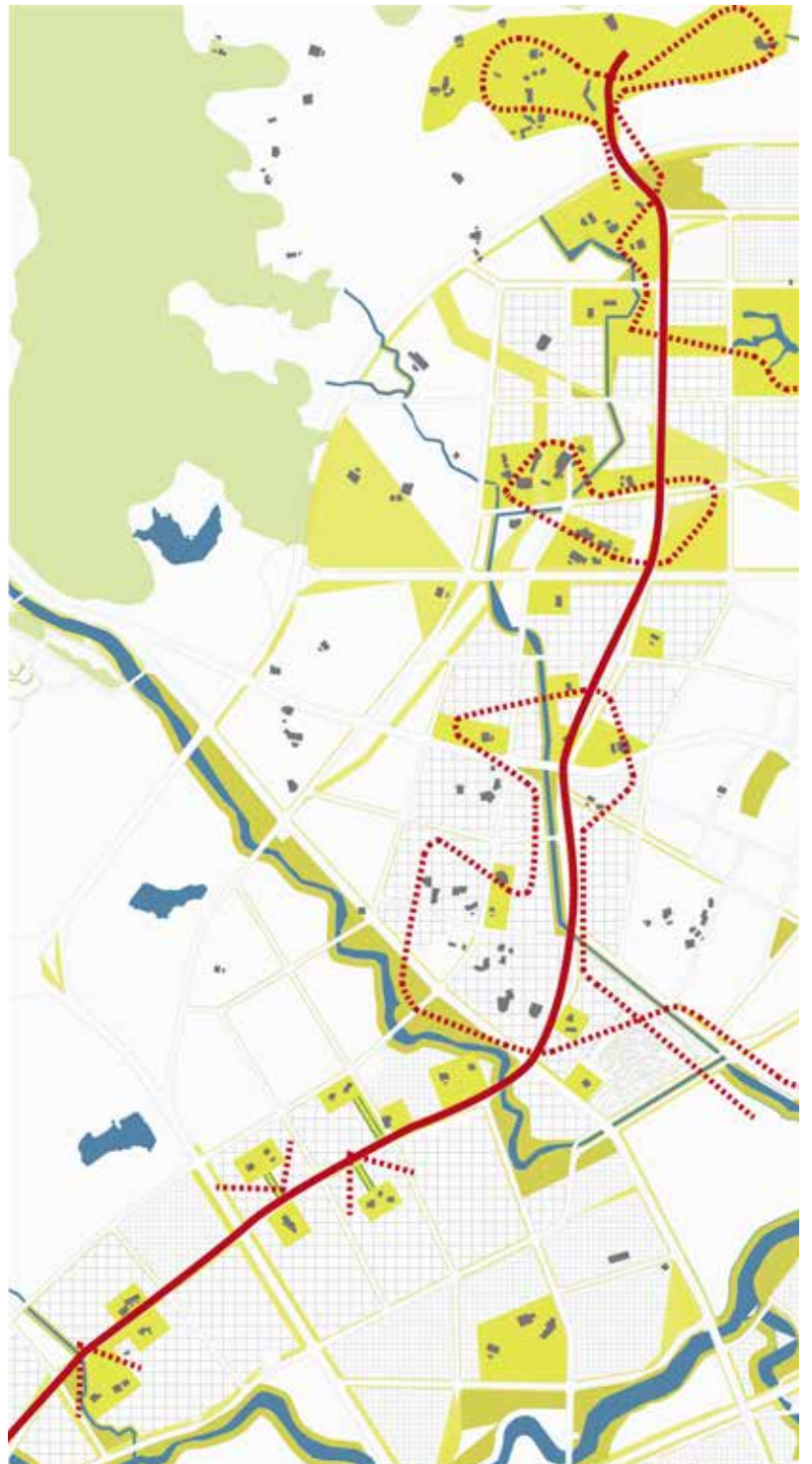
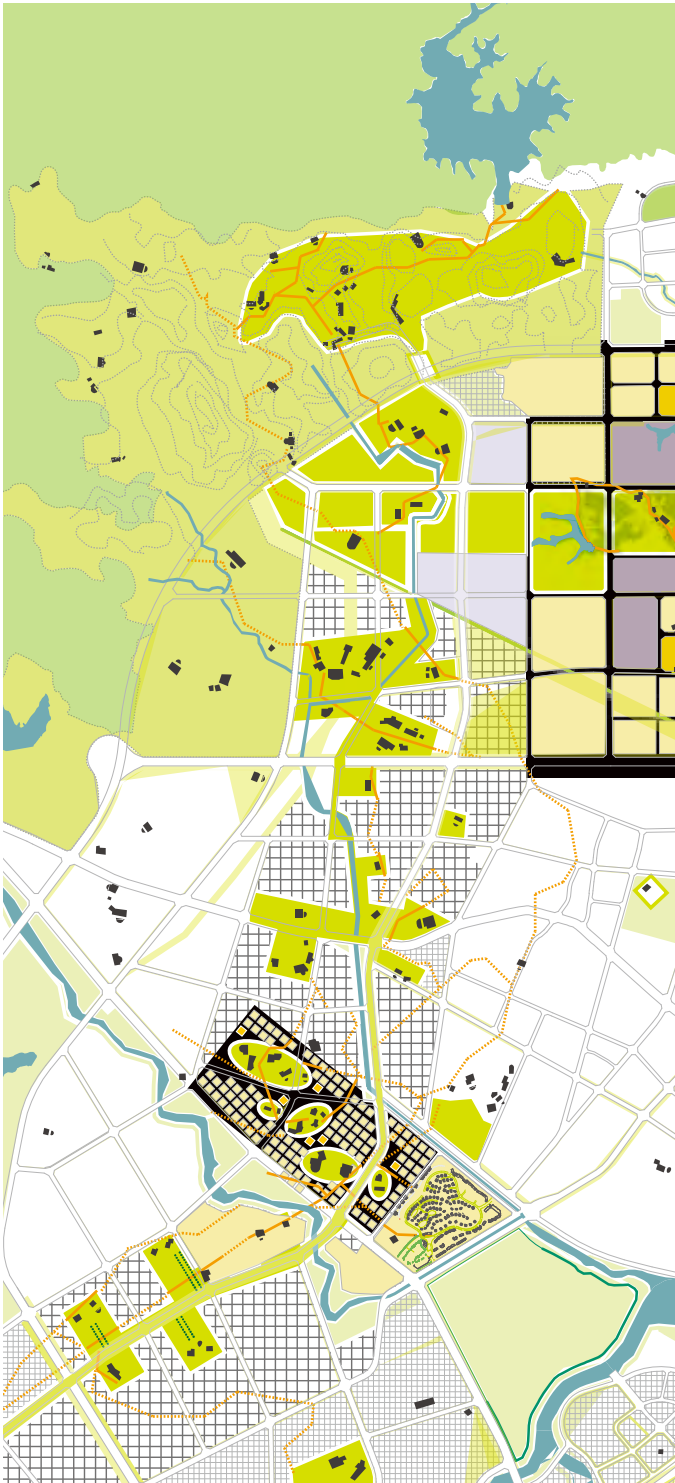
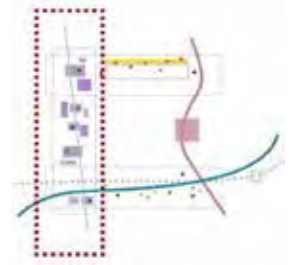
University Park and the Residential Habitat. One of the major Projects within the Actual Huiyang Master Plan can really be the Opportunity to foster a new attitude towards the Implementing of the Hakka Residences Preservation, and Pivot point for the Tourism Master Plan (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).



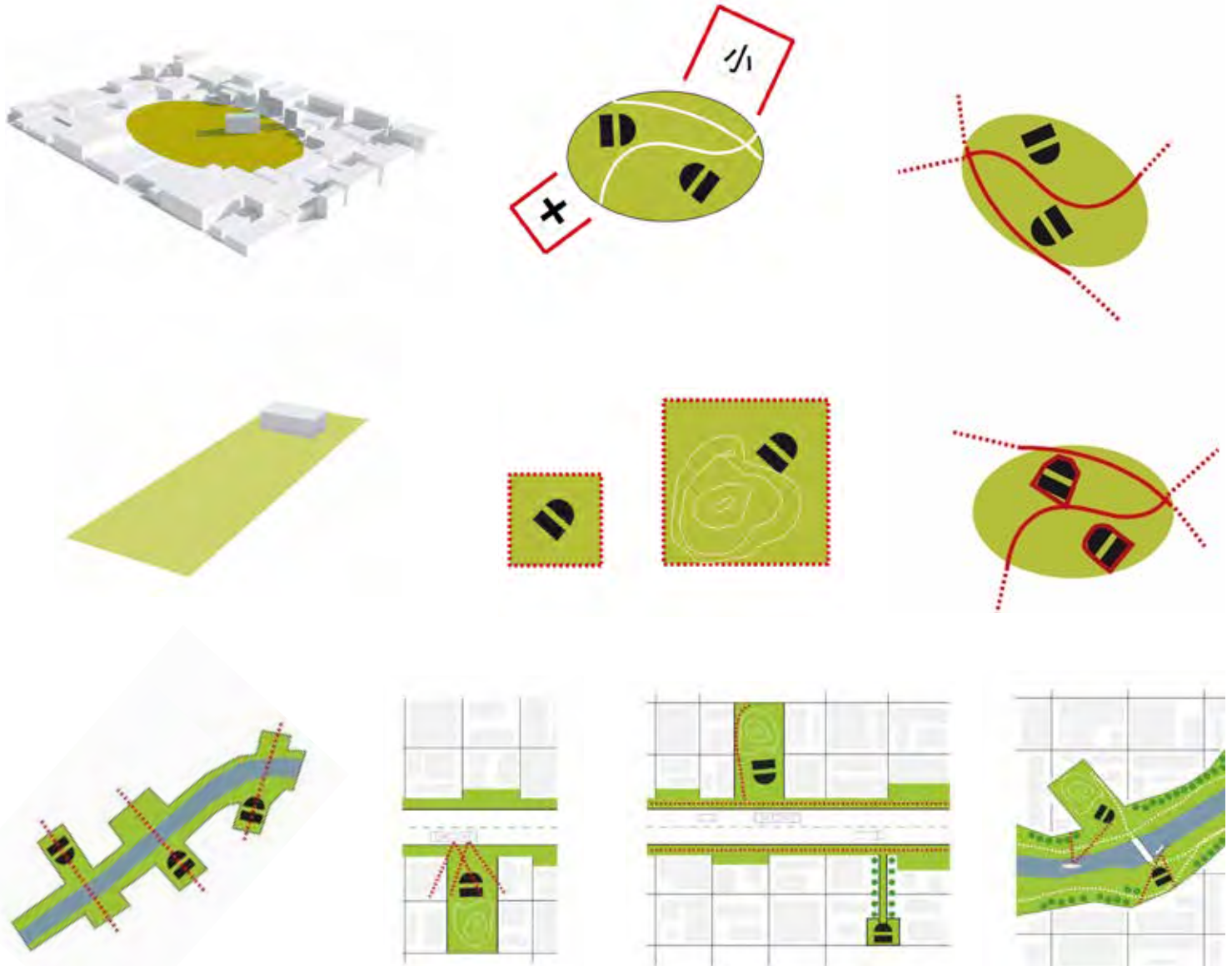


**Tables 8-9**

The Industrial Strip  
Mitigating the Impact of Fast  
Development. *It preserves  
the Systemic Value of  
Hakka Residences* (Source:  
*Politecnico di Milano, 2011*).







In this page:

**Table 10**

Strategies of Protection of the Hakka Sites according to the Thematic Strips.

- a. Hakka villages immersed in a dense urban fabric are protected by a buffer zone with highly recognizable geometric form.
- b. The basic buffer zone with a radius of 50 meters, can be manipulated and altered as to include an existing public path, or service or natural element on a case by case basis.
- c. Hakka sites and their buffer zones offer a concrete opportunity to connect existing services to new ones, through their buffer zones.
- d. Geomorphological features within the Hakka sites should be carefully protected, eventually modifying the buffer zone.
- e. Historic path running through the Hakka sites should be given specific attention and carefully

protected.

f. Hakka site can host a variety of functional programs, they can be differentiated according to their conservation status and to their belonging to the diverse thematic strips:

- in the industrial strip, Hakka sites can be recovered as service to the industry workers (cafeterias, clubs...);
- along the rivers they can become part of the recreational and sport facilities system;
- in the university strip park, they can host public services, a library and similar activities (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).

On the opposite page at the top:

**Table 11**

Constructing a System of Recognizable Places.

Connecting a System of Recognizable Places: a basis for improving attention and care towards the Hakka Residences Heritage.

- a1. Connecting the Hakka villages to the river and to the green system.
- b1. Protecting the Hakka sites from a main thoroughfare while preserving the view of the building.
- c1. Creating a perceptive and functional link between the Hakka site and the distant main road and connecting the Hakka sites through a cycle and pedestrian path preserving the view from the road.
- d1. Connecting the Hakka sites through a cycle and pedestrian path preserving the view from the river (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).

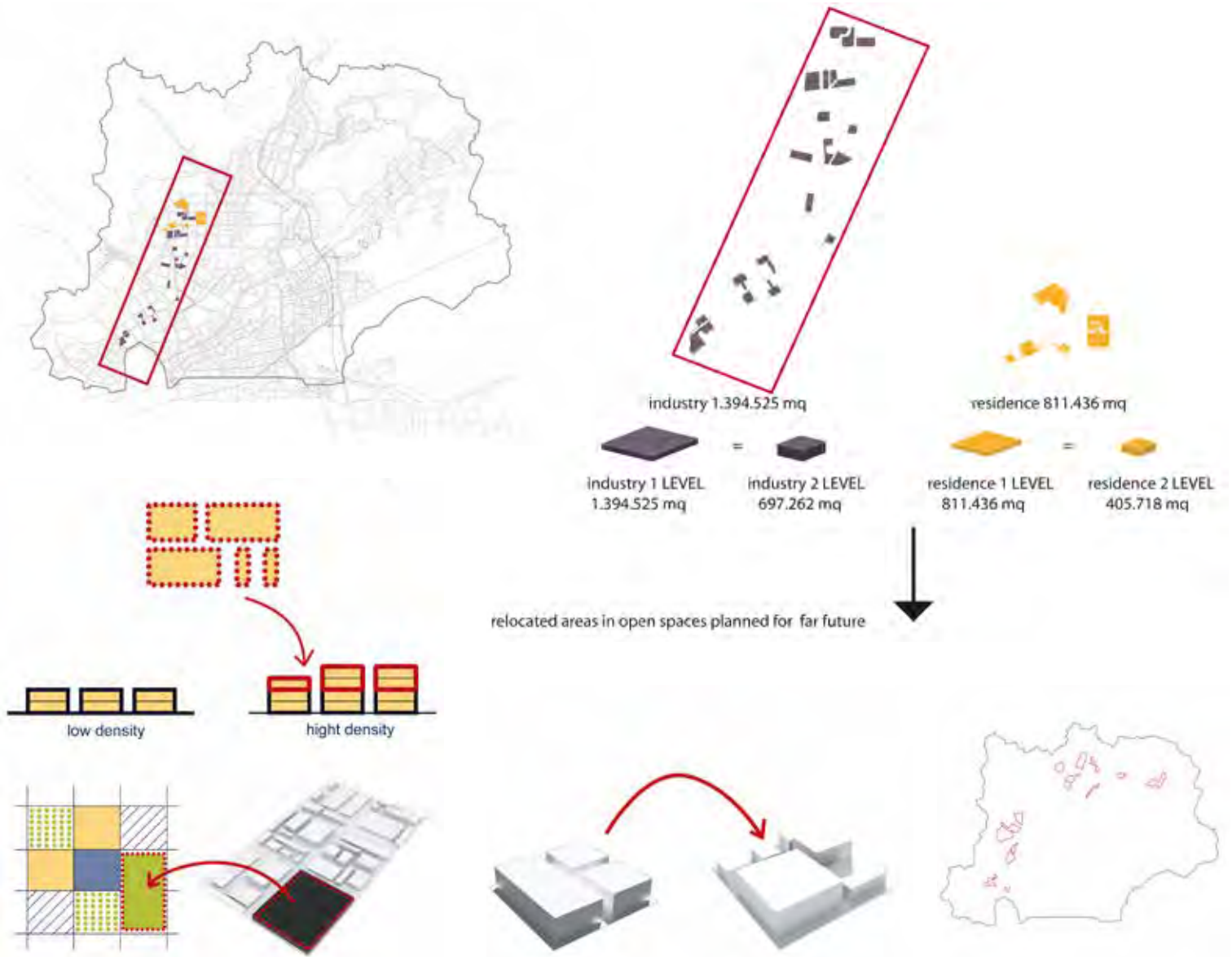
On the opposite page below:

**Table 12**

Dealing with Procedural Issues. A possible perequative Policy.

Industrial strips: data about industrial and residential surfaces and criteria for perequative policy (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).





pursue a strong growth in the coming decade.

The diverse projects in progress: the high-speed railway station able to connect the city with Shenzhen, the infrastructural backbone formed by six subway lines overlapping the road network of the Plan, show the dimensions of this growth that is already being implemented.

Within this large scale scenario, we propose to include some reflections on the value of Hakka settlements and the opportunities they offer: their preservation will become the opportunity to built a rich and stratified city where historical memory of the agricultural landscape contributes to the consolidation of the new identity of both the old villagers and the new citizens attracted by the new work opportunities in the Guangdong Province.

A Tourism Development Master Plan, in this regard, will not serve as much to attract an exogenous population, of international or national tourists, but rather to allow the construction of a specific “identity” of Huiyang’s city and territory usable by all citizens in everyday life.

## 6. Strategy and Method.

The proposed strategy aims at the recovery of individual Hakka sites but more than that it is directed at the reconstruction of their geographical “system” by seeking physical or thematical continuity: the physical continuity of the trails or the natural elements, and the thematical continuity linked to the “vocation” actual or planned, in the diverse contexts in which each site is located (residential vocation, production, service etc..).

Our proposal searches for a pattern that proceeds by points (Hakka sites) and linearities (the path) aiming to implement the functional relationships between the historic buildings and the natural resources, between the existing services and the new and planned ones. The result is a design characterized by a sequence of open spaces and volume, seeking a possible evolution in their mutual relationship.

The project works, at the landscape large scale, interacting with the various aspects that distinguish it: hills, depressions, vegetation, but also with the urban reality around it and the small villages inside, trying to enhance existing systems without imposing strong signs.



1

However when the project focuses on the three main identified areas it intensifies the physical and signposting consistency of the interventions, suggesting geometries that can speak with each other and with the landscape through a system of connections.

The Hakka sites, emptied of their original fuses, preserved for their architectural value, can become signs of identity and privileged places inside their context: single elements of recognition for the community at the urban scale and naturalistic reserves at the metropolitan scale.

With the aim of improving the quality of life and the built environment our proposal has the ambition to suggest a method that can be extended to many Huiyang areas in need for regeneration: giving new meaning to the space of the villages through the geometrically defined shape of their buffer zone, redistributing planned residential and productive densities and reconnecting the urban and social fabric, both historical and contemporary.

### 7. Framing the context.

The territory under study is bound, to the north, by the presence of the Dong River and the sprawling of urbanized areas of the Huizhou territory.

To the South, the urban system extends itself in a linear shape from the last offshoots of the city of Shenzhen to the petrochemical areas and touristic resorts of the Bay of Dayawan proceeding parallel to the coastline between the freeway and the new

high speed railway line.

This area is possibly one of the most interesting for the development of the whole Region.

Along these parallel lines a city is being built made of high density residential enclaves alternate to large industrial operations and their dormitories.

On the north/east – south/west axis the landscape system consists of a branch of the Dong River, Dan-shui, which runs along the historical center of Huiyang and of protected forest areas.

This territorial system is an important natural resource and a natural park at the regional scale, separates the region of Huizhou and Huiyang from the urbanized areas that fall under the direct influence of the city of Shenzhen and is therefore a strong element of recognition inside the territory.

### 8. Three main design topics for Huiyang master plan.

From the local resources diagnosis, we have identified three target areas in order to propose a landscape design in its broadest and most inclusive sense.

The project presented is thus subdivided into three areas and three work themes which depend on a comparison between the current territory situation, its agricultural structures and the new planning tools.

The three areas are:

1. University campus programming;
2. Industrial areas regeneration;

**Figure 1**  
Workers' club in a Hakka Residence in the Industrial Strip (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).





2

### 3. Danshui River.

These three areas define a “C” shape within the rigid structure of Huiyang Master Plan. The “C” represents the potential “tourist route” of the city. Along this shape are concentrated the majority of the Hakka sites within the municipal area. An overview of this sites helps to specify and strengthen the city’s public spaces.

*Strategies for reuse of Hakka sites into the future campus (north axis).*

One of the places most characterized by the new Huiyang’s Plan is a sort of “central park” in the north of the city which will form the backbone of the campus which can be connected with a series of greenways and with the two main protected areas in the west (Area C described above) and east of the city. Inside this park the Hakka settlements can be safeguarded and may be freely used to support university activities as provided by the Plan.

A careful consideration of the topography of the site suggests to deform the grid proposed in the Plan to adapt it to the topography preserving the delicate relationship between the Hakka settlements and the slope of the hills, highlighting the relationship between the new city and the agricultural landscape’s structure.

*Strategies for the reuse of Hakka site inside the industrial context (north-south axis).*

The project considers the productive sector, west of

the city, as a cultural and social (environment, context) to be reassessed, according to new visions. The recovery of Hakka villages in this context becomes an opportunity to reinvent their use.

At the same time, the planned expansion of the industrial zone acquires a content of social construction in relation to those who work for big companies or in relation to the community that assists to the rapid evolution and renewal of one of the social and productive realities on the planet.

The willingness to put on a “show”, along with the Hakka assets, the real city of the intensive production and of the dorm factories becomes a strategy to gain quality public spaces between the uneven and fragmentary gaps of this area.

In the industrial relation’s systems between the industrial artifacts we have identified two elements of continuity that structure the north-south axis; the road infrastructure established by the Plan; a sort of ring that will serve the entire west side of the town and a historical route that connected all sites in the Hakka assets.

The precise geometric shapes of the open spaces defined by the range of constraints imposed on each single Hakka settlement become bonding surfaces for the artifacts and the various element, acting as “background or repeating frame” and therefore giving rhythm to the new road, anchorage points for the future development of these parts of the city.

Within these ranges of constraint the historic route that linked together all the sites is always highlighted so as to enhance their sense of belonging to a wider territorial structure once constant.

In the same way the Hakka assets sites and their ranges of constraint’s presence on the street is always signaled by a large green space, where possible, or by a double row of trees that leads to the artifact.

In the area north of this axis, the study area (area B, protected by the new Plan) is characterized by a widespread system of small villages and valuable Hakka settlements around which still survives an authentic rural dimension.

Here we assume - besides the recovery of valuable sites - to create a network of paths in the landscape. Here, interventions are designed not only from the “material” point of view of the recovery of artifacts, but also from the “immaterial” point of view of the relationships between new and old residents-tourists and the landscape itself, through an approach that takes into account the multi scalar and temporal dimension of the landscape project.

*Strategies for the Danshui River redevelopment (east-west axis).*

The river that runs through the city of Huiyang has already been the subject of studies and rehabilitation projects by the district administration, at least in its most central parts.

Compared to the “natural endowments” of the context the river is the element that mostly characteriz-

**Figure 2**  
Worker’s club in a Hakka Residence in the Industrial Strip (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).



3

es this city and it represents an important environmental resource.

For this reason the Municipality should try to exploit its potential to the maximum.

Further South, along the line where the river flows tangent to the historical center, and the more recent urban fabric, the project strategy suggests, - in addition to remediation and renaturation of the river banks - to transform the historical deposit of the Hakka assets sites along the riverside in recreational services for the park and the city.

Some sites may be directly connected to the river, also their buffer zones may be useful to realize both downhill axis towards the water and “bridges” linking the river’s shores.

The Hakka buildings may be either points of departure or destination of the pedestrian or bicycle paths that run along the river or cross it, elite points for observation and enjoyment of the landscape, points of rest and refreshment, information aids, centers for sports, education and recreation.

### 9. Actions and opportunities.

The project proposal suggests different methods of action for villages recovery, taking into account the context situations in which the diverse villages are inserted and providing a set of general rules and use opportunities, clearly distinguishing between invariant rules and variables suggestions so as to leave to the project an open character.

So for example, where the larger expansion of in-

dustrial sites is planned – a large area which has already been affected by recent urbanization and where villages are in a state of disruption – the project aims at providing an “area of respect”, like a buffer zone with a well defined shape, around individual buildings to be preserved.

This strategy implies an effort in redefining the urban fabric of the village surroundings, always guaranteeing a very close relationship with the main road, so that the Hakka villages – where recreational the services are located – will always be visible from the city’s main street.

In thinking about the spaces for the production itself, the possibility (especially in those areas adjacent to the residence) to propose a redistribution of density for the productive sector is also considered. In some cases the project proposes to replace amounts removed from the the sensitive context in other areas more appropriate or in other cases its suggests an expansion in height so as to reduce the footprint on the ground and give back open spaces to the public.

In the case of the river park the project suggests to always group, where possible, one or more villages in a single and larger area of compliance with a looser boundary allowing to grasp the relationships between the diverse buildings and the morphology of the river.

The proposed uses are always about community services that can be merged with existing services already provided by the plan but do not exclude

**Figure 3**  
School in a Hakka Residence  
in the Educational Strip  
(Source: Politecnico di  
Milano, 2011).





4

that the system of the Hakka villages as a whole can be a resource partially available to an attentive real estate market an also available for a program of “albergo diffuso”(diffused hotel) .

An open-air museum, a museum diffuse, along with its reference accommodation exceeds the traditional concept of linear sequence, with a single entry point and a defined and hierarchical path.

The project makes the Hakka assets available with multiple access means.

Physical connections and information flows between the three main identified centers and will help to strengthen the network connection between the narrative parts.

Thus, if the single regeneration projects shall consider a number of specific constraints as the stability and maintenance conditions of the buildings, the ownership structure and their valorization's economical opportunities, our proposal in this study is a logic and a method of operation that allows us to read the historical assets represented by the Hakka settlements as a great opportunity for the growth program's enrichment .

The meaning of a tourism plan is to be found in the rediscovery of the daily value that Hakka pre-existences may have in the construction of the contemporary city.

The single buildings that we seek to preserve are different in quality and condition and are perhaps not so important for the international tourism development.

But their widespread presence and the logic of their location constitute an interest for the citizens and a possible element of identification that goes further back than the ancestors' memory for the single families.

**Figure 4**  
University library in a Hakka Residence in the Educational Strip (Source: Politecnico di Milano, 2011).

## A\_Area Tie Men Shan/Ling Hu Villages.

*Maurizio Meriggi*



1. About the “minor market of Niu Lang Jing, see: M. Meriggi, 2018, pp. 40-44, 48-52, 108; here, D1 area at p. 156.

2. For details see here: “Atlas of Hakka Residences in Qiuchang “commune” at pp. 198-206.

3. See this version of the Master Plan at pag. 11, Figure 11, and the shape of the area proposed by Politecnico di Milano team at pag. 11, Figure 15. At the same time this version of the plan envisaged the concentration of industrial compounds on the surrounding of this green area. The Politecnico report 2012 was also suggesting to find another location for the industrial areas and as a result in the new masterplan the industrial area was moved to the north end of the city in the area of Xiang Ling village (see later D1 area sheet at p. 156).

### Geographical position.

Referring to the map of Qiuchang Commune of 1979 the A area collects the Tie Men Shan sub-commune at the north and east and Lin Hu sub-commune at the west and south, with clusters of villages, and geographically belong to the marketing community of Xiang Ling sub-commune<sup>1</sup>. The built-up area groups delimitate an almost triangular area with Ling Hu village at the southern vertex with Zhe Gu Ling residence at the western vertex and Shi Gou Wu and Huang Zhu Li residences of Tie Men Shan sub-commune at the eastern vertex. This last group is located on Town Road N. 200 which was the one connecting Danshui with Huizhou before Huinan Road S254 was constructed, cutting the Tie Men Shan area in two parts. Four streams are crossing the area from southwest and northwest going to the Danshui River on the east side. A water reservoir having the shape of a trident is at the west end of Ling Hu village. The area is today delimited by Jiangjun Town No. 225 to the west and north, by Huinan Provincial Road No. 254 to the east and by the Second Ring Road to the south.

### Situation (2013 -today).

The triangular area having its vertex at the south in the Ling Hu central village is a peri-urban countryside densely cultivated with 14 Hakka residences of weilong type (8 in Ling Hu village, 6 in Tie Men Shan Village) and clusters of hamlets. The two lower corners of the quadrangle of main roads in which the triangle is inscribed are occupied by industrial compounds at the west and residential compounds at the east. Few industrial activities of medium-small size are present also in the triangular area, and a primary school is located in the northeast corner of the triangle.

### Landscape and historical value.

The area still conserve the fragment of a rich agricultural landscape, including plains and hills, and together with Zhoutian area is one of the first settlement in Huiyang territory of the Hakka emigration of the second half of XVII c. during the reign of Kangxi Emperor of Qing Dynasty. In Tie Men Shan area are located the residences: Shi Gou Wu and Tie Men Shan Nan Yang Shi Ju, mid-XVII c.; Gui Ling Xin Ju, first half of XVIII c.; Huang Zhu Li and Qing Cao Lou, second half XIX c.<sup>2</sup> In addition to these buildings in Ling Hu villages are located other 6 residences of the same type of weilong with ponds in front and some clusters of small houses forming little hamlets placed along the old roads at the foot of the hills. In the hills of almost any cluster of residences and hamlets are present woods with tombs. All residences follow the rules of Fengshui.

### Masterplan 2008-2020 and 2021-2025.

The backbone of the road traffic system on an urban scale was established by the 2008-2020 plan and is now implemented by defining the quadrangle that delimits the area.

The first version of the plan envisaged an intense subdivision of the area with medium and small blocks that effectively erased the historical agricultural landscape and demolishing the Hakka residences. In 2013 the plan introduced a huge green block of nearly 150 ha<sup>3</sup> in the centre of the area to protect the major villages of Tie Men Shan.

The new plan extended this protection area to 300 ha. to include also Ling Hu Village’s territory at the south end of the quadrangle. The green compound is surrounded by industrial and residential blocks.

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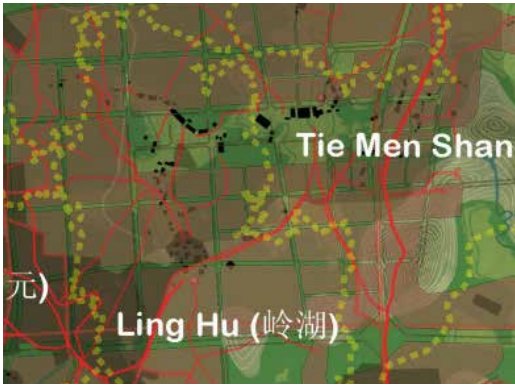
*At left: Huiyang masterplan 2007-2020. Black historical settlement and historical road network (Elaboration by the author). At right: Huiyang masterplan 2021-2035.*

*On the opposite page at the top left:*

*Land occupation in the 2012 variant of the Huiyang master plan 2007-2020: deep brown - built up area in 2012; black historical settlement; red - historical road network (Elaboration by the author).*



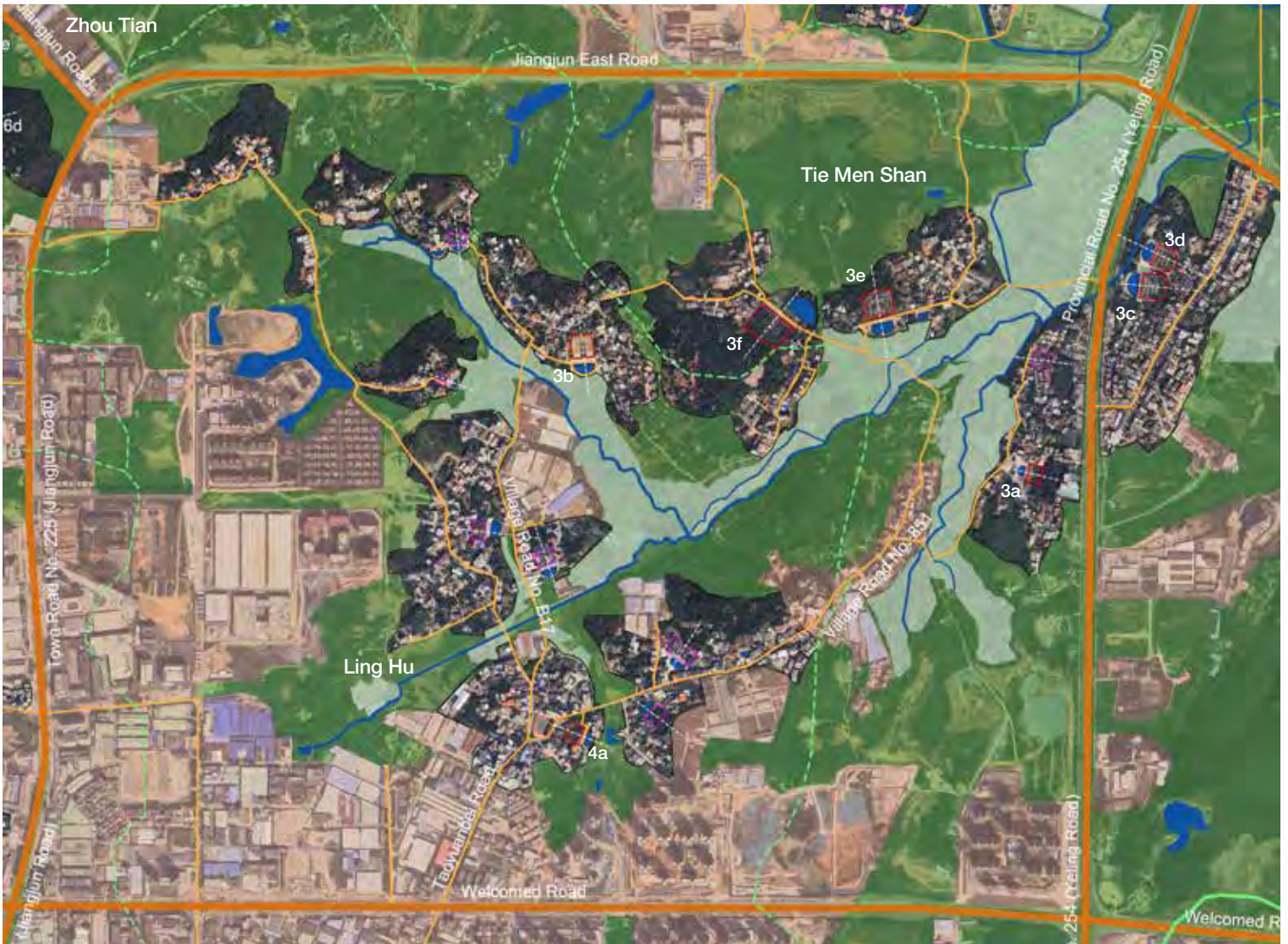
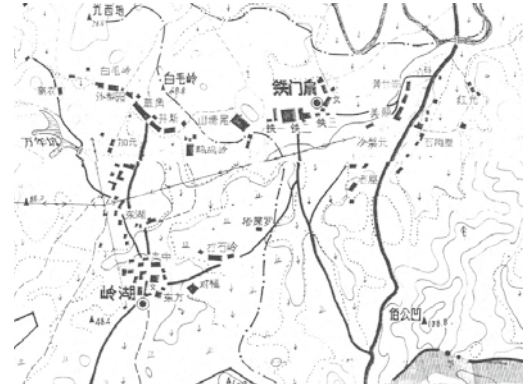




On this page on the right:  
Extract from "Qiuchang Commune Map", 1979.

On this page in the center:  
Built up area, main road network, historical villages and road network, with indication of Hakka residences (© Xiang Li, 2023, base Google Earth 2023).

On this page at bottom:  
Roof plan of most relevant Hakka residences in the area (© Zhu Tan, 2023).



4a  
FU LIN LOU  
1851-1900

3b  
ZHE GU LING  
1745

3e  
TIE MEN SHAN NAN YANG SHI JU  
1695

3f  
GUI LIN XIN JU  
1747

3d  
HUANG ZHU LI  
1889

3c  
SHI GOU WU  
1669

3a  
QING CAO LOU  
1851-1900



## Tie Men Shan Village. The “core” of the future Green City.\*

Angelo Torricelli,  
Giovanni Comi

\*Text by G. Comi.

Like many Chinese metropolises, Huiyang has been the scene of a disruptive urban expansion since the early 2000s, which has modified the area with numerous production plants and infrastructures, causing major upheavals on a territorial scale.

A development which, as the aerial images show, has compromised, perhaps irreparably, the relationship between the city and the countryside, making it very difficult to read the rural form of the landscape.

In Eastern Guangdong this ongoing “metamorphosis” has also led to a gradual abandonment of traditional construction methods in favor of stereotyped systems and compromised not only the relationship between urban form and the rural world but an entire architectural system, that of the *tulou* (*thú-lèu*), which in addition to being a built testimony of the Hakka culture (*Kejia*) represents a heritage of rural tradition in the process of being abandoned.

In Huiyang, particularly in the Xiangling area, the heavy interventions of land reform, rationalization of street levels – the result of a large subdivision – have determined the isolation of the Hakka settlements in the region (*weilong*), concealed the relations with the territory and the complex settlement structure to which they belong: the hilly terrain, the system of cultivated fields, paths, canals and water basins.

A form that can only be found today through a “piece-meal” reading of some of the surviving architectural complexes in the area.

The reading of the place has made the compositional logic and the landscape value of these building types recognizable as well as their profound link with the rural context. It was therefore decided to intervene on this “heritage” avoiding proposing conservation or recovery operations of the artifacts in their singularity but assuming the landscape as a system in which everything is interdependent, intertwined, where the different transformations are configured as the result of modifications that shape new arrangements. It is not only the survival of the physicality of the single building that is in question but the landscape of the urban-rural continuum.

For these reasons, developing a prescient environmental and urban vision represents a possible strategy capable of attributing value both to the built heritage and to the rural matrix, re-defining their role and relationship with the built in order to restore a consolidated form to the fabric and to the context a founda-

tional value.

The redevelopment and conservation project of these sites offers an “alternative” reading of the city and reveals the gap between the possible city and the ordinary city, an expression of the distance that separates the representation of ideas from reality. It is not a purely nostalgic operation but a way of “seeing” beyond the mere object form of things, to grasp their profound and hidden character.

Recognizing the urban and architectural dynamics – on the proximity and territorial scale – which are at the basis of the settlement process, has made it possible to rethink space, both private and public, through the design of a new system that recovers ancient layouts, involves the forms of open space, and is completed with the construction of a network aimed at enhancing the natural and historical heritage. Invoking the landscape therefore means referring to the relationship with the surrounding context which asks to be redesigned so that it becomes a concrete development opportunity and not a mere object of exploitation or scenography.

The resulting idea of the city assumes Hakka architectures as elements with architectural and urban value with respect to a precise design action. The scalar relationship between urban planning and architectural planning is thus inductively placed, recovering the urban motivations that define the role and contents of the project, and attributing to these architectures the value of architectural cornerstones within the new urban fabric of the city.

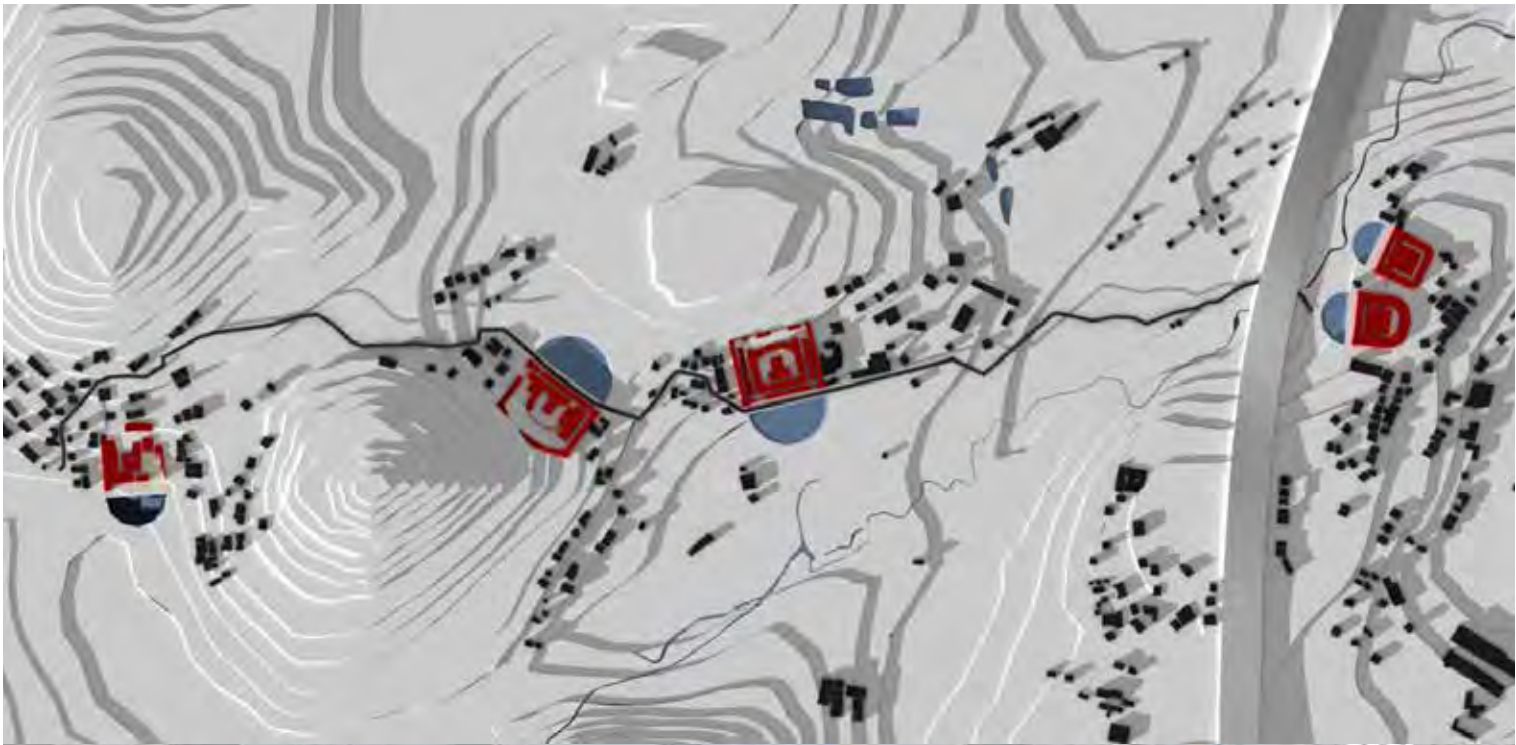
The proposal assumes these architectures for the role they establish with the elements of the landscape (water basin and hill) according to the precepts of fengshui and reinterprets them as parts of a widespread system along a sort of itinerary which, having identified the sequence of architectures, it enhances its position within the area of future expansion of the city.

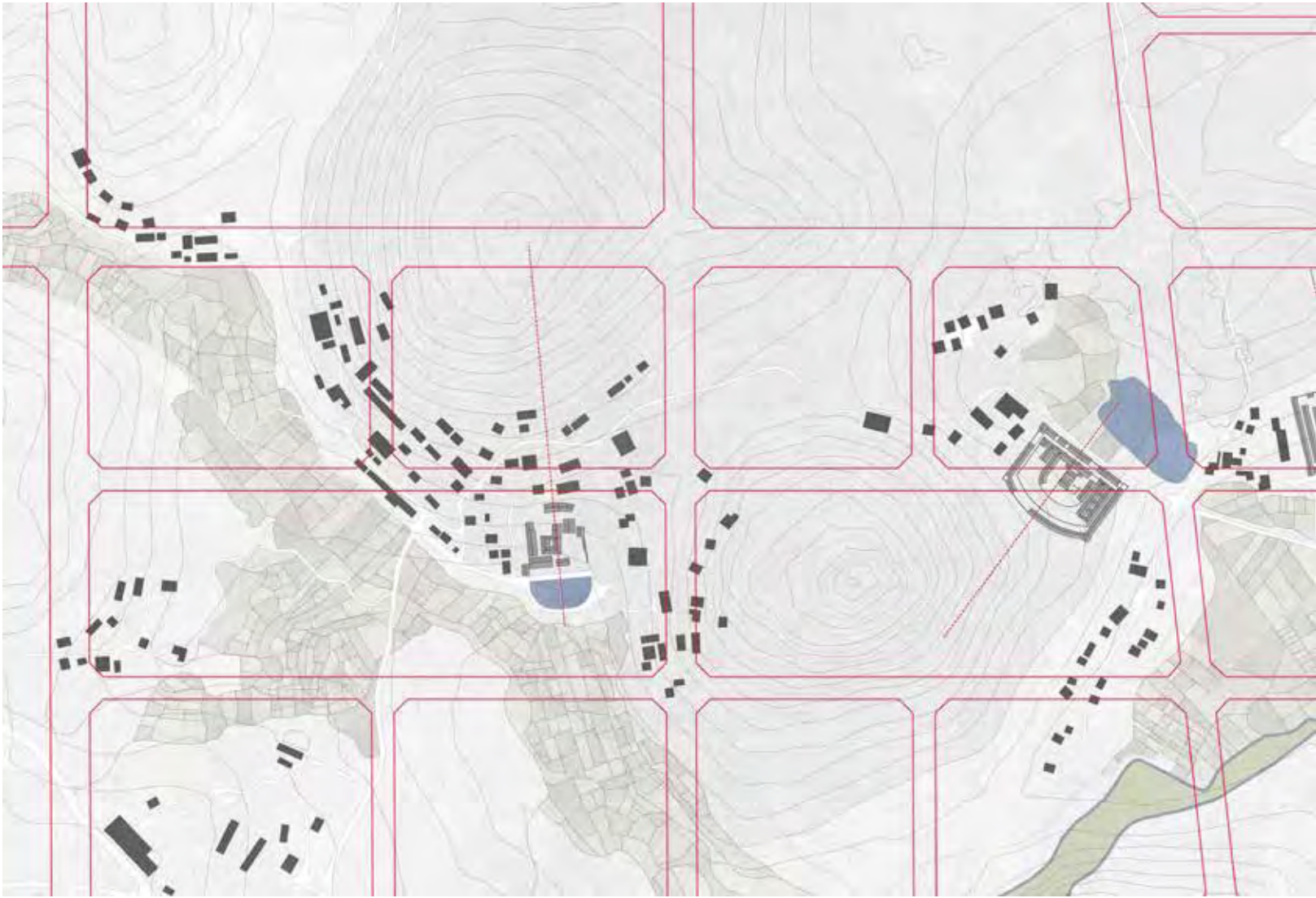
Starting from the compositional analysis of the building and its being an architecture inseparable from the relationship with the site, the proposal offers a reading of the city and the territory that goes beyond the classic city-countryside opposition, recognizing the belonging of the single *weilong* to a system capable of establishing solid relationships with memory and nature.

Understanding them within a broader view, the project identifies the artefacts included in the new urban plan, enhanced by their *in situ* musealisation, and connect-

*On the opposite page:*  
Natural and architectural  
landscape elements in  
Tie Men Shan village.







ed by a pedestrian path capable of drawing a network of *en plein air* museum itineraries to which it is entrusted the task of restoring meaning to the individual finds in order to rediscover them within an original and more complex unit of which they were part.

The proposed hypothesis is therefore that of considering the Hakka sites along an archaeological visit walk which, moving from the complex called “Shi Go Wu (Stone Dog)” leads to the wider Guilin Xin Ju, identifying a sequence of architectures.

In doing so, the city is no longer an exhibition of autonomous pieces but of architectures based on the “large plan”, the result of an investigation that digs deep and which qualifies the architectures of the past as elements of the urban composition.

This survey of Hakka villages shows us not only the difficulties that Chinese architecture has to face when confronted with projects of urban installations imported from the West, but it is also a pretext for reflecting on the ways in which Chinese metropolises are transformed and on how difficult and for contemporary China to find a synthesis between its own tradition and the forms introduced by globalization.

For these reasons, the study of the typological and settlement characteristics of Hakka architectures represents a valid example for the definition of new pro-

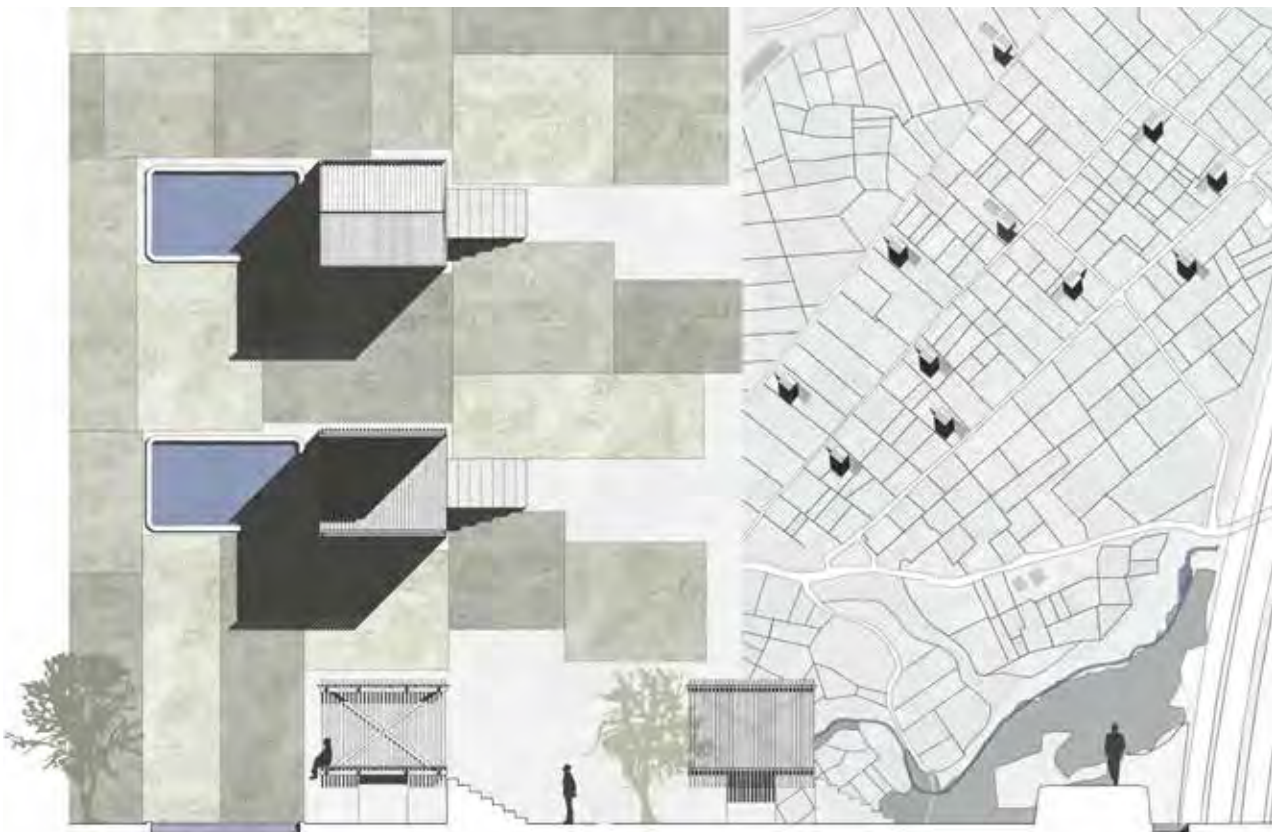
totypes for tourist settlements capable of harmonizing with the historical and environmental context.

If these “monuments” are assumed as material for a new architecture, it is possible to think of the composition according to a principle of “quotation” capable of recognizing a method that declines the theme of repetition/replication in search of a new idea of architecture and the city .

The project for the Yanizishan Hakka Hotel (see page 9, note 14) starts from these premises, part of a larger urban planning intervention for a new residential site in Huiyang. The hotel is organized planimetrically through the sequence of four volumes parallel to each other and to the contour lines; the internal distribution takes place along a central axis that houses the common areas and connects the different environments by solving the jumps in altitude. Built on several levels, these volumes house the hotel's guest rooms which open onto the landscape through large windows. Architecture is recognized here as an essential act that not only gives shape but transforms the ground from natural into artificial.

Above:  
The Hakka villages and the orography in the Xiangling area of Huiyang with the layout of the future expansion planned by the Municipality (in red).





*On the right:*  
The new rural facilities.  
Plans and elevations.

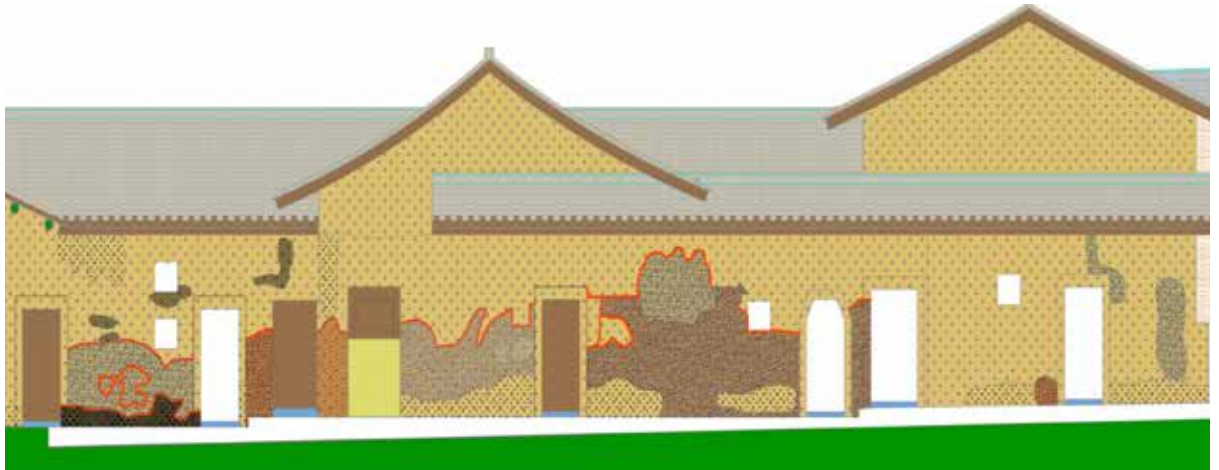
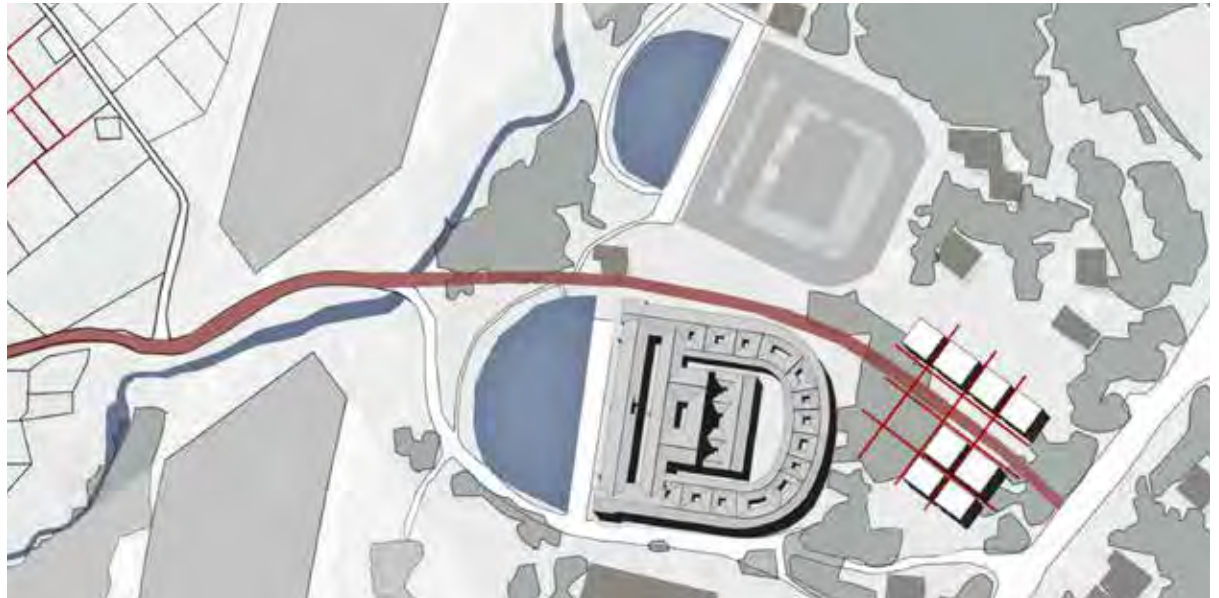


## Shi Go Wu

On this page:  
Shi Go Wu residence as a visitors center. General Plan, detail of conservation project. The proposal to consider the Hakka sites of the region as part of a widespread system draws an archaeological tour that organizes the villages of the Xiangling region. This new visit itinerary that starts from Shigowu leads up to Guilin Xin Ju and recognizes a sequence of architectures and places located within the area of future expansion of the city. A system that despite the new infrastructure sees the complex called "Stone Dog" as centre which is considered as an archetypal model of the architectural typology of Hakka villages. For the village of Shigowu, the project involves the spatial and functional redefinition and volumetric conservation in order to enhance the built form and building technique.

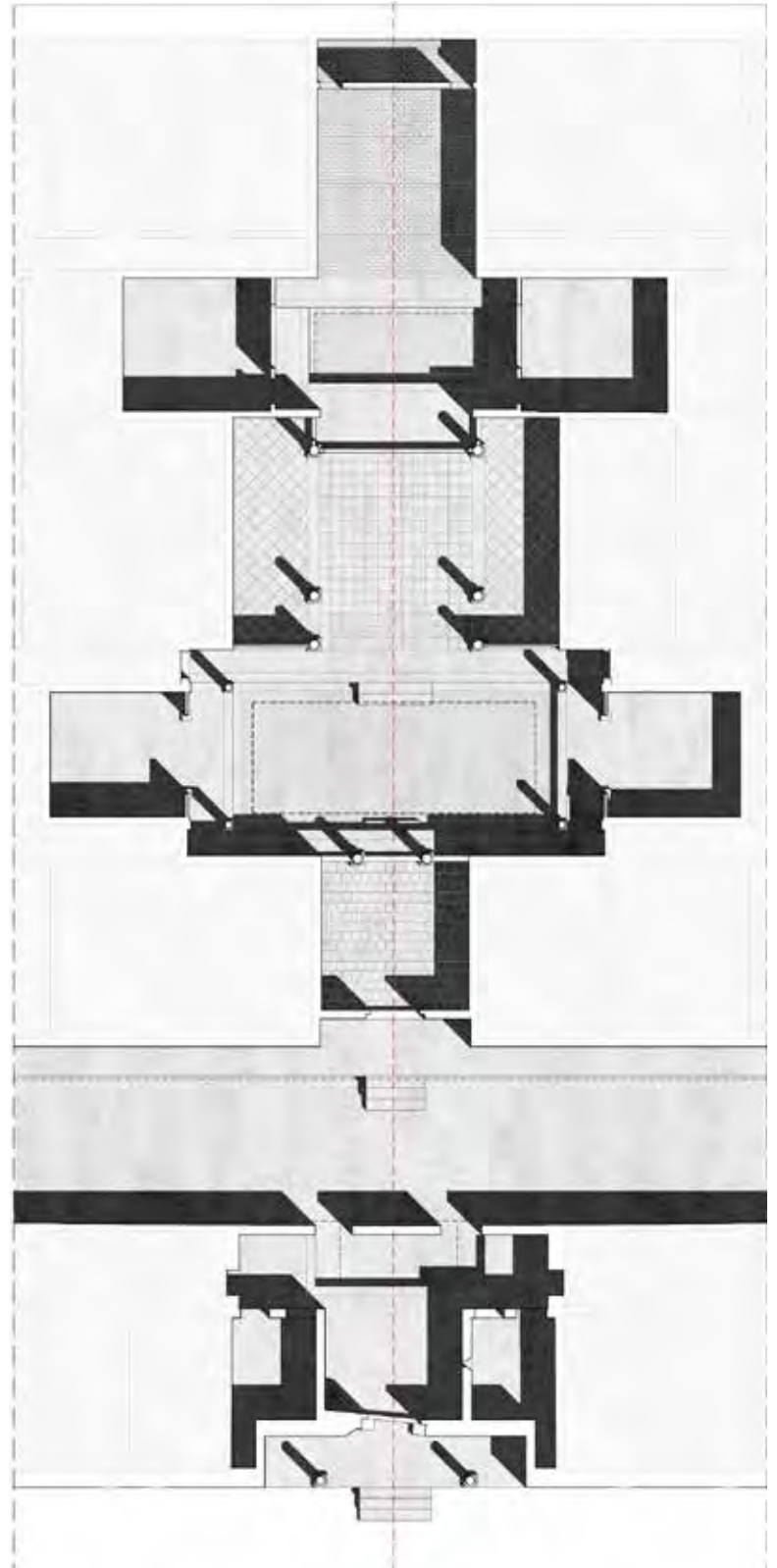
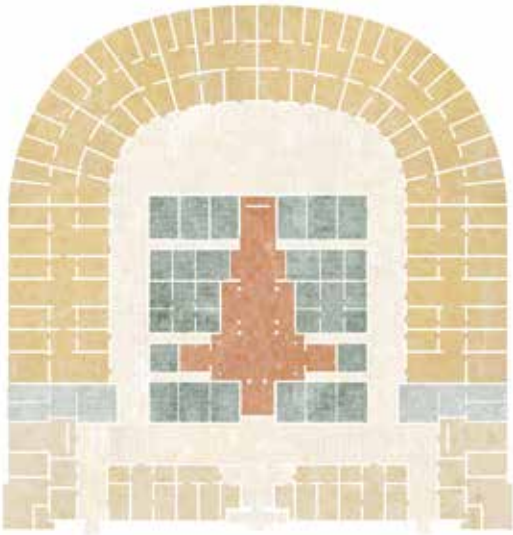
On the opposite page:  
Study of the distribution system. Plan of the ground floor with the activities, plan of the citang.

On this page below:  
Longitudinal section of the residence.

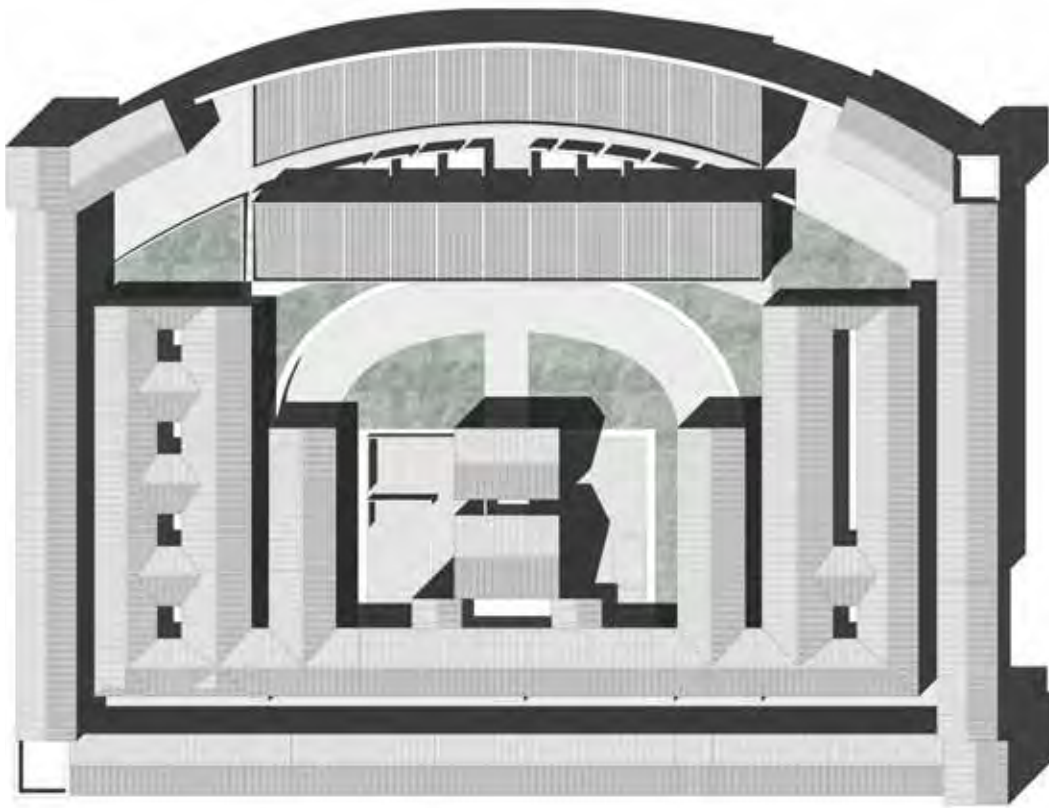




- Temple/citang*
- Infopoint and services for the Park*
- Connection space*
- Shops and workshops*
- Library and exhibition spaces*
- Public services*



# Guilin Xin Ju



On this and on the opposite page above and in the center: Project for Guilin Xin Ju residence as university residence and library: plans and section. With its seventy meters in length of the main front, the Guilin Xin Ju, although in a state of profound decay, still appears today as one of the largest Hakka buildings among those present along the park route. Of the complex, only the citang area has been preserved in good condition. The intervention

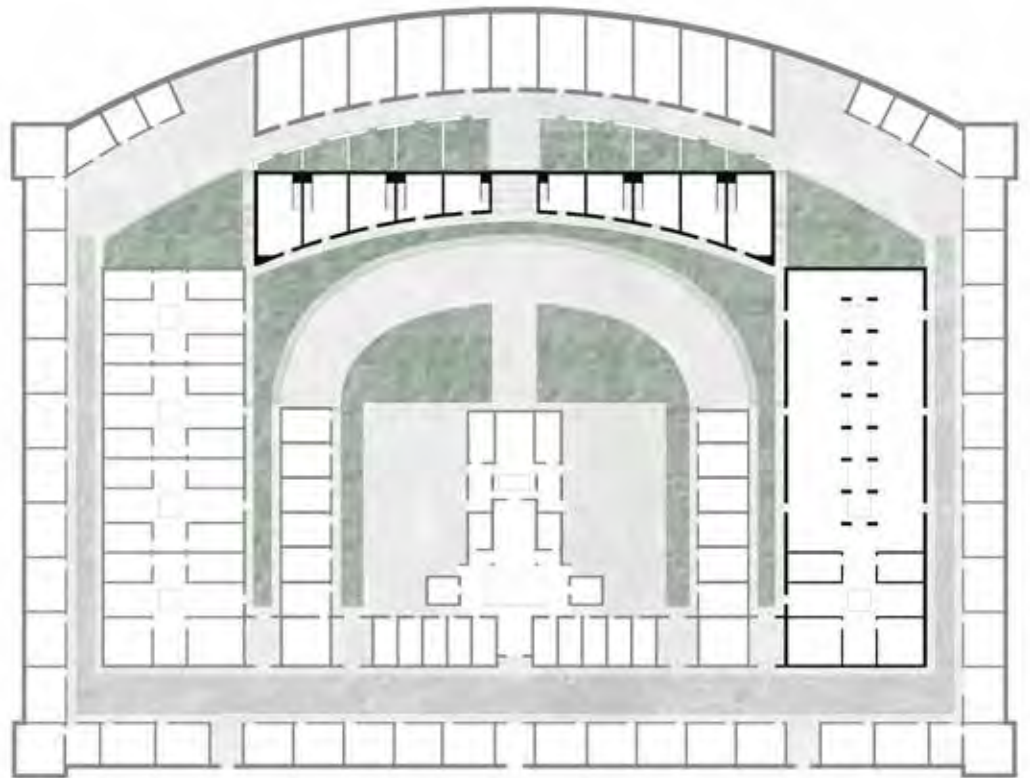
proposes to redesign the rear perimeter as an exedra through the creation of two new volumes, one curvilinear, tangent to the retaining wall and one rectangular. The latter mediates, in section the jump in altitude and designs a sequence of small residential units that develop on various levels. The project enhances the deep bond that Hakka villages establish with the ground and with the topography of the landscape in which they arise.

On the opposite page at the bottom right: Angelo Torricelli, Giovanni Comi, Project for the Yanizishan Hotel in Huiyang, 2015. Plan and section showing the relationship with the topography (© see page 12, note 15).

On page 120: Shi Go Wu residence as a visitors center: views of the plastic model.

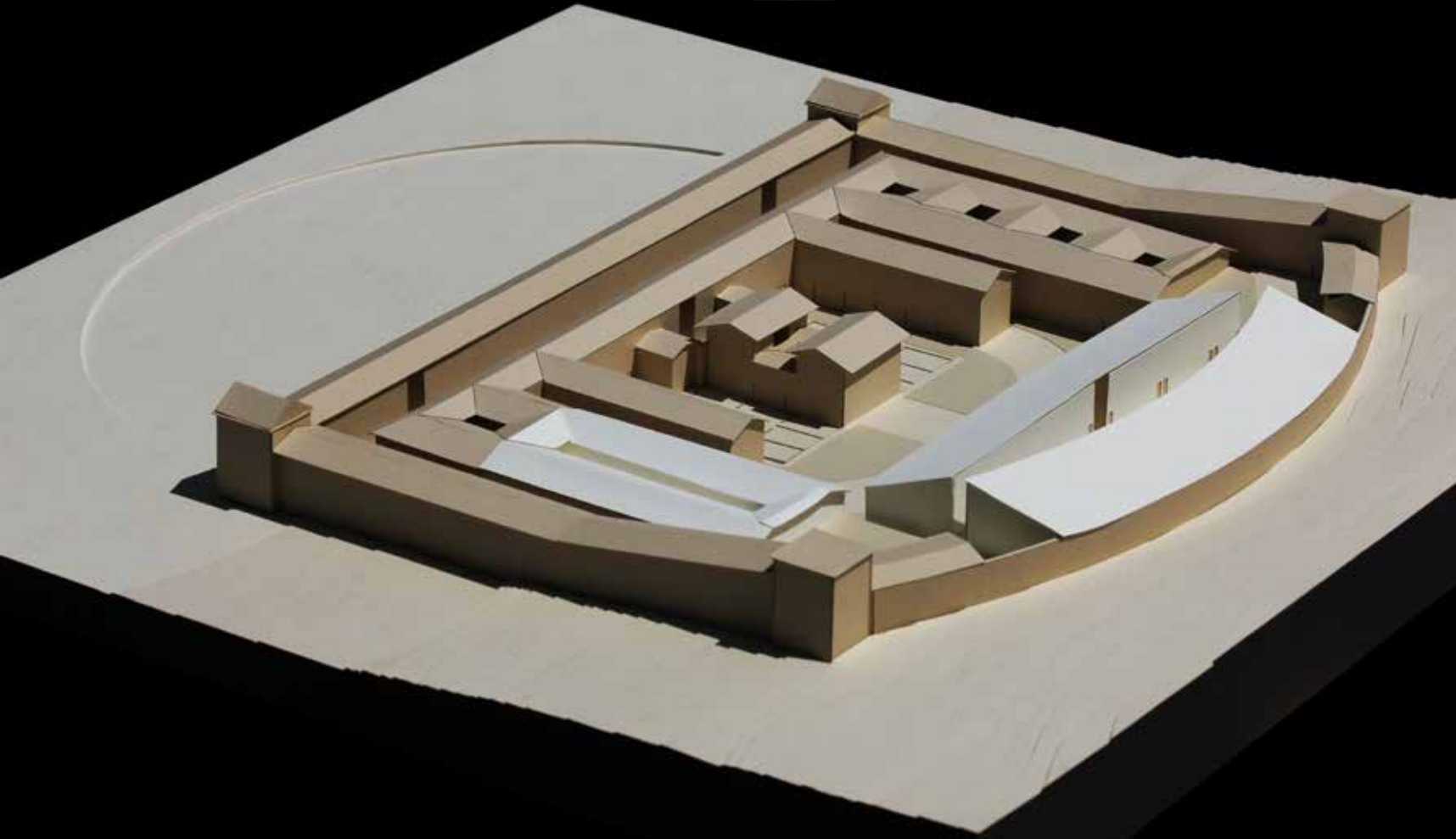
On page 121: Project for Guilin Xin Ju residence as university residence and library: views of the plastic model.











# The “edge” of the new city on the Xiang Ling/Tie Men Shan border.\*

Adalberto Del Bo, Stefano Perego

\* The project was elaborated with the collaboration of Jiang Weiwei and Liu Xiaoxiao and published in Milan Polytechnic University - School of Civil Architecture - Department of Architectural Design, 2011, 2013a. Text by S. Perego.

Density, relationship with nature and with the elements of local architectural tradition are the principles posed to the basis of the idea of planning presented for Huiyang which stands as an alternative to the masterplan defined by the municipality.

Within the vast area for which the municipality of Huiyang has drawn up the zoning plan, the interest has been concentrated in the area close to the settlement called Stone dog the point of convergence of a system of buildings, paths and fields of great interest and mostly intact. The Hakka buildings that define this central area of the “City Masterplan 2007 - 2020” have a genealogical link with the “Stone Dog” building as their construction took place in the following decades and centuries representing a growth of the family whose original stock resides precisely in this main building. In addition, these buildings have a continuity of plant compared to the main building. Around the central part, traditionally dedicated to the founding ancestors of the building, the residences are built in a concentric way in an orderly set of private and collective spaces. The goal of the plan has been an important challenge due to the complexities posed by the site and by the municipality. In fact, the main aim was to bring together in a synthesis the different elements that have been recognized here: in fact, to combine the volumetric quantities provided by the “City Masterplan 2007 - 2020” and the richness of the landscape has required an effort to relate seemingly antithetical worlds.

Among the hypotheses underlying the idea of advanced cities, we decided to maintain, in addition to the density defined “a-priori”, also the functional indications contained in the zoning plan that we had revised based on urban character of the proposal, assessing their appropriateness in relation to the different parts of the plan together with the landscape. The partial adherence to the urban plan is also found in the choice to maintain the forecast of a large urban park. The idea of the park expressed in the masterplan just as an intention doesn't have a relationship with the topography that is, with the reliefs and the general shape of the plot of fields and paths, a very ancient trace in the territory. The planned central park connects the Hakka buildings as elements of a system that sees in the slight depression the element of connection of the area.

The hypothesis put at the base of the elaboration considers the building quantities foreseen by the urban



On this page above:

## Table 1

Overlapping between the site plan of the project with shadows and the Huiyang Master Plan 2007-2020.

On this page below:

## Table 2

Photomontage: relationship between a historical Hakka site and the new settlement.

On pages 124-125:

## Table 3

Site plan with shadows and elevation of the project.











0 200 250

Planivolumetrico









晋书元中书侍人捕鱼五業  
 絲徑り三説之志也包角批  
 毛林空岫寂分中子性柯  
 子州鮮美居平演於人正  
 子書之波前川之志新古林東亦  
 源便の二山之志心勢舞若為  
 光便換根後只波り及十步詠  
 開於土地瞻原其儀新志正田  
 其河壘之升之志當洋海夫通程



instrument as a project data based on which it was tried to propose a solution able to guarantee a close relationship between the new building, the nature (with orography) and with the Hakka site system. This design idea has been defined by a mixed types settlement, consisting of urban units made by high-rise buildings and low-rise buildings, ensuring the achievement of building density.

High-rise buildings have the task of defining the limits of the entire area of the intervention that extends in an east-west direction and also they draw the road front of the infrastructure system that has been maintained with the appropriate modifications in order of ensuring the minimum volume of ground movement.

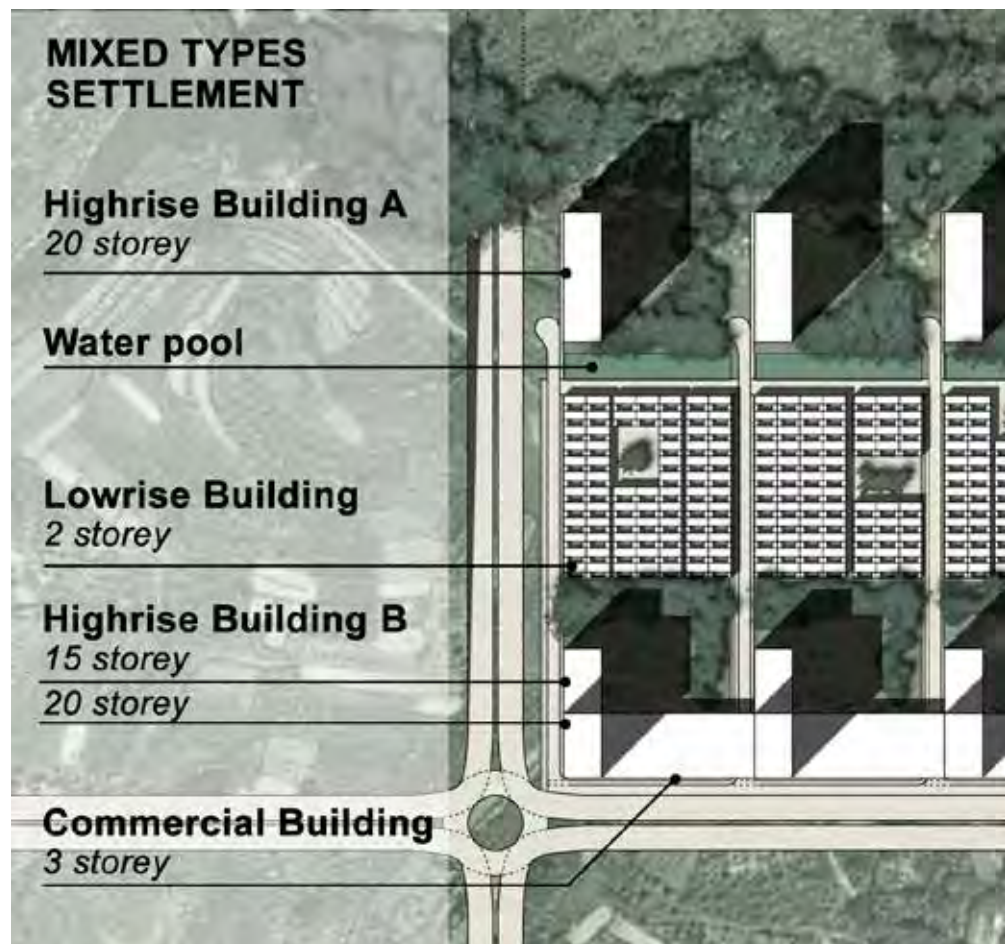
The orientation of high-rise buildings, as well as finding an explanation in the very nature of the central distribution building where apartments are exposed to the east and west (for which specific solar control elements are designed).

In order to maintain relations with tradition, the continuity of the long road front consisting of high buildings is interrupted in some specific points where the axis of symmetry of each building Hakka targets the hill placed at a distance as a focal element for the reasons that find in Fengshui its origin and reason. The concentration of the building on the edges of the blocks is also related to the will to have the central areas, maintaining their current destination, will continue to be cultivated according to the ordered design still visible today.

The high-rise buildings are related to a tissue of low-rise patio houses that constitute formally defined settlement units. The low-rise houses express a strong relationship with the residential tradition of the Chinese Hutong and with the Hakka architectural culture; In fact, Hakka residences typically have a patio around which houses are built, large enough to allow ventilation to the rooms and to have protection from the sun during warmer periods. In fact, the latitude of Huiyang is about the same as that of the North Tropic: this means that at the summer solstice the sun is perpendicular to the Earth's surface with very high temperatures and a significant humidity rate. For this aspect the size of the courts of low-rise houses is proportionate in this respect. In terms of urban solar control, the settlement solution was verified through the solar path at significant times of the year. As has already been pointed out above, at the summer solstice (21 June), high-rise buildings do not cast shadows in the middle of the day.

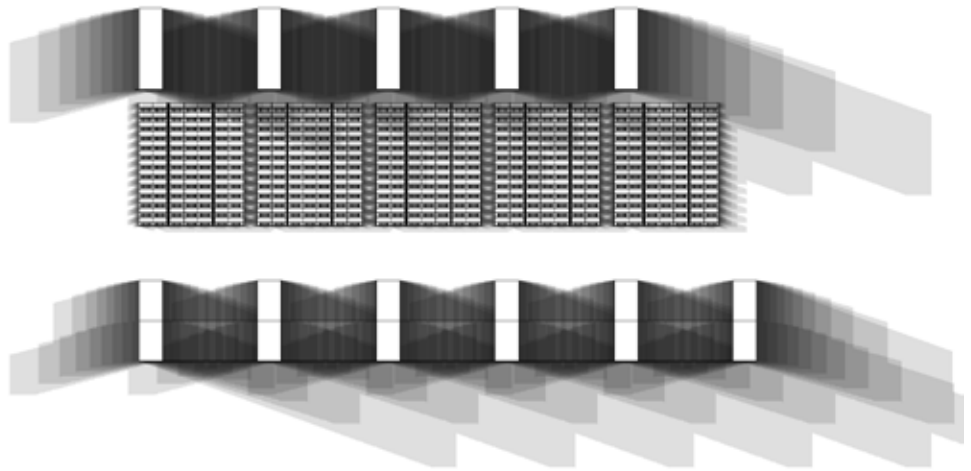
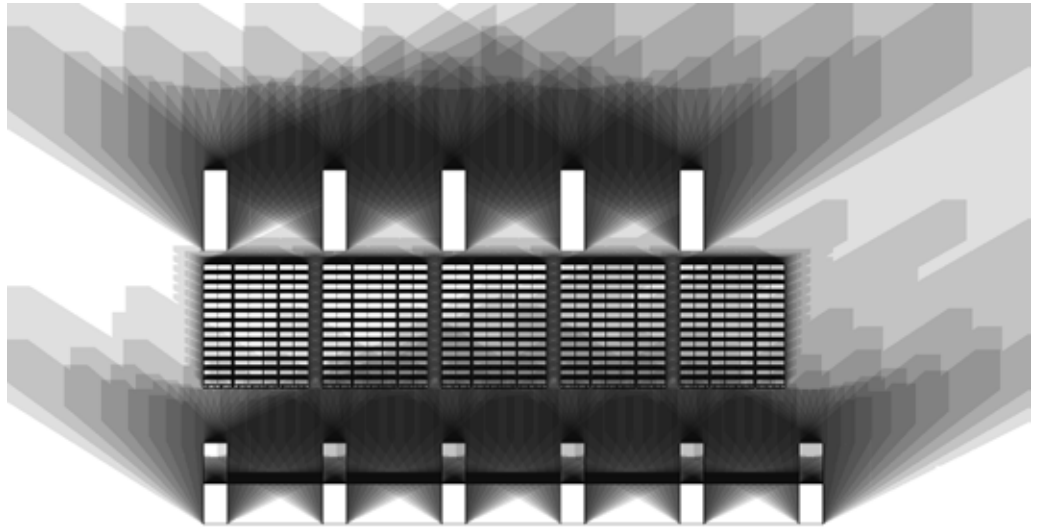
The winter period, although not particularly rigid, requires attention to the penetration of the sun's rays inside the environments. For this reason, the verification of the trend of the shadows is significant. The verification carried out at the winter solstice allowed to control the distance between the low buildings and the size of the patio.

The compact structure of the block with low-rise houses is interrupted by some semi-private areas, small squares that guarantee areas of internal nature that can allow temperature control.









On pages 126-127:

**Table 4**

Photomontage: a historical Hakka site and the new settlement with the poem "The peach blossom Spring" by Tao Yuanming, 421 CE.

On pages 128-129:

**Table 5**

Block urban section; detail of the site plan with shadows, patio houses and row houses ground floor and first floor plans. Typical floors.

On this page:

**Table 6a**

Shadows analysis (from the top): 21st dec - 21st June, between 8 am to 6 pm.

On the opposite page above:

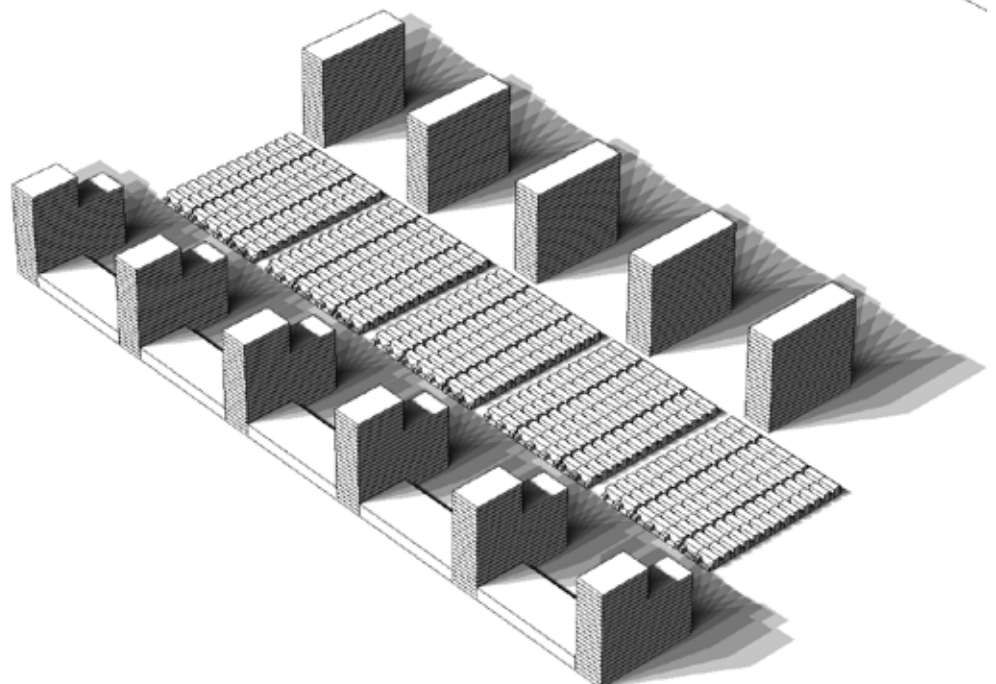
**Table 6b**

Shadows analysis (from the top): 21st March and 21st Dec, between 10 am - 2 pm.

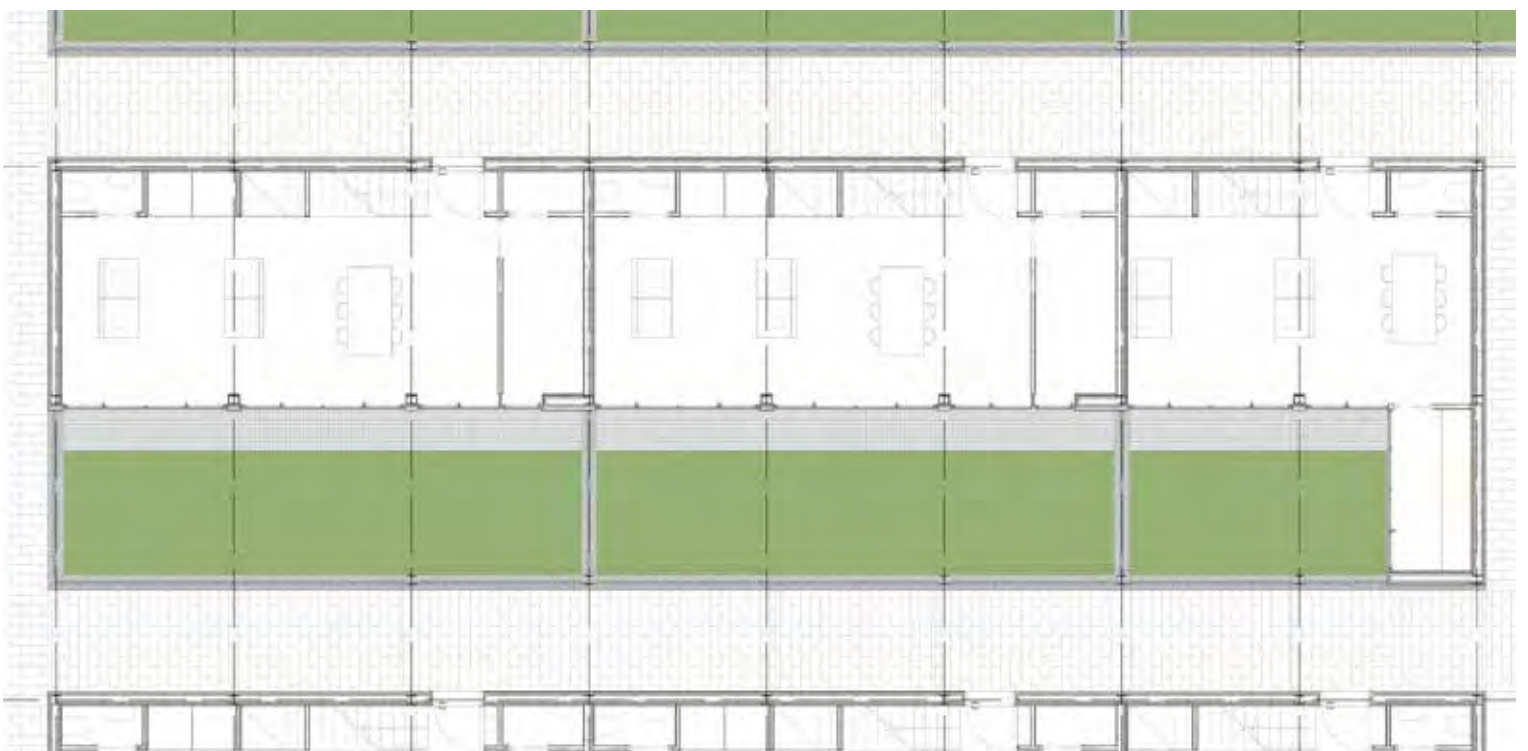
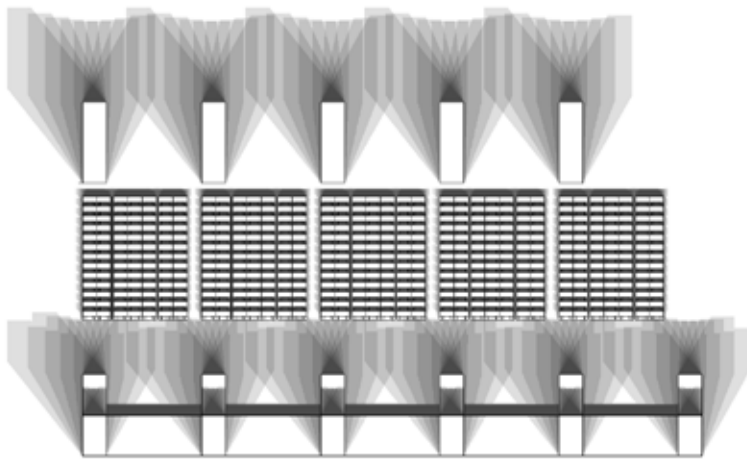
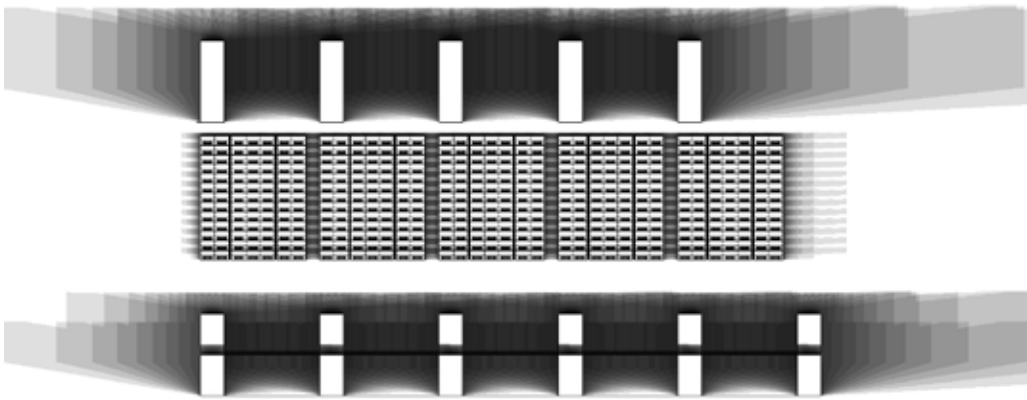
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**Table 7**

Patio houses plan (portion).

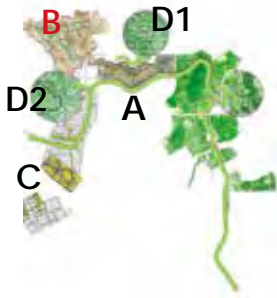






## B\_Area Zhoutian Village.

Maurizio Meriggi



### Geographical position.

Referring to the map of Qiuchang Commune of 1979 the B area includes the territory of Zhou Tian sub-commune and part of the territory of Guanshan sub-commune at west and Chayuan sub-commune at south. They belong to the marketing community of the minor market of We Bu village<sup>1</sup>.

The area has the form of a triangle having at the upper left vertex the residence of Gong Xiu Lou (5j), in the lower vertex the residence of Liu Zhao Lou (7b) and in the upper right vertex the Qiu Shao Ling village.

The territory is a hilly compound crossed by a system of parallel streams northwest-southeast oriented forming linear valleys. The numerous clusters of villages are linked by the Village road No. 710 at west and an appendix of the Town Road No. 225 at east, both linked with the Jiangjun Town Road No. 225.

### Situation (2013 -today).

The area is a peri-urban countryside densely cultivated almost untouched by urbanization with more than 20 relevant Hakka villages and some open hamlets, with the exception of a small factory and a touristic complex of villas and hotel in correspondance with intersection of the appendix of the Jiangjun Town Road No. 225 with the same Jiangjun Town Road No. 225.

In the southern part of the area there is the Complex of "General Ye Tin Memorial Museum" with annexed park attracting huge numbers of national tourism connected with the Jiangjun Town Road No. 225.

### Landscape and historical value.

The area still conserve a rich agricultural landscape, including plains and hills, and together with Tie Men Shan

area is one of the first settlement in Huiyang territory of the Hakka emigration of the second half of XVII c. during the reign of Kangxi Emperor of Qing Dynasty.

In Zhoutian and Guanshan area are located nearly 33 hakka residences almost of rectangular weilong type<sup>2</sup>. Among them, Ye Ting Gu Ju, Bi Yan Lou, Hui Xui Lou, Hui Shuoi Lou, are directly linked with Ye Ting family and his ancestors in the XIX c.<sup>3</sup> and placed in the surrounding of "General Ye Tin Memorial Museum".

Zhou Tian Lao Wei residence belongs to one of the two Ye brothers who founded Tie Men Shan and Zoutian villages in XVII c.

Other residences as Gong Xiu Lou, Hui Long Lou and Song Qiao Lou are samples of huge dimension weilong of relevant artistic value.

In general all the residences of the area have a high artistic and testimonial value, conserving also their relation with the agricultural landscape following the rules of *fengshui*.

### Masterplan 2008-2020 and 2021-2025.

In both masterplan the area is and agricultural park, that in the last one has been extended to include the west part of Chayuan and all Guanshan sub-communes territory<sup>4</sup>. For villages and landscape is foreseen a full conservation. The only new buildings admitted are those related with tourism as the "Swall hill complex" near the "General Ye Tin Memorial Museum".

In the former masterplan a touristical complex was forecasted in Guanshan territory.

The last masterplan forecasts a parkway linking Longgang (Shenzhen district) with Huidong city passing through Guanshan territory and north of Huiyang at the border of built-up area.

1. About marketing communities in Zhoutian area see here: Acuto, Meriggi, p. 86; C-D2 area sheet at p. 148.

2. See here: "Atlas of Hakka Residences in Qiuchang 'commune'". Sheets: 5-7, at pp. 207-232.

3. About Ye family in Huiyang see here: Tan Zhu, pp. 189.

4. The first version of 2007-2020 masterplan was forecasting in this part of Guanshan territory industrial use, that has been modified to agricultural park after Politecnico di Milano report, 2012.

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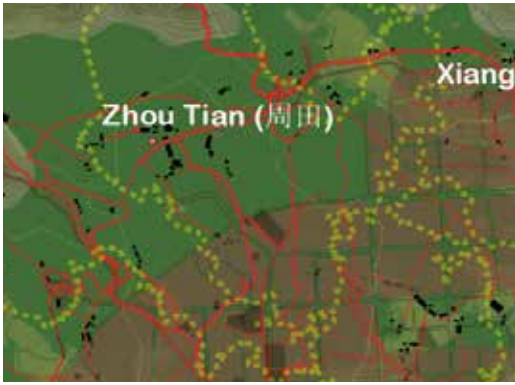
At left: Huiyang masterplan 2007-2020. Black historical settlement and historical road network (Elaboration by the author). At right: Huiyang masterplan 2021-2035.

On the opposite page at the top left:

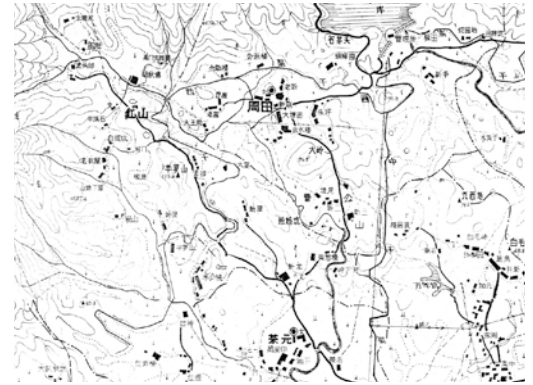
Land occupation in the 2012 variant of the Huiyang master plan 2007-2020: deep brown - built up area in 2012; black historical settlement; red - historical road network (Elaboration by the author).





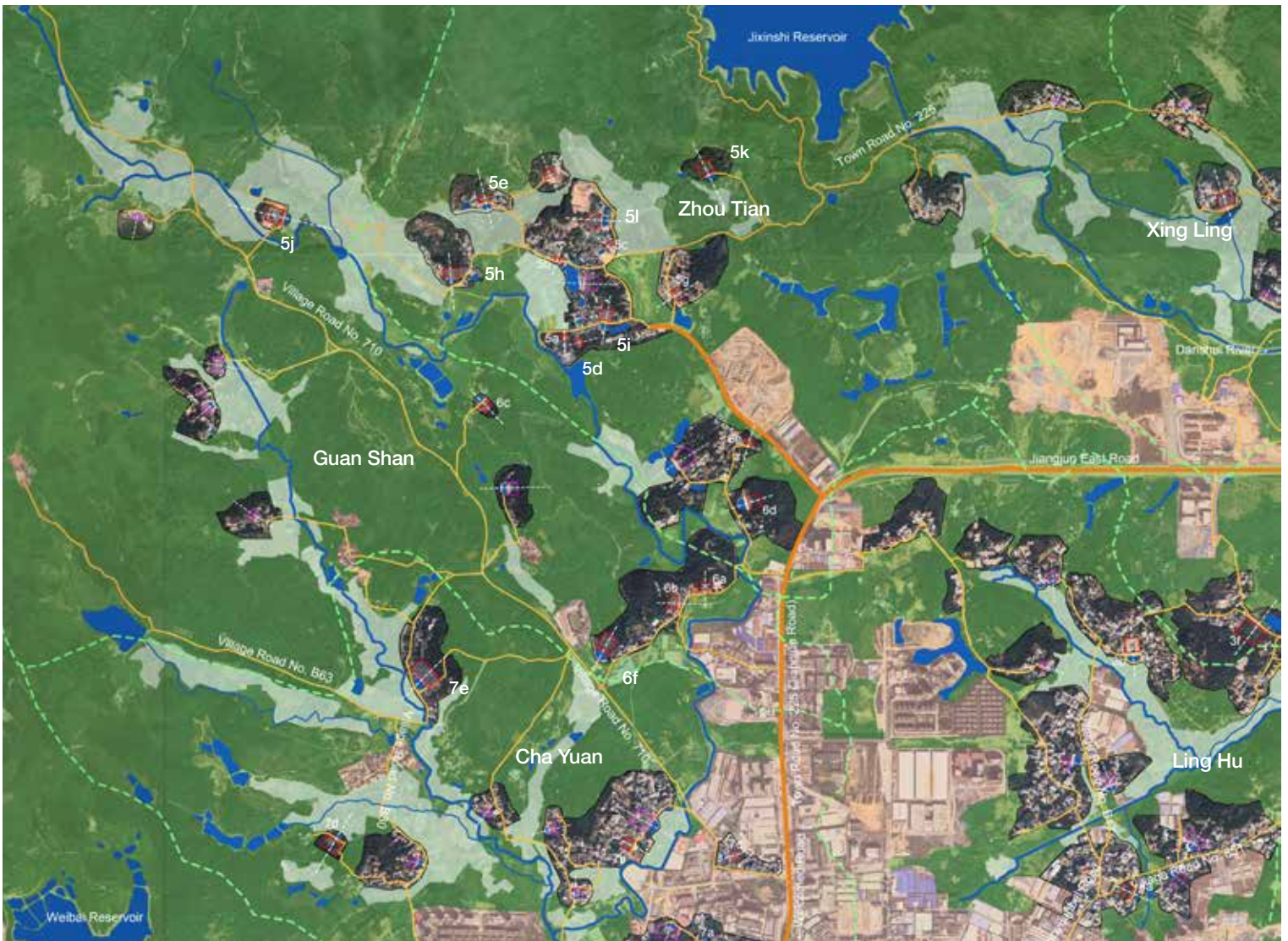


On this page on the right:  
Extract from "Qiuchang  
Commune Map", 1979.



On this page in the center:  
Built up area, main road  
network, historical villages and  
road network, with indication  
of Hakka residences (© Xiang  
Li, 2023, base Google Earth  
2023).

On this page at bottom:  
Roof plan of most relevant  
Hakka residences in the area  
(© Zhu Tan, 2023).



5j  
GONG XIU LOU  
1851-1900

5h  
BI YAN LOU  
1889

5e  
HUI XIN LOU  
1936

5k  
RUI SHI WEI  
1880

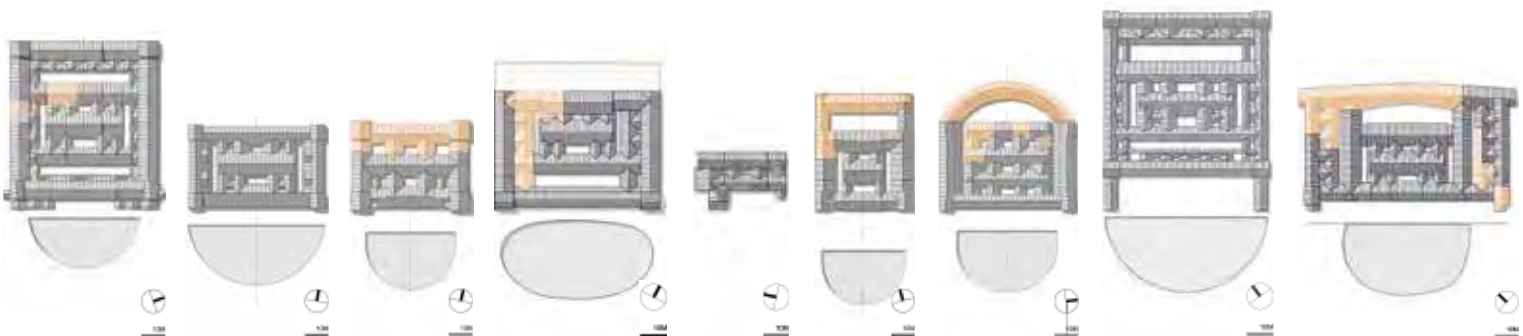
5d  
YE TING  
GU JU  
1884

5i  
HUI SHUOI LOU  
1825

5i  
ZHOU TIAN LAO WEI  
1650-1700

6f  
HUI LONG LOU  
1889

7e  
SONG QIAO LOU  
1753





# Rural landscape as a resource: an agricultural park to preserve the Hakka Heritage.\*

Maurizio Boriani, Alberta Cazzani,  
Domenico Chizzoniti, Maria Cristina Palo,  
Zhu Tan

\* This paper is the result of a joined work of all authors, with a multidisciplinary contribution of landscape and architecture preservation (Maurizio Boriani, Alberta Cazzani, Maria Cristina Palo) and architecture and urban design (Domenico Chizzoniti and Zhu Tan).

Specifically, Maurizio Boriani, Alberta Cazzani e Maria Cristina Palo developed section "1. The agricultural landscape in the North Huiyang region: risks and opportunities", Alberta Cazzani section "2. The landscape survey of area C", Maria Cristina Palo section "3. An agricultural park to valorize the Hakka sites in area C"; Domenico Chizzoniti wrote the architectural design description of "Hui Shui Lou as a Visitor Center with galleries for temporary exhibitions", "Hui Xin Lou as a Visitor Center with accommodation and restaurant", Bi Yan Lou as *Hakka Culture Experience Space*"; Zhu Tan of: "Bi Yan Lou New Rural Dwellings".

The working group, in addition to the authors, included: Cecilia Bischeri and Giacomo Menini. References to the text are enlisted at p. 244, in the section: *Landscape Surveying and Preservation*.

Landscape survey of the North area C: identification and analysis of structural and perceptive landscape settlement.

*It is possible to understand the complexity of Hakka rural landscape features. This detailed survey - considering historic sites and landscape components, decayed, or altered areas, and impact elements - constitutes a reference for planning tools and new buildings development projects (surveying and drawing by Alberta Cazzani and Maria Cristina Palo, 2010).*

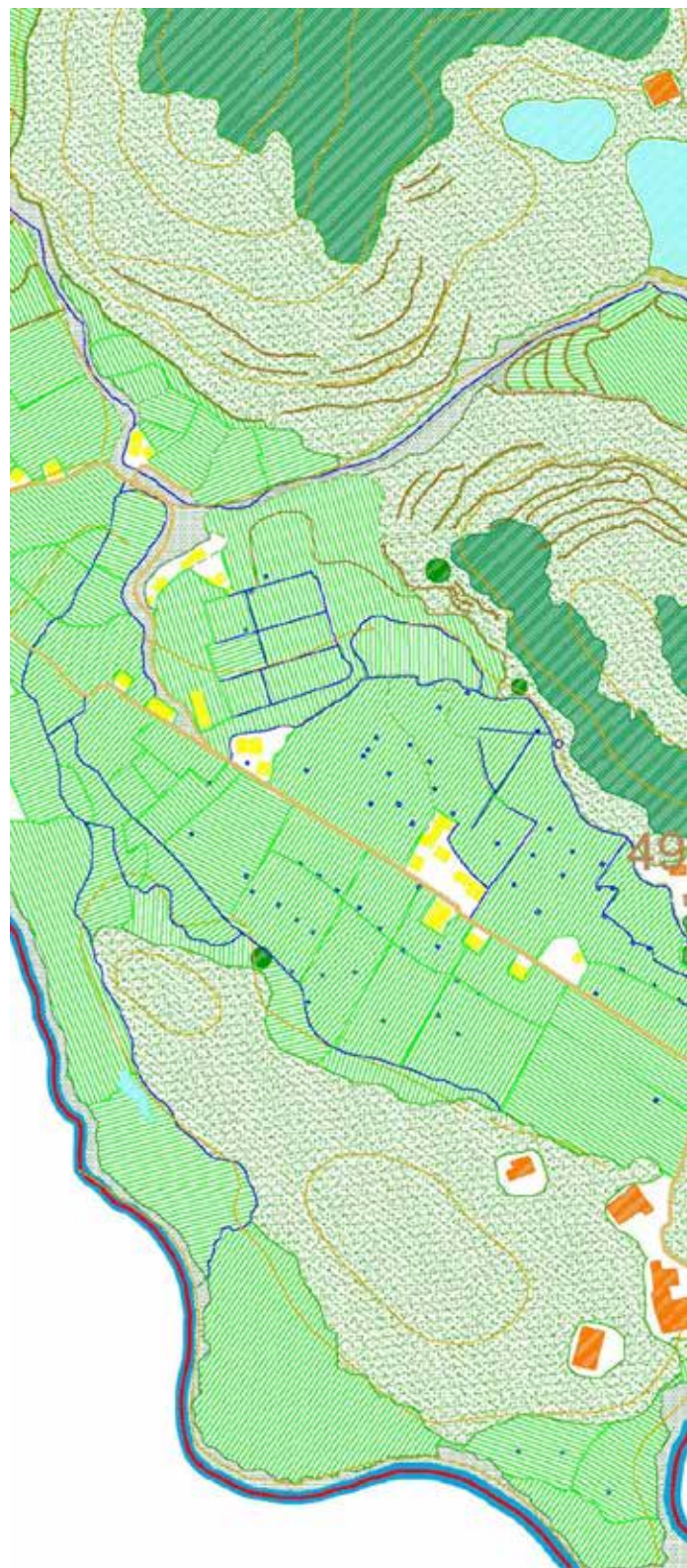
## 1. The agricultural landscape in the North Huiyang region (area C): risks and opportunities.

The landscape structure of an area can only be understood and protected by taking into consideration all the natural and anthropic factors that have created it. For this reason, it is today important to analyze the traditional agricultural landscapes as a fundamental component of planning policies and tools in order to preserve them, considering their values and problems and recognizing cultural, perceptive, social and economic opportunities to conserve and manage them linking to sustainable agriculture and urban expansion (Grenville, 1999).

The city of Huiyang is implementing a new urbanization plan, which entails the transformation of a considerable part of its agricultural land into a built-up zone, involving the historic site system of the Hakka community. It is a cultural landscape of great historical and ethnographic interest that appears to be in serious danger. The current territorial structure is characterized by vast zones of agricultural land, generally used for vegetable gardens, fruit and arable farming, linked with a sparse urban settlement featured with isolated Hakka fortified sites and some small urban rural centers.

With particular regard to the agricultural landscape of the analyzed area C, in the North of Huiyang downtown and urban zones, it includes broad irrigated flat areas alternating with plains cultivated with traditional groves, woodlands, hills covered by orchards, predominantly Lychee groves. Agricultural use of the landscape is still well consolidated, even if it is sometimes eroded by new industrial and residential construction of a growing city, particularly in the South, closer to the Huiyang urban zones.

There are evident symptoms of intrinsic weakness in the agricultural system: a good number of traditional residential and rural buildings, mainly the Hakka sites, have been abandoned and some agricultural land has been rented to immigrants who live and work there in precarious conditions. The Town Planning Scheme is developed around a grid layout, defined by large two-lane roads that impose upon the natural landscape and ancient agricultural buildings without any particular respect for the historic settlement. Only the northernmost portion, close to a more defined hilly area, has remained untouched by urbanization and should act as a natural-agricultural park. Some green public areas are designed within the road network, but they are planned as urban-recreational parks, than as agriculture-productive areas.





**LEGEND**

**GEOMORPHOLOGICAL FEATURES**

- Elevation curves
- Terrace/sloped terrace
- River
- Canal/channel
- Pond

**LINEAR FEATURES**

- Suburban road
- Rural road
- Trail
- Landscape Infrastructure (viaduct, aqueduct, electric plant, etc.)

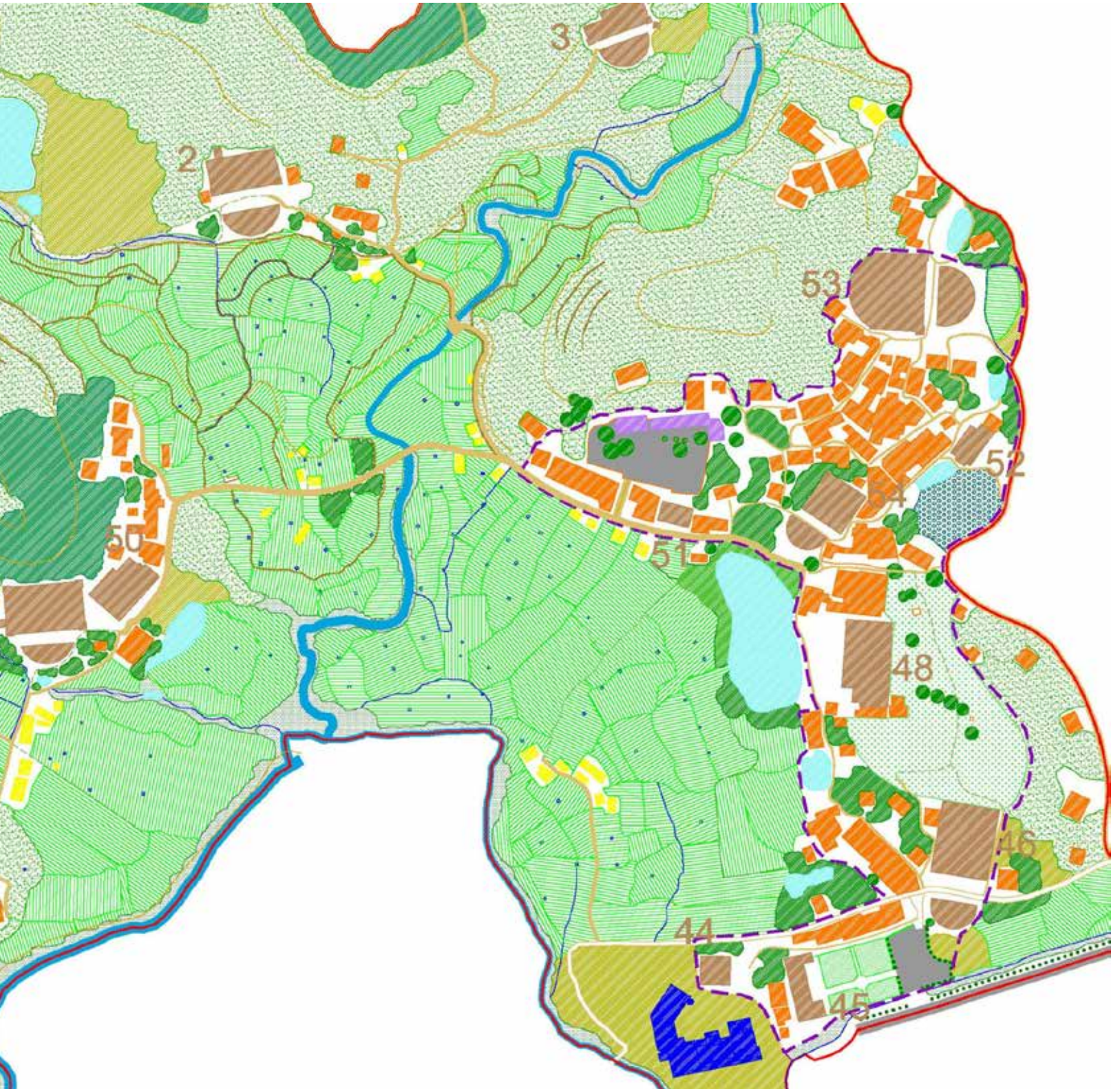
**BUILT AREAS**

- Historic village
- Haika Site (house and pool)
- Residential house/rural house
- Factory/Commercial building
- Public service building (school)
- Museum
- Temporary building to support agricultural activities
- Pool/water storage

**UNBUILT AREAS**

- Woodland

- Wood/shrub river bank
- Orchard/wood with Lichee groves
- Traditional agricultural groves
- Nursery
- Public park
- Parking
- Uncultivated area/abandoned area
- Exceptional tree (for age, species, dimension)
- Tree lined
- Group of trees
- Edge







The risks of this planning policy are: erosion of large portions of good quality agricultural land, loss of identity, loss of biodiversity, abandonment, neglect or destruction of important architectural assets and landscape. Agricultural areas cannot be considered anymore as separate to those destined for urban development, constructing a city disjointedly from the context of the agricultural and natural landscape.

It is important now to understand that agricultural periurban areas constitute one of the components of the 21<sup>st</sup> century city and must therefore be included in the overall city development plans and projects. Today, the goal is to bring the country to the city, seizing the opportunities that might emerge in a reciprocal relationship between the two contexts (AA.VV., 2011; Gottero, 2019). The term periurban refers to those urbanization processes that characterize the agricultural land on the edge of cities in which agricultural land is still functional and the rural society lives on (Boscacci, Camagni, 1994; Lohrberg, Christenn, Timpe, Sancar, 2022).

Here agriculture has specific advantages offered by the city and, at the same time, the city can make use of some important opportunities offered by the countryside. Among the city's positive exports to the country: proximity to market and consumers, wealth of infrastructure, intense cultural exchanges, high demand for recreational facilities, protection of natural environments and the possibility of income in addition to what is strictly linked to agriculture. In terms of the negative exports, it is essentially a matter of competition for the use of agriculture's fundamental resources: land and water. At the same time, the city can benefit from important advantages: the preservation of traditional agricultural landscape and historic sites linked with it and maintenance of open spaces, the defense of sparsely populated land, recreational and cultural services for leisure and tourism. If the agriculture policies are focused on environmental sustainability, there are also other advantages: maintenance/improvement of the biodiversity and limited hydrogeological instability and fire.

Therefore, we have reached a point where we must introduce the concept of multifunctional agriculture into the planning of rural areas. Multifunctional agriculture covers all the contributions that agriculture brings to the social and economic wellbeing of the community and that this latter recognizes as deriving from agriculture (Van Huylenbroek, Durand, 2003). Particularly three factors characterize agricultural areas as multifunctional: the economic factor, that takes into account the traditional function of the sector (production of consumer goods and consequent income and employment); the environmental-ecological factor, connected to main-

taining the quality of the environment, preserving the landscape, hydrogeological protection, preservation of biodiversity and more generally the optimization of local natural resources. Finally, the social factor, through the role that agriculture might play in maintaining sociocultural traditions and features and in the provision of recreational, educational and therapeutic services.

These 3 factors remain however a critical issue for the periurban agricultural areas, because often strong competition develops between urban expansion and rural use. As agricultural areas become potential areas for construction, this short term value might constitute an important economic resource for the farming sector, but in the long term this destroys the possibility of competing against the threat of urban expansion. In order to take advantage of the ecological and social benefits that these areas can offer the city, it is fundamental that planning regulations are defined to protect the presence of rural areas on the margins or within the urban territory and that these regulations can be translated into town and regional planning proposals like protective belts, agricultural parks, natural oases in order to conserve and valorize the historic agricultural landscape and natural landscape.

Today, the Northern area of the city of Huiyang (the above-mentioned Area C) conserves a high concentration of the Hakka settlements and exhibits the typical characteristics of periurban agriculture. It is an area of great interest in terms of anthropology and landscape, due to the presence of important architectural monuments (the Hakka sites, ancient, fortified farms), a precisely regulated (Feng Shui) territorial layout, thriving horticulture, orchards and nursery stock and the presence of areas of natural interest (woodland, waterways), all linked to/ an historic water system (irrigation channels) and rural road network

## 2. The landscape critical survey and of area C.

Reading and analyzing the landscape of area C (in the North of the city of Huiyang) was a multi-step process (Scazzosi, 2002; Page, 1998). As described above, first it was important to study the municipal Huiyang planning map 2007-2020, discovering that area C is almost all in "landscape tourism green space" zone, with the exception of the area closer to the Huiyang urban sections, that is in "industry 1 level" and "residence 2 level" zone and it is divided from other area by a planned ring road. The planning tool analysis proved that area C includes areas in transformation that need management and preservation criteria especially referring to the Hakka sites.

Next it was necessary to understand the landscape, recognizing Hakka sites, landscape historic features

*On this page:*  
Huiyang well conserved  
agricultural landscape, view  
from site Hui Xin Lou (site 2,  
area C).



(historic villages and sites, traditional agricultural areas, water and road system, exceptional trees), present uses and functions, transformed areas/areas in transformation, current resources and problems. In this way it was possible to analyze all the structural and perceptive landscape features and potentialities we researched, including listed Hakka sites (see the Inventory of Hakka sites described in this same volume) and landscape types, from agricultural landscape and natural landscape, to periurban landscape.

Specific surveys were conducted in 2010 to allow the identification and evaluation of the complex landscape connected to the Hakka sites. Consequently, a map was drawn up including the localization and analysis of the structural and perceptive landscape characteristics and the examination of the landscape conservation problems. In detail including: geomorphological features, like terraces, sloped terraces, elevation curves; linear components (irrigation network, trails, roads, infrastructures); built areas, like Hakka sites, historic villages, residential, rural, commercial, public service buildings and factories; unbuilt areas, like woodlands, orchards, traditional agricultural groves, public parks, uncultivated/abandoned areas; vegetation, like exceptional/monumental trees, rows of trees, group of trees, edges, have been highlighted with specific colors and symbols to better understand the area C landscape system (see map at pp.134-135).

It was essential to underline the irrigation plain landscape: it was designed by a dense network of small irrigation ditches to irrigate the fields. The irrigation network is regulated by a profuse series of little, hydraulic features (gullies, manhole covers, sharing system, dams, etc.), which have often still conserved their historical characters.

This entire system of historical components, in danger of disappearing further to recent rural transformation and building development, has been identified and a census has been conducted, marking off, in particular, the areas where their concentration is greatest and the areas, therefore, deserve to be preserved with care.

In analyzing the landscape characteristics, the goal was to identify and consider the natural and cultural features, as well as the perceptive ones, having as its objective the preservation and the rehabilitation of rural and periurban areas. For this reason, the research was also focused on the studies of the functional and visual re-

lationships existing between the agricultural landscape and its natural, or urban context. Consequently, it was important to survey land use, organization, form and shape of the landscape, and also views and vistas, as landscape features that create a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.

The landscape reading, on the basis of the defined methodology, has allowed the identification of areas that require specific preservation and management policies and treatments: sites of particular architectural, landscape and naturalistic significance to conserve and enhance; altered or decayed sites to rehabilitate and reuse. These historic sites and landscape components, decayed or altered areas, impact elements, are a reference for planning tools and new development projects and particularly demonstrate the opportunity to plan an agricultural park to conserve the productive crops and to preserve the Hakka sites and the connected landscape.

### 3. An agricultural park to valorize the Hakka sites in area C.

The landscape survey of the North part of the area C demonstrates the strengths of the area are strongly linked to its rich cultural heritage and unique geographical position. They include the monumental and built heritage, rural urban identity, agricultural landscape, natural zones, woodland, views, traditional agricultural and religious practices.

On the other hand, the area is facing several challenges, such as: low levels of awareness about heritage values amongst the local population, leading to a lack of care and capacity to interpret heritage as an opportunity for local development; social changes, including aging and transient populations; transformation of the rural landscape, through future mechanization of agricultural activities and progressive abandonment and re-naturalization of traditional agricultural landscapes.

The agricultural area is still productive and it could be valorized, proposing an agroecology approach, a sustainable management and defining better housing and living conditions for agricultural workers, making agricultural methods more compatible with current needs. After the critical analysis of the area C, it was necessary to outline the future agricultural park goals: conservation and reuse of architectural assets, especially historic Hakka sites defining compatible functions with cultural and social purpose; protection and valorization

*On this page:*  
Views of the Huiyang North area C agricultural landscape.

*At left: plain landscape cultivated mainly with vegetables and, in the hilly areas, cultivated terraces with orchards of Lycian trees (near Hakka Hui Yuan Lou residence, site 3).*



*At right: cultivated landscape surrounding Hakka site Hui Xin Lou (site 2), in the foreground you can see the historic irrigation system with ditches and pools and in the background Hakka site Hui Xin Lou a significant architectural fulcrum.*



of the area's natural elements; improvement of the area's ecological function through interventions aimed at environmental recovery and safeguard of biodiversity; creation of ecological connections between the different areas of natural value (ancient trees, hedgerows, woodland, springs and waterways), with particular emphasis on the needs of birdlife, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals; improvement of visitor access and use through the construction of low impact structures and features; involvement of local communities through some exemplary interventions to demonstrate that 'redevelopment is possible'; involvement of farmers through vocational training courses to spread good and sustainable practices to improve high quality local agricultural production; environmental training and education program for schools, involving students to learn about the values and the opportunities of historic cultural heritage, agricultural and natural landscapes.

In order to achieve to goals listed above, it was essential to define a master plan to underline protected areas, buildings of historical and architectural interest to be involved and reused, various interventions for the recovery and redevelopment of agricultural landscape historic features and practices, visitor trails in order to promote and to make accessible the park to the public. The agricultural park proposal also added an Hakka architecture and landscape tour (see map at pp. 138-139) different historic and landscape resources of the surveyed area are connected in an open air museum/ tour to discover this exceptional heritage.

The aim of the tour is to provide the conservation and reuse of 3 Hakka sites in the area C North, considering local resources and potential to improve tourism and involve local communities. It is also crucial to conserve and increase traditional agricultural production by improving the living and working conditions of farmers with the construction of new rural dwellings close to Bi Yan Lou Hakka site (n.11 on the map, see architectural design description at pp.146-147).

Some Hakka sites are included in the *Hakka architecture and landscape tour* increasing historic, architectural, landscape and museal values of the area to support the visitors with facilities and interesting cultural experiences, particularly rehabilitating: Hui Shui Lou (n.3 on the map) and Hui Xin Lou (n.7 on the map) as a visitor centers, Bi Yan Lou (n.11) as the "Hakka Culture Experience Space", an ethnographic museum (see architectural design descriptions pp. 140-145).

The various historical and landscape resources of North area C are so linked into a unique tour, set like an open air museum, to visit, appreciate and enjoy this outstanding landscape. The tour involves various sites and areas to enrich and diversify the visitor experience, walking along historic roads, enjoying natural and agricultural landscapes, appreciating the complex ancient irrigation system, and visiting sites of cultural value.

Particularly the tour has 11 notable points of interest highlighted on the map to enjoy different cultural, landscape and recreational experiences. It starts at the new museum dedicated to general Ye Ting and continues to general Ye Ting Museum (n. 45 in the Hakka Site Inven-



9 - Traditional rural landscape



10 - Woodland



8 - Panoramic point



11 - Bi Yan Lou: "Hakka C



tory) and then to Ting Gu Ju Hakka site, the new visitor center, an InfoPoint to know proposal visits and activities in the Agricultural Park. The tour involves a public park with monumental Camphor Trees and crosses an historic village with rural buildings and some Hakka sites, specifically Zhou Tian Lao Wu (n. 53), Feng Ji Lou (n. 52) and Tian Rui Gong Ci (n. 48). The next site along the tour is Er Sheng Gong Temple (n. 51) with the temple still in active use, showing traditional religious values and practices that are often lost in other Hakka sites. After that it is possible to visit Hui Xin Lou, the propos-

Plan of the North area C Agricultural Park Proposal Master Plan.

The map represents the "Hakka architecture and landscape tour". Several historic and landscape resources of area C are connected to discover this exceptional heritage and to conserve several sites of cultural, rural and natural value. In order to set this tour, conservation and reuse interventions are planned for some Hakka sites, specifically: Hui Shui Lou as a visitors' center with galleries for temporary exhibition; Hui Xin Lou as a visitors' center with accommodation and restaurant; Bi Yan Lou as an "Hakka Culture Experience Space", an ethnographic museum to valorize tangible and intangible Hakka heritage.

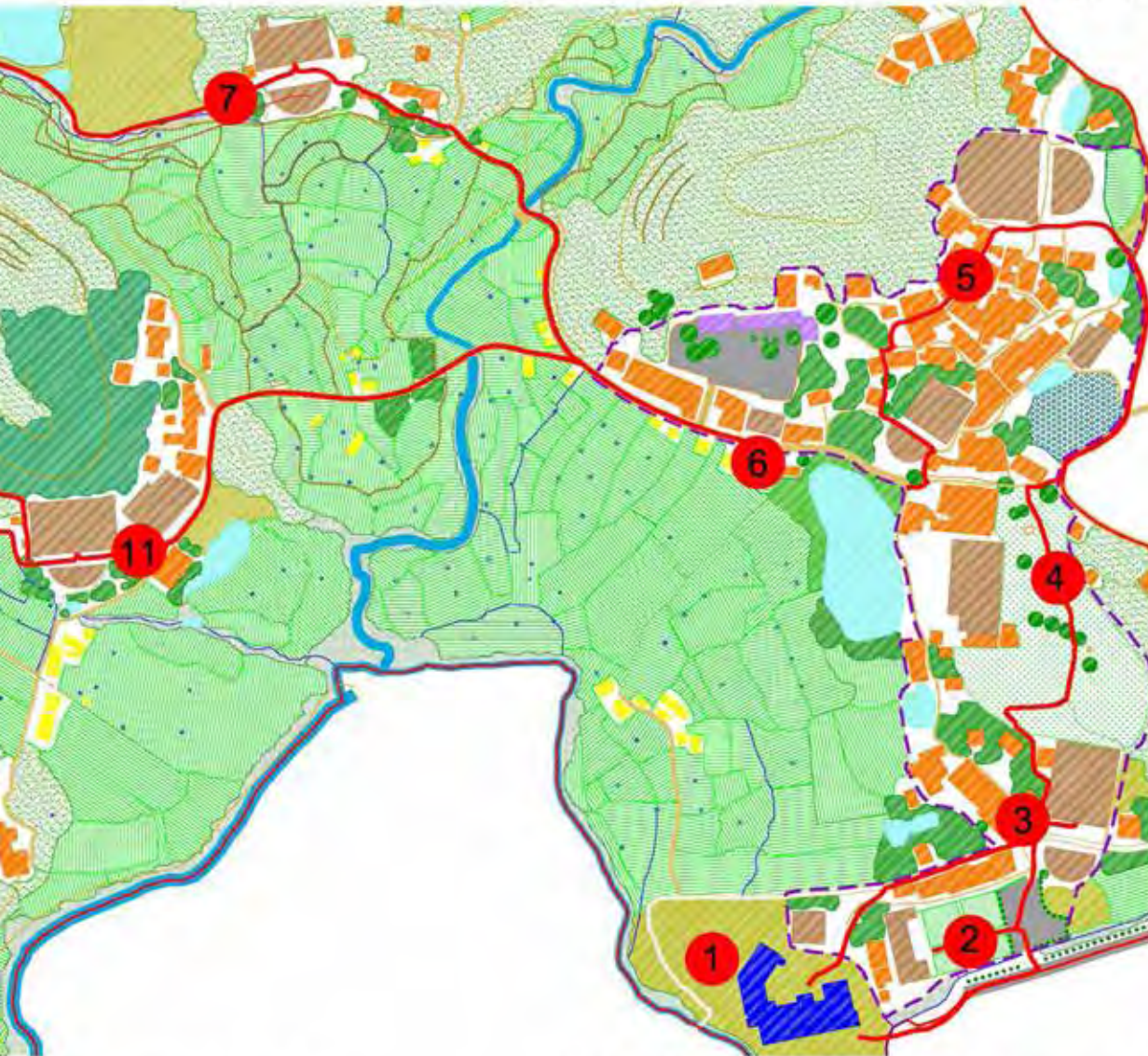




7 - Hui Xin Lou: Visitor Centre, accomodation and restaurant



6 - Er Sheng Gong Temple



5 - Historic village and Zhou Tian Lao Wu, Feng Ji Lou, Tian Rui Gong Ci



4 - Public Park with monumental Camphor Trees



3 - Hui Shui Lou: new Visitor Center

Culture Experience Space™



1 - New Museum



2 - General Ye Ting House Museum



al visitor center with accommodation, restaurant and space for temporary exhibition, cultural and recreational events. The tour goes along the hills, where visitors can enjoy beautiful views of the historic agricultural landscape and admire some Hakka sites. Then the tour crosses landscapes of the rural plain, traditionally and still cultivated with rice fields, vegetables, and various groves, connected with the historic irrigation system, a complex significant network still conserved and in use. It is so possible to appreciate a lively, dynamic and productive agricultural landscape, observing rural tech-

niques and groves managed with the aim of conserving historical characteristics, but also of developing a sustainable, multifunctional, innovative approaches. Climbing the hills, covered by wood and cultivated with Lychee trees. The tour finishes at Bi Yan Lou Hakka site (n.49 in the Hakka inventory) that will be restored and reused as "Hakka Culture Experience Space", an ethnographic/anthropological museum to explain and display Hakka traditions, features and culture to document, valorize and promote the richness and complexity of the tangible and intangible Hakka Heritage.



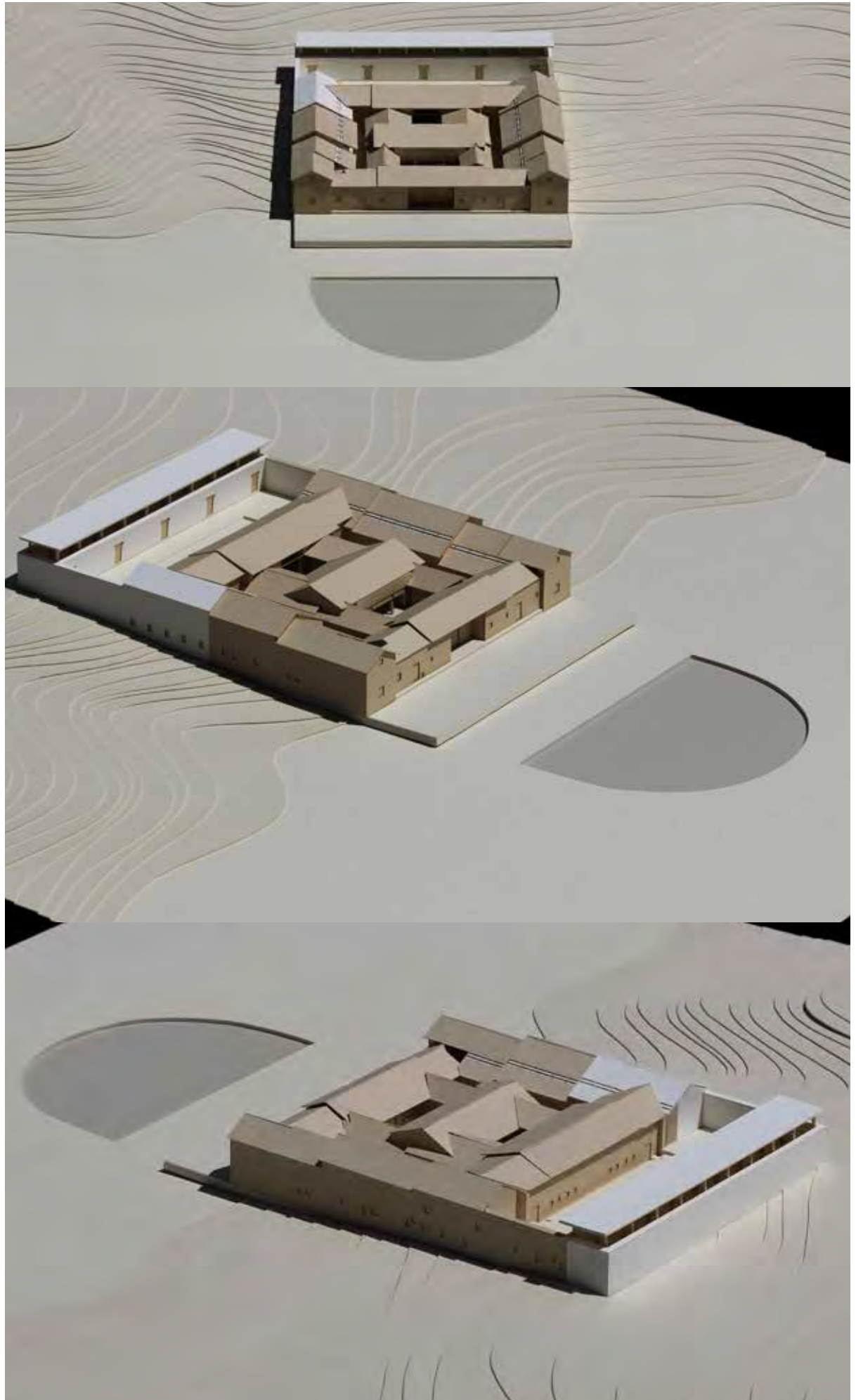
## Hui Shui Lou as a Visitors Centre with galleries for temporary exhibitions.



The identification and enhancement of local cultural character can help communities settled within the so-called Area C (rural area) to differentiate themselves from others, providing them with a competitive advantage. However, it should always be kept in mind that the rapid increase in the number of tourists can have a negative impact on conservation if the receptive capacity is exceeded. Yet, the difficulty of contemplating sustainable forms of ecotourism should have played an important role in this transformation process, given the latent danger of subjecting these places to a flood of visitors who risk in a very short time altering the physiology of these unprotected rural areas and turning them into entertainment zones. The Hui Shui Lou site should be designated as a Visitors' Center with galleries for temporary exhibition.

The system is equipped with a series of functions that in coherence with the guidelines for the survey, conservation and restoration of Hakka earthen architecture provide for the enhancement of the morpho-typological arrangement of the existing artefact with the increase of new functions that, housed on the ground floor in the perimeter parts of the building are intended for exhibition activities, the intermediate parts for gardens and a series of service facilities that nevertheless confirm the integral conservation of the sacred space.

(Text by D. Chizzoniti)



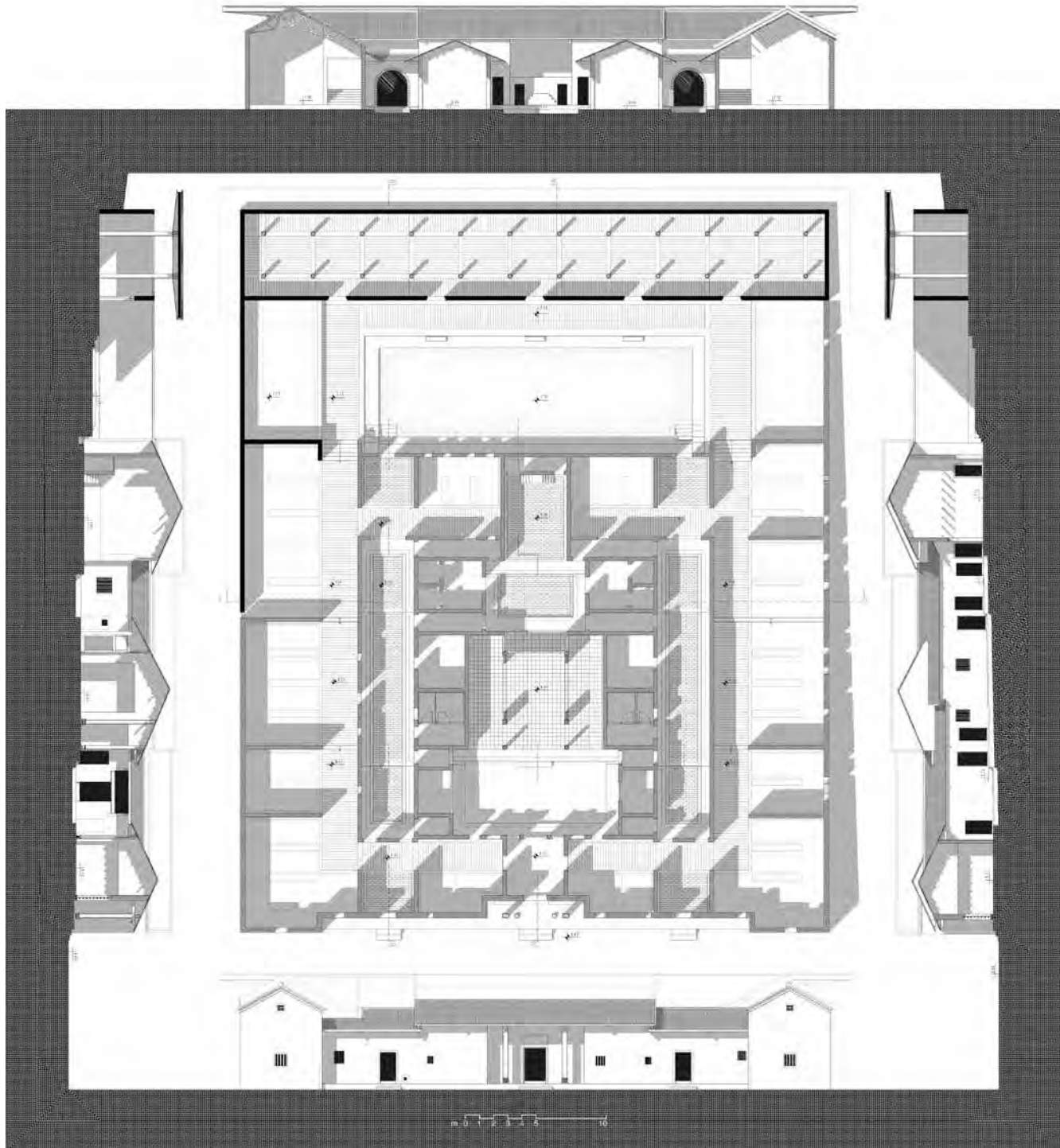
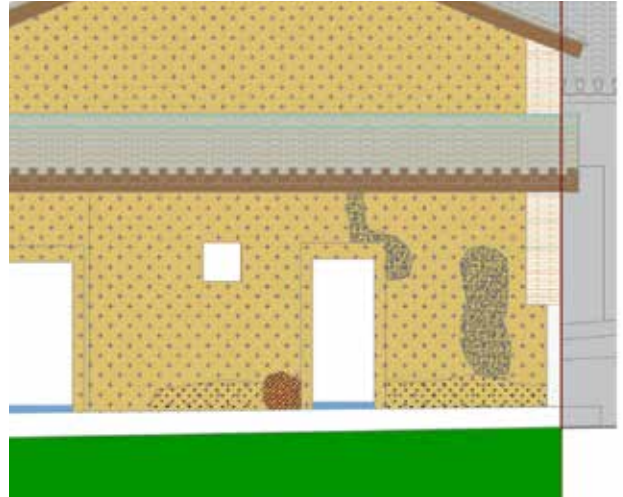


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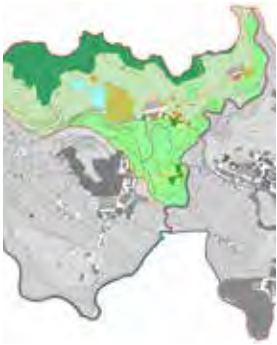
Project for Hui Shui Lou residence as Visitors centre with galleries for temporary exhibition.

Views of the plastic models, perspective view, front, sections and plan (D.

Chizzoniti and Z. Tan with C. Bischeri, G. Menini, 2010-2012).



## Hui Xin Lou as a Visitors Centre with accommodation and restaurant .



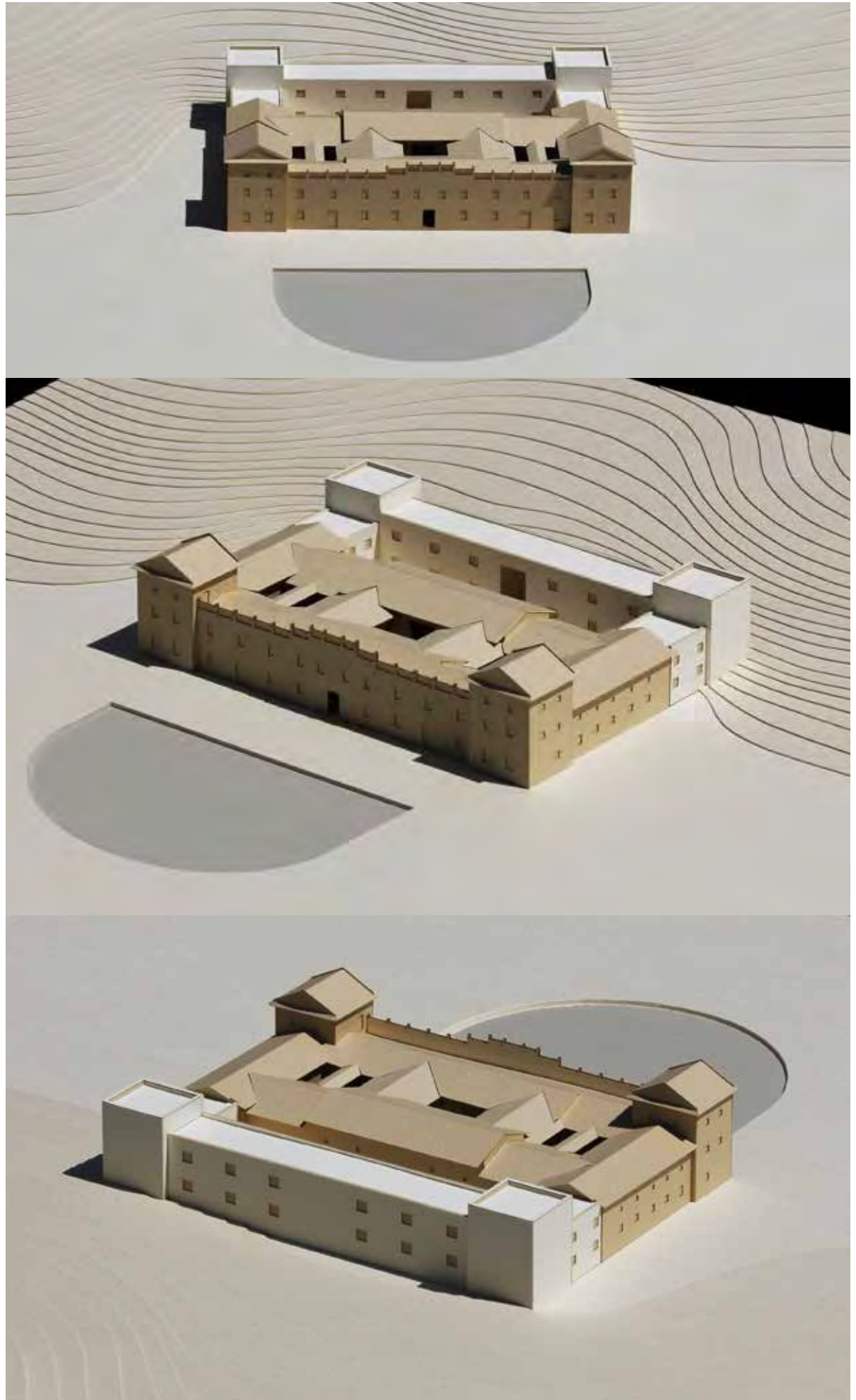
An entirely different case is significantly represented by the Hui Xin Lou site, which in the program of the various activities was to function as a Visitors Center with accommodation and a restaurant.

Prepared for the project to allow the integral preservation and enhancement of the sacred space the system is supposed to be organized on two levels: on the ground floor by reconstructing the northern wing at the temple space, the system is conceived in its general arrangement as an accommodation facility with rooms and services, kitchens and restaurant and all the necessary distraction to equip this specimen with that functions valuable for a stay immersed in the culture and customs of the Hakka people.

On the side parts, the rooms are organized in double height with an internal staircase that ensures practicability of the space similar to the original configuration of the ancient residences.

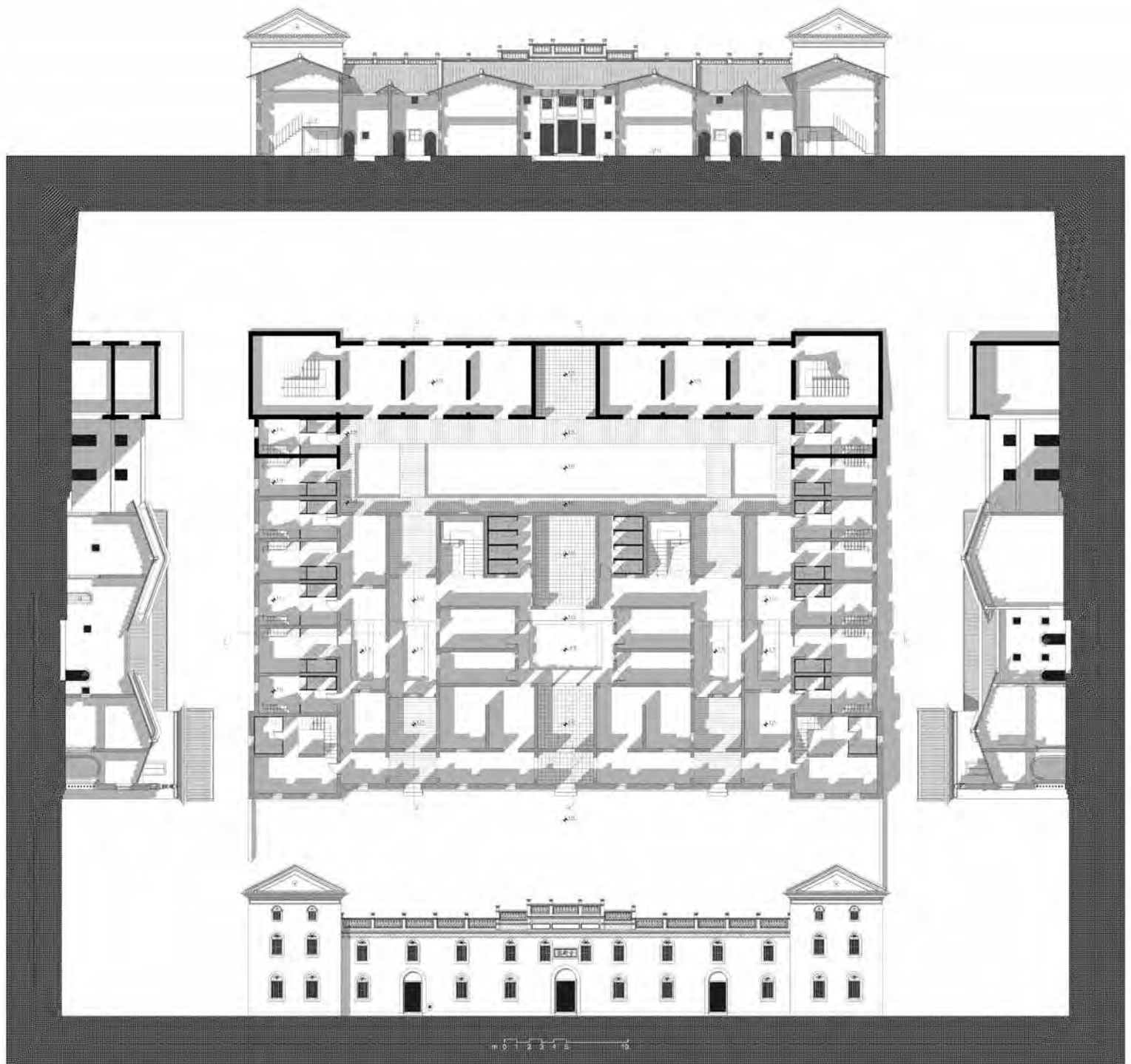
The upper floor, in the reconstructed part, is intended for the accommodation rooms for the Hotel, while the central one is almost entirely occupied by the services with the Hall, the restaurant, and the accommodation facilities for the guests.

(Text by D. Chizzoniti)





On the opposite and in this page:  
Project for Hui Xin Lou residence as Visitors centre with accomodation and restaurant.  
Views of the plastic models, perspective view, front, sections and plan (D. Chizzoniti and Z. Tan with C. Bischeri, G. Menini, 2010-2012).



## Bi Yan Lou as “Hakka Culture Experience Space”.

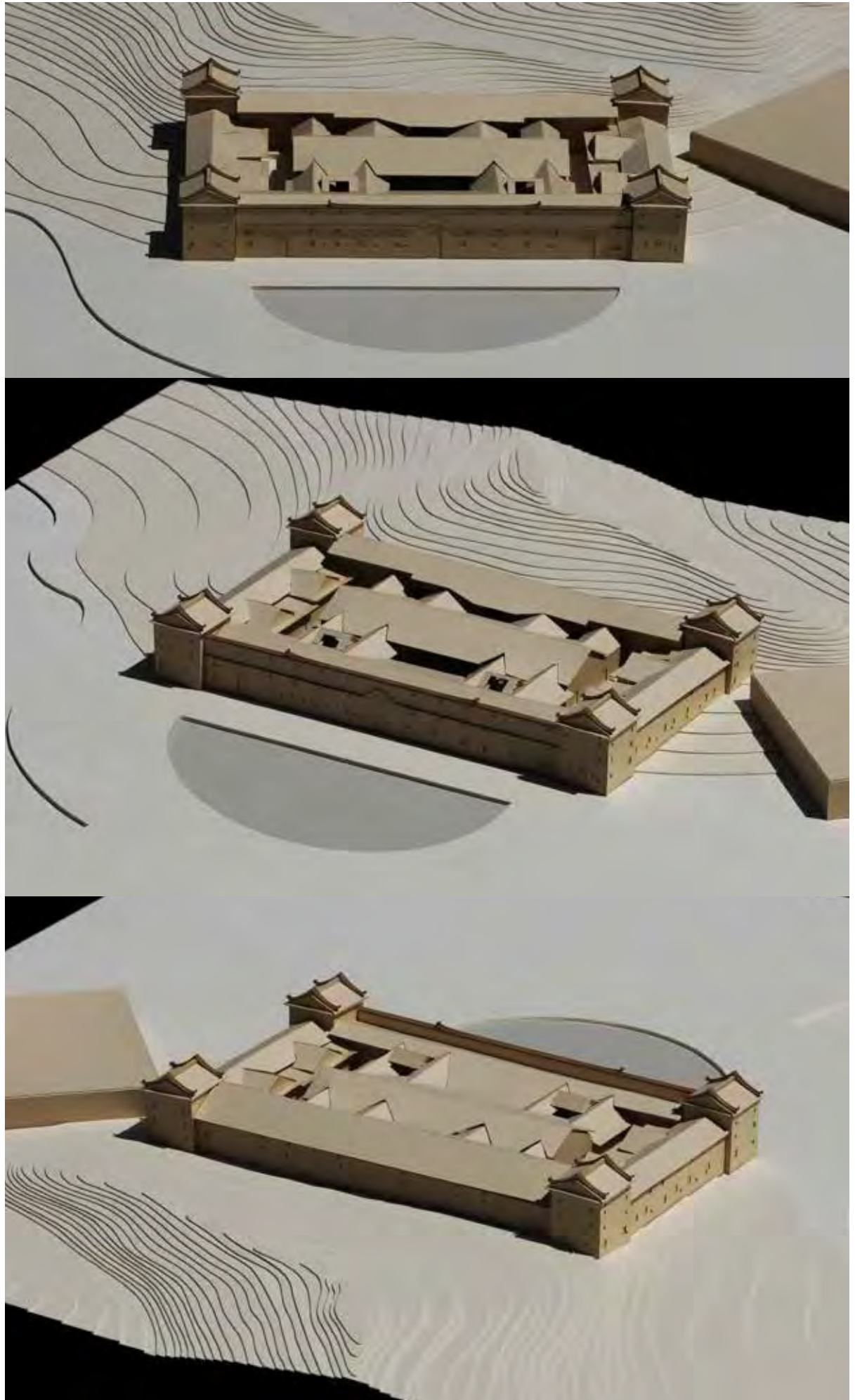


In the reorganization of a program of functional redesignations of different residences to form the circuit of an eco-museum equipped with tourist receptivity to be correlated with a significant centrepiece of the area, namely the house-museum of General Yetin and the new museum connected to it, the case of the Bi Yan Lou site plays a central role in the program of cultural activities as the Hakka Culture Experience Space.

Of the cases seen above, it is the best preserved by conformation and quality of the spaces and by construction. The complex is organized on the central sacred space and two side courts with outbuildings and at the head the main residence, all located on one level. This specimen in general is best suited to authentically interpret and witness the settlement characters and conditions.

Therefore, in this case, the project involves the preservation, restoration and enhancement of the spaces of the main house at the head and the integral preservation of the sacred space, as well as the side parts that at the elongated courtyards seek to re-immense guests a full and authentic experience of the ritual of the Hakka life.

(Text by D. Chizzoniti)





On the opposite and in this page:

Project for Bi Yan Lou residence as "Hakka Culture Experience Space".

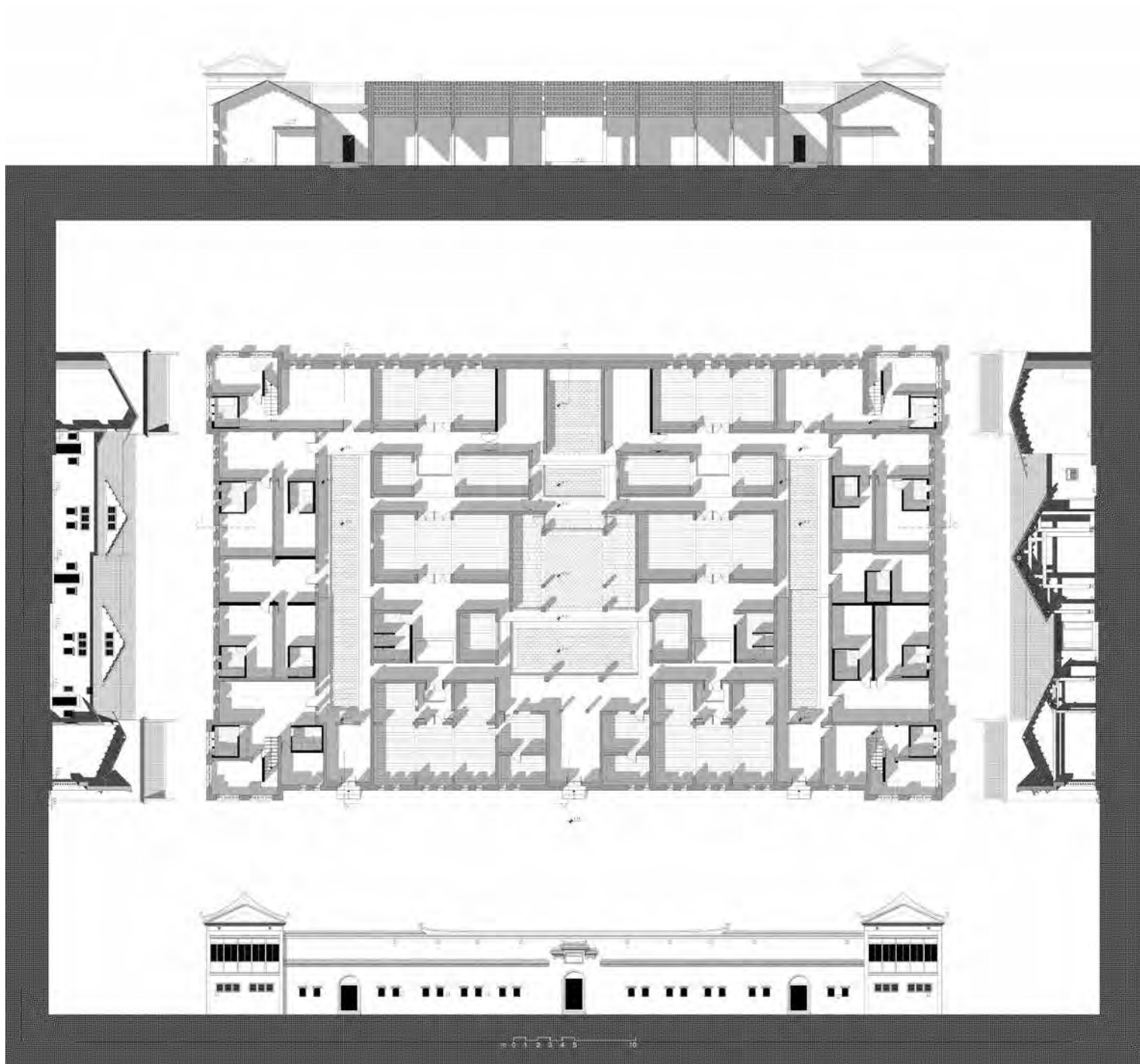
Views of the plastic models, perspective view, front, sections and plan (D. Chizzoniti and Z. Tan with C. Bischeri, G. Menini, 2010-2012).

t 1 SURVEY

第一部分 调研

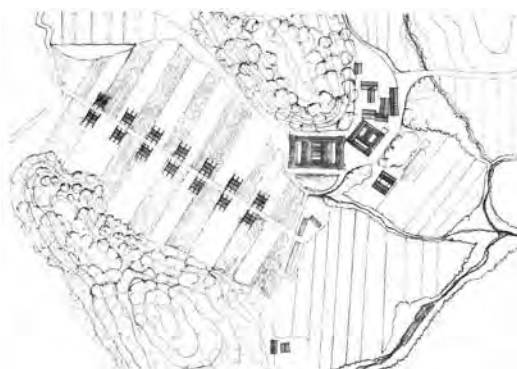
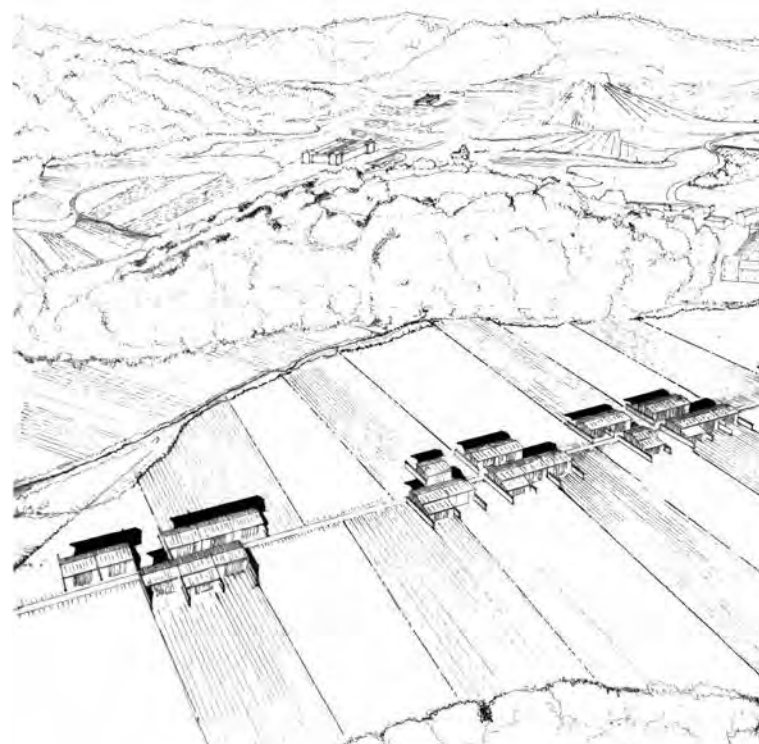
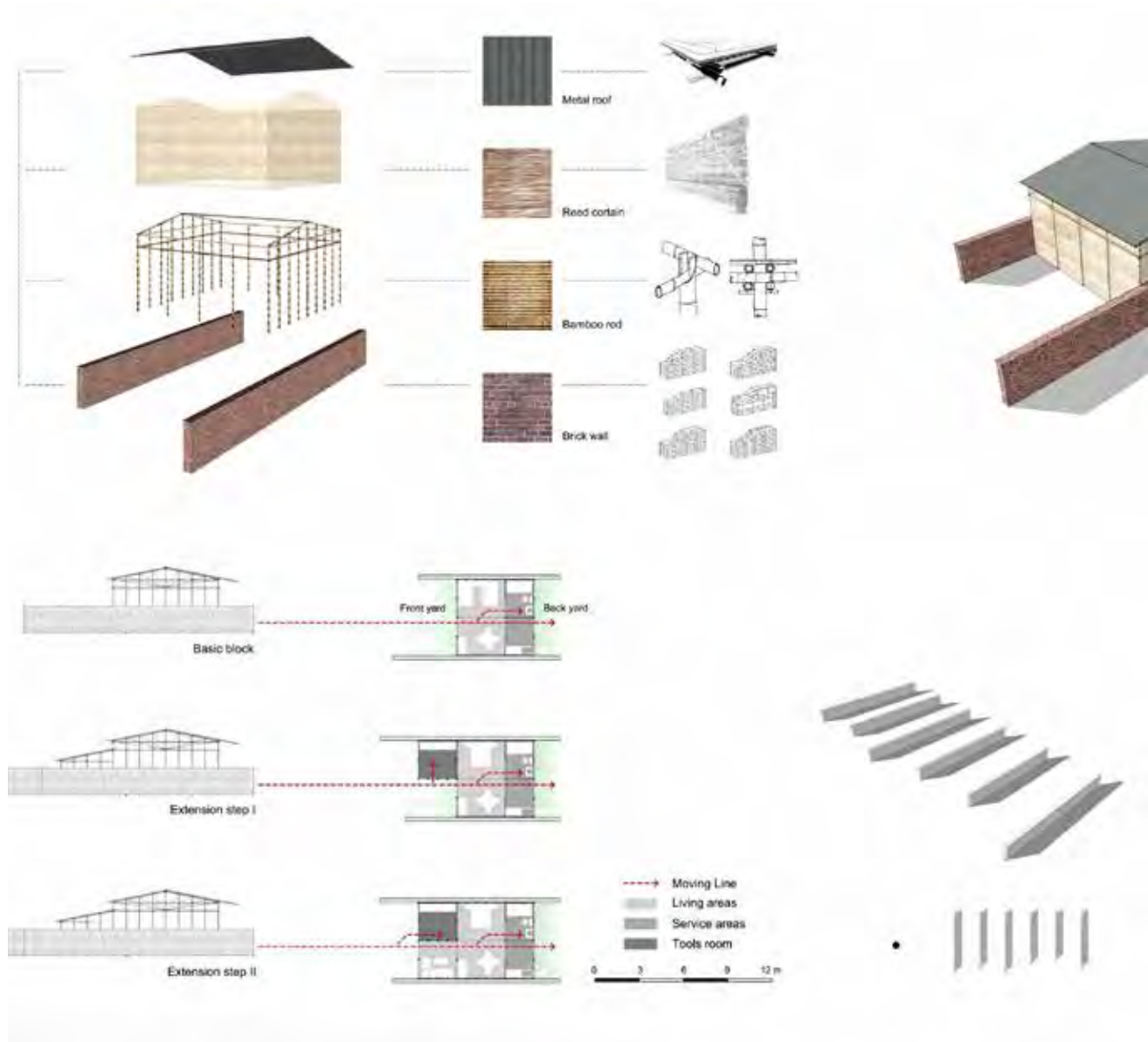
t 2 TOURISM PLAN

第二部分 旅游规划



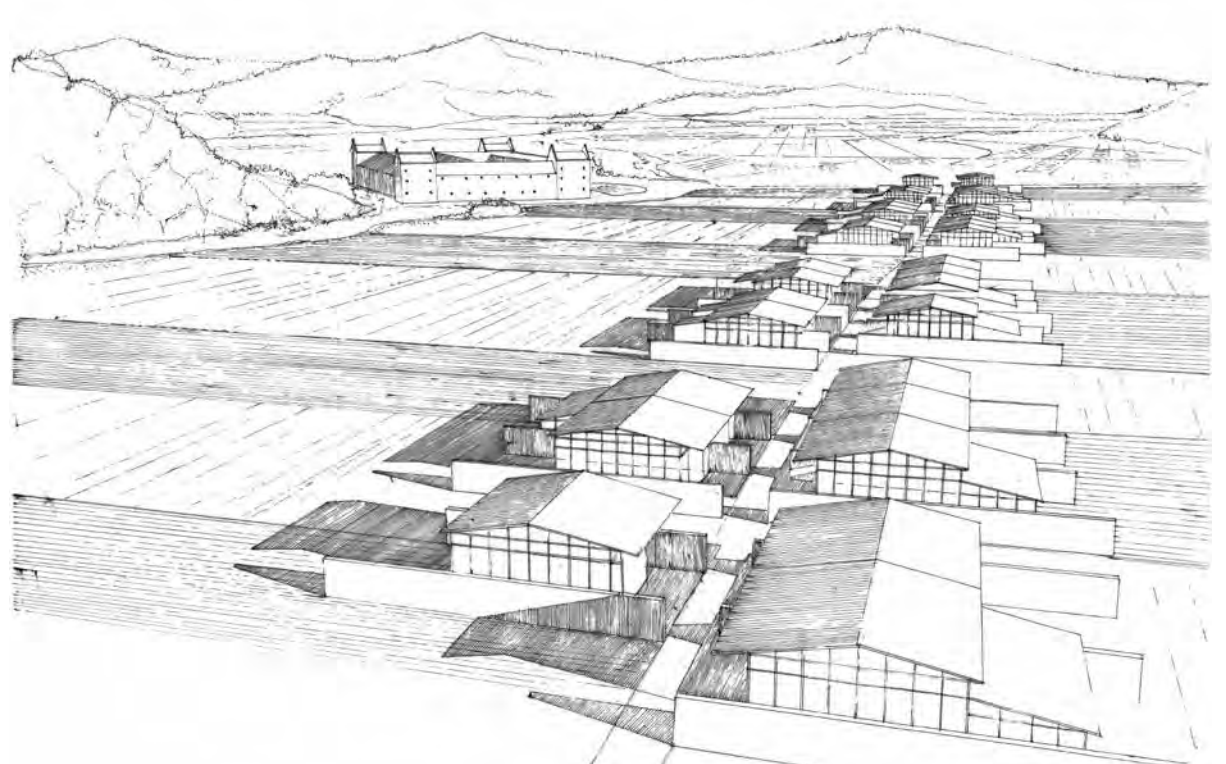
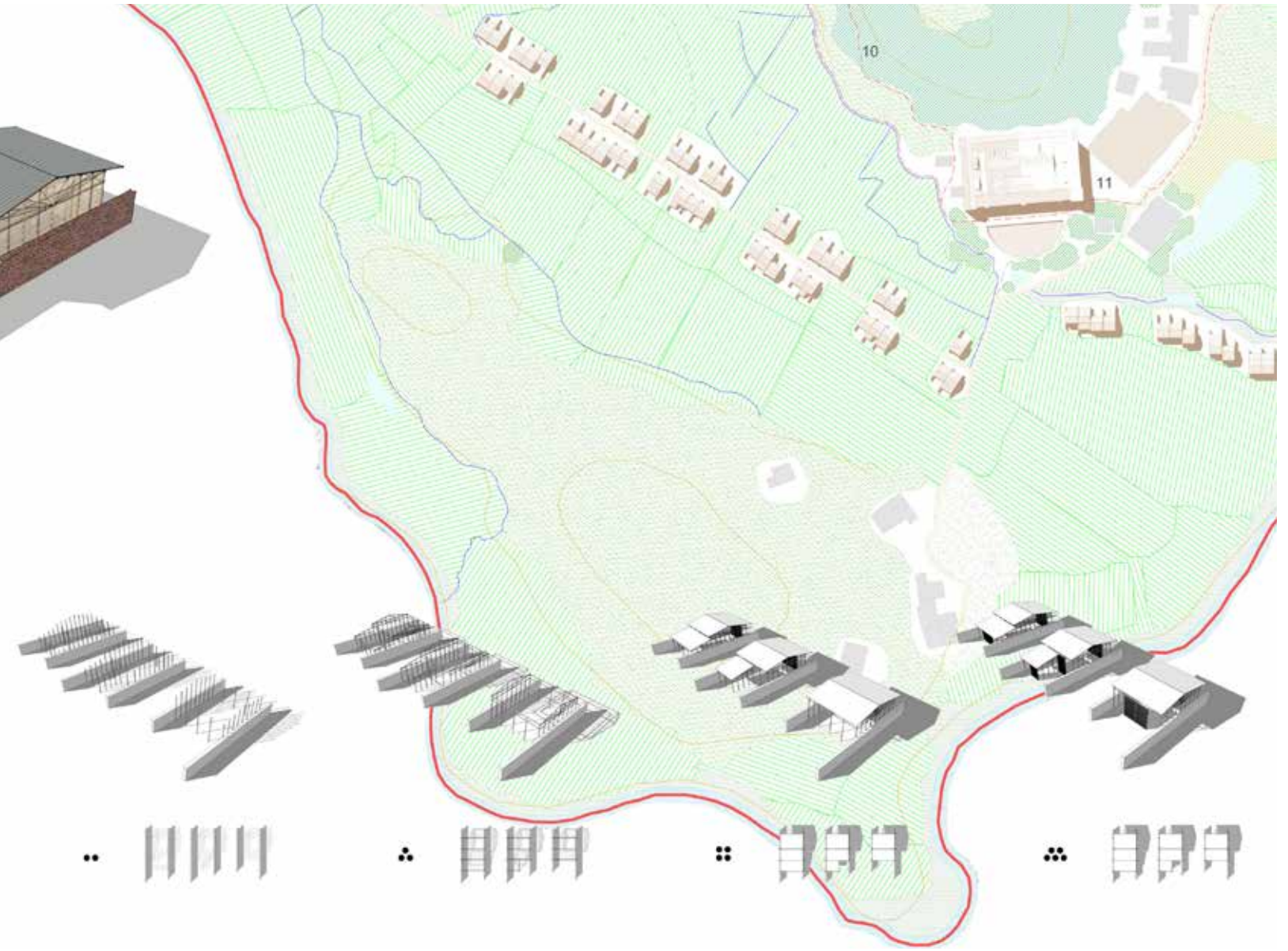
# Bi Yan Lou New Rural Dwellings.

During the field survey we found that many farmers from inner land of China had come to work and live in the Hakka villages. They rent the farmland which had once belonged to the Hakka family in the valley to cultivate the fruit and vegetables. Some of them lived inside the part of Hakka heritages which were still un-collapsed and fed poultry in the residences' courtyards. It is not good for the preservation of the heritage and it's also dangerous for the farmers to live in the houses lacking restoration. Some heritages like Biyanlou have been protected and locked without any inhabitant. The farmers who worked here have had to build some simple dwellings or tools storages just by the side of the field using the building materials of warehouse. These constructions were ugly with low living conditions. Therefore, we provided our idea of a method to build the farmer dwellings. We suggested that the houses could be easily built and removed by the farmers themselves and could be easily reached by the small paths in the field. It could be composed by a series of spatial modules which are flexible and could be composed for different requirements. There are volumes for living, sleeping, washing, and storing the farming tools. The farmers could first insert some basic structures-the low brick walls into the farmland by respecting the modules, and then decide their volume composing which could be finished by using the natural and local materials such as bamboo and metal panel to integrate the new houses into the landscape. (Text by Z. Tan)



In this and on the opposite page:  
Bi Yan Lou New rural dwellings  
"Hakka Culture Experience."  
On the top: Schemes of the constructive system of units and their aggregation (Z. Tan and D. Chizzoniti with C. Bischeri, G. Menini, 2010-2012).  
On the bottom: Sketches of the possible aggregation layouts (D. Chizzoniti).







## C\_D2 Areas Cha Yuan/Wei Bu/Gao Ling Villages.

Maurizio Meriggi



### Geographical position.

Referring to the map of Qiuchang Commune of 1979 the C and D2 area includes the territory of Cha Yuan, Wei Bu, Gao Ling sub-communes, belonging to the marketing community of the minor market of We Bu village.<sup>1</sup> The area has the form of a strip aligned along the streams from the hills of Guanshan and Wei Bu area. The numerous clusters of villages are grouped along the National Renminy Road No. 228 from Huiyang to Guanzhou and the Jiangjun Town Road No. 225. from Zhoutian to Shenzhen Longgang district.

### Situation (2013 -today).

The area collects the first industrial settlement of Huiyang and is densely urbanised with a new residential compound of workers dormitories and housing. The Qiuchang central village had been the first one to develop following the type of the urban villages of Shenzhen made of low-medium height buildings with mixed commercial and residential use. The other villages of the area survived in most cases for the built-up areas maintaining the historical Hakka residence core, while the original agricultural land has been rented by the sub-communes committee to industrial firms.

### Landscape and historical value.

The area has almost completely lost its agricultural landscape. The historical villages appear as an archipelago of islands surrounded by a caotic continuum of industrial workshops. The clusters of historical villages of the sub-communes of the area are still existing with some green buffer zone in their surroundings. In general, the Hakka residences of the area are in a state of very fragmented conservation<sup>2</sup> with few expections as

for instance Xiu Lin Lou residence, in Cha Yuan territory showing an unsuspected stylistic evolution of the traditional type of compact rectangular weilong in 1930s<sup>3</sup>. The two twin residences of Jiang Tian Nan Yang and Gao Bu Lao Wei, were built in the second half XIII c. during the very first wave of Hakka immigration in the area under the pressure of the invasion from the Jin Dynasty in the central provinces. The great ensemble of Pu Zai Lao Wei was built in mid XVI c. during the one of the most flourishing period of Ming Dynasty and the aftermath of the ritual revolution reinforcing the power of clans in imperial administration. Some other residence mainly built or rebuilt in XIX c. represent significant variations of the rectangular weilong type with angle towers as the residences Qiong Lin Lou, Shu Bei Tang, Mao Lin Xin Ju.

### Masterplan 2008-2020 and 2021-2025.

The masterplan 2008-2020 and its variant in 2012 were forecasting a complete transformation of the area for industrial use, with the exception of few blocks for commercial, tertiary, and in minimal part, for residential use. Following that plan almost all the historical villages were bound to disappear. After the Politecnico report in 2011 and 2013, that was suggesting a methodology of conservation of the village cluster with extended buffer zone for public facilities (see later) the masterplan 2021-2035 adopted an accurate zoning block by block and area by area differentiating in the urban texture clusters of conservation from areas of the historical built-up environment and wide park zones in correspondance with natural landscape (streams and water reservoirs)<sup>4</sup>.

1. About marketing communities in this area see here: Acuto, Meriggi, p. 86.

2. See here: "Atlas of Hakka Residences in Qiuchang 'commune'". Sheets: 7-10, at pp. 227-243. Abou Ye family in Huiyang see here: Tan Zhu, p.189.

3. See detail redrawings of Xiu Lin Lou residence at pp. 54-55.

4. See samples in the internal axe, parallel to Qiuxinan Road linking Cha Yuan, Wei Bu, and Gao Lin historical cores.

On this page below:

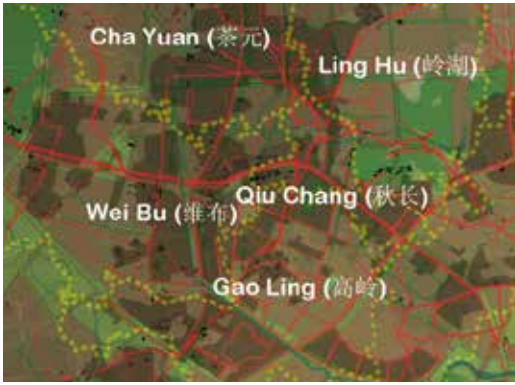
At left: Huiyang masterplan 2007-2020. Black historical settlement and historical road network (Elaboration by the author). At right: Huiyang masterplan 2021-2035.

On the opposite page at the top left:

Land occupation in the 2012 variant of the Huiyang masterplan 2007-2020: deep brown - built up area in 2012; black historical settlement; red - historical road network (Elaboration by the author).







On the right:  
Extract from "Qiu Chang Commune Map", 1979.



In the centre:  
Elaboration with "Built up area, main road network, historical villages and road network, with indication of Hakka residences" (© Xiang Li 2023, base Google Earth 2023).

Bottom:  
Roof plan of most relevant Hakka residences in the area (© Zhu Tan, 2023).



7a  
XIU LIN LOU  
1930s

8b  
QIONG LIN LOU  
1850-1900

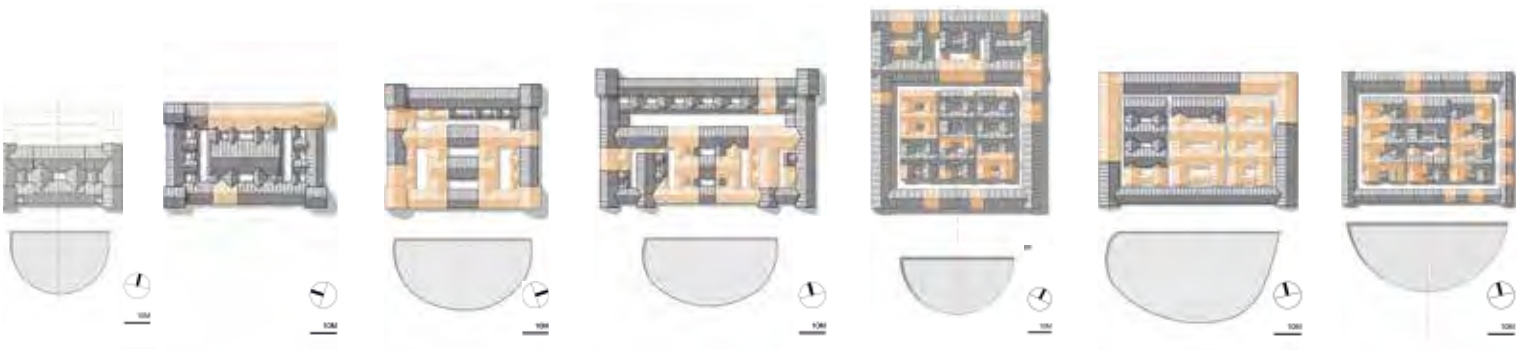
8c  
SHUI BEI TANG  
unknown

9a  
MAO LIN XIN JU  
1829 (first built 1250-1300)

10a  
PU ZAI LAO WEI  
1552

10b  
GAO BU LAO WEI  
1250-1300

10c  
JIANG TIAN  
NAN YANG  
1250-1300





## A garden in Jiang Tian Nan Yang Shi Ju archeological ruins.\*

Angelo Torricelli,  
Giovanni Comi



\* Text by G. Comi.

The relationship with tradition arises in very complex and completely different terms in cultures foreign to the Western one. Chinese culture does not know the cult of classicism, much less that of monuments which, as Françoise Choay observed, is an all-European invention. The difference between type and model that characterizes Western culture therefore appears to be absent as well as the concept of “transposition” except in the sense of “repetition”. It follows that the ruin takes on a completely different role: the passing of time is expressed by natural objects, while the architecture emerges as a temporary “guest” fact of the context, which either “immutably” renews itself, re-proposing a single typological-morphological structure, or foresees urban projects based on a substantial blank slate.

As illustrated in a traditional Chinese art genre called *huaigu*, traces of the past stimulate an introspective gaze that is the result of a meditation on the passage of time. The *huaigu* do not tell of abandoned or destroyed buildings but of uncultivated fields, or trees close to death; it is the ruins of nature that allude to the passage of time. The central role in the work is not the fragment, or an architecture in a state of ruin but the “void” that this new absence determines and the feeling of lack, desolation, that the new condition of the place is able to arouse in the visitor.

The concept of ruin brings with it that of conservation. In China, the way of proceeding with conservation is partial – but also total – reconstruction, as it refers to the shape of things and not to their physicality; the need for continuous maintenance therefore takes on a ritual character around the idea that generated it because it can be assimilated to an operation of restoration of original conditions considered to be original and therefore truly authentic, a meaning which can be found in the etymological origin of the term *zhenshi xing* (authenticity) composed of *zhen* which means “oneself”, “original”, and of *shi* to indicate what is “true”, “real”.

The motion of continuous destruction and construction of a site is therefore the concrete expression of a thought according to which eternity does not dwell in the architecture but in the compositional principle of which the architect is the bearer. The reason for the reconstruction of the Chinese heritage cannot therefore be attributed exclusively to the need for continuous maintenance of the materials used - wood instead of

the stone of the classical tradition - but rather to a more complex thought around the concept of memory and a of time as an achronic reality.

Starting from these premises, the project for this site plans to reconstitute the plan drawing by attributing an overall order to the archaeological remains.

What the project brings into play is an archaeological reading, in the sense of recovering a collective memory which, through the protection and rediscovery of tangible documents, brings out founding and archetypal models of the anthropization of the territory.

To do this, the project intervenes on the village of Jiang Tian Nan Yang ShiJu preserving the body of the central volume in its current state, avoiding rebuilding the volumetric unit but enhancing the forms of nature and the traces of the ruined past through a new open space design.

On the one hand, the recovery of the rural character is proposed as a “constitutive exterior” of the settlement, the enhancement of which can restore an architectural form and limit the processes of wildness; on the other, the project assumes the “void” as a space of value, and acts on the architectural elements that define the shape and contribute to the recognizability of the space: the system of fronts, the theme of the threshold, the openings, giving a built form to the relationship between private and public sphere, between inside and outside.

Small pavilions with double pitched roofs restore a rhythm to the open space and that vertical directionality reaffirmed by the system of canals and small water basins that mark the space of the garden.

The geometry adopted thus introduces a series of parallel horizontal bands that house the system of urban gardens.

The northern perimeter is measured by a system of walls and a new band planted with fruit trees that recovers the traces of the ruined buildings, reinforcing the relationship between pre-existing buildings and plants. Through iconography, redesign and analysis, the project thus operates an artistic control of the spaces, far from the nostalgic and romantic temptation, basing the design of the new on the constituent elements of the place.

Through targeted operations of mending the fabric, the intent is to restore meaning to the void, recovering, in the project, a contextuality capable of expressing the character of the places in a built form.

*On this and opposite page in the center above:*

A. Torricelli, Sketches of the Hakka residence Jiang Tian Nan Yang Shi Ju, 2010.

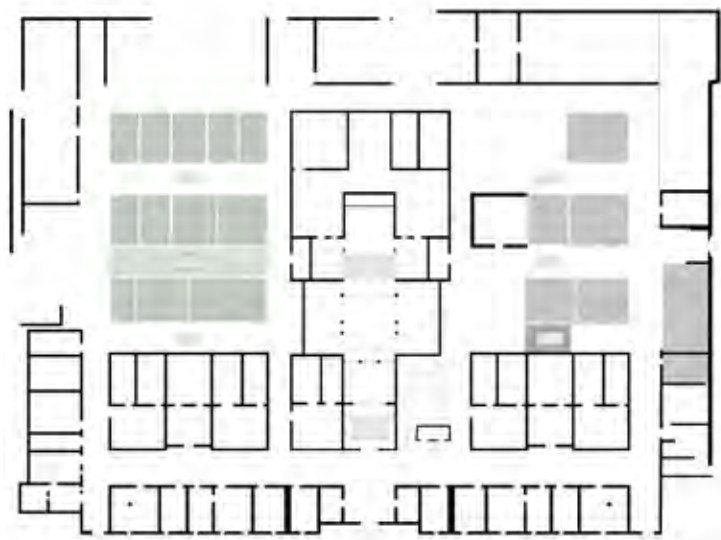
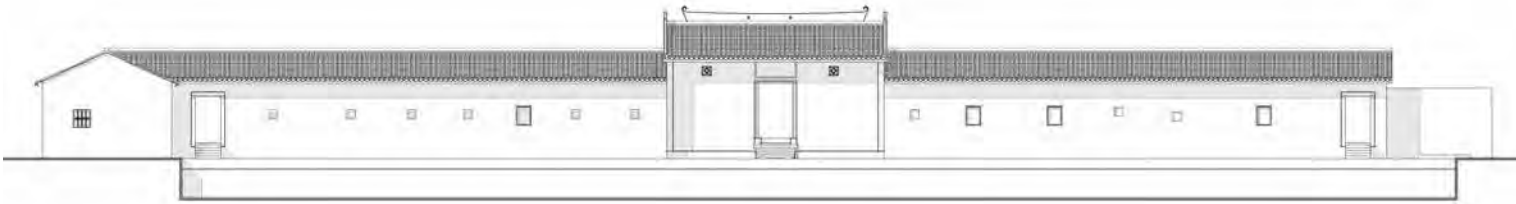
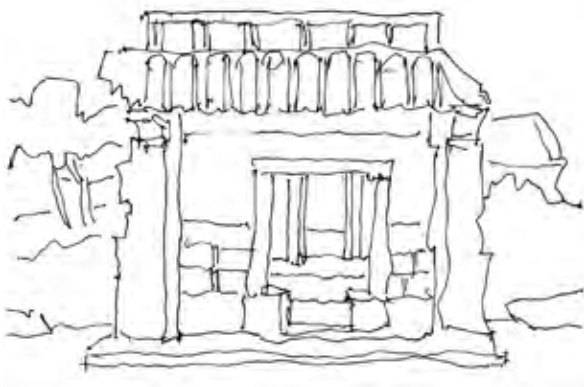
*On the opposite page above on the left:*

Area of the twins Hakka residences of Jiang Tian Nan Yang Shi Juand Gao Bu Lao Wei.

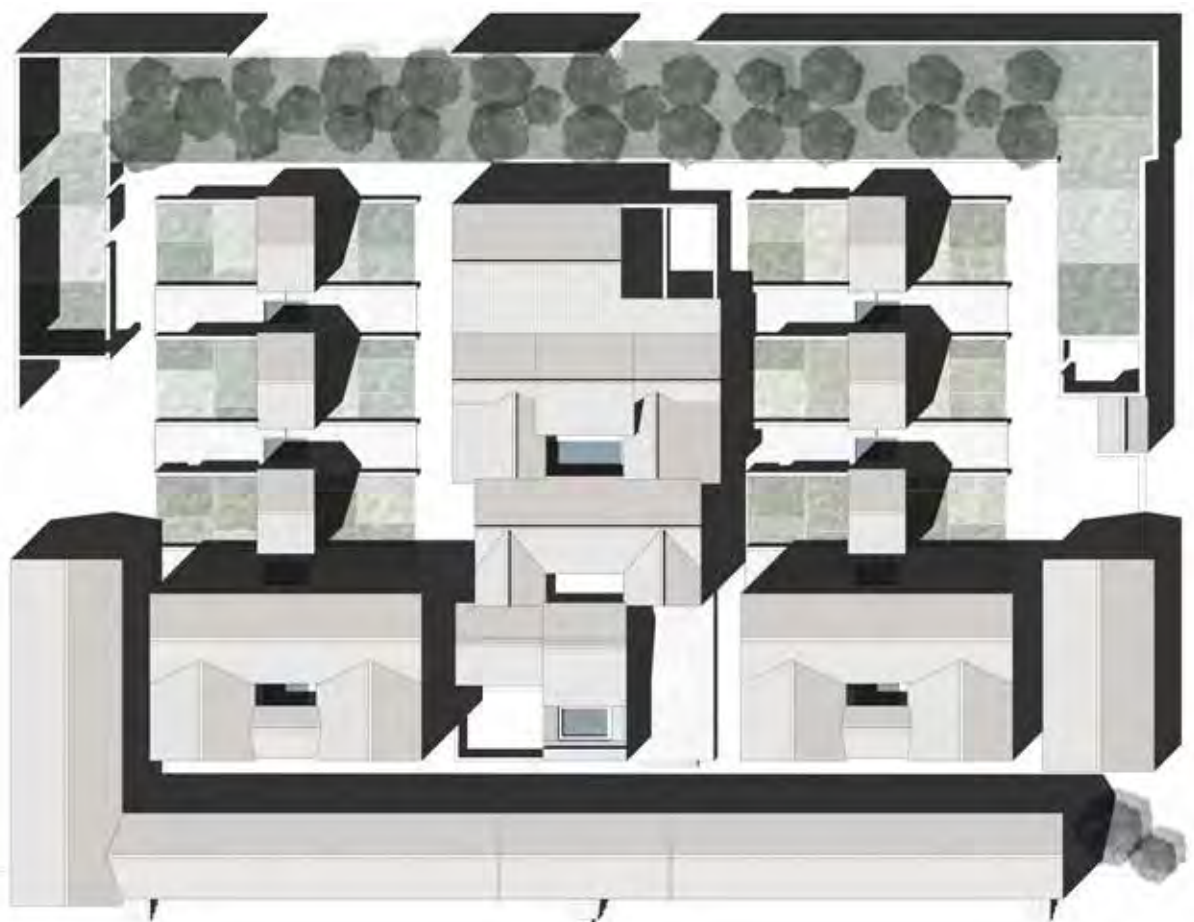
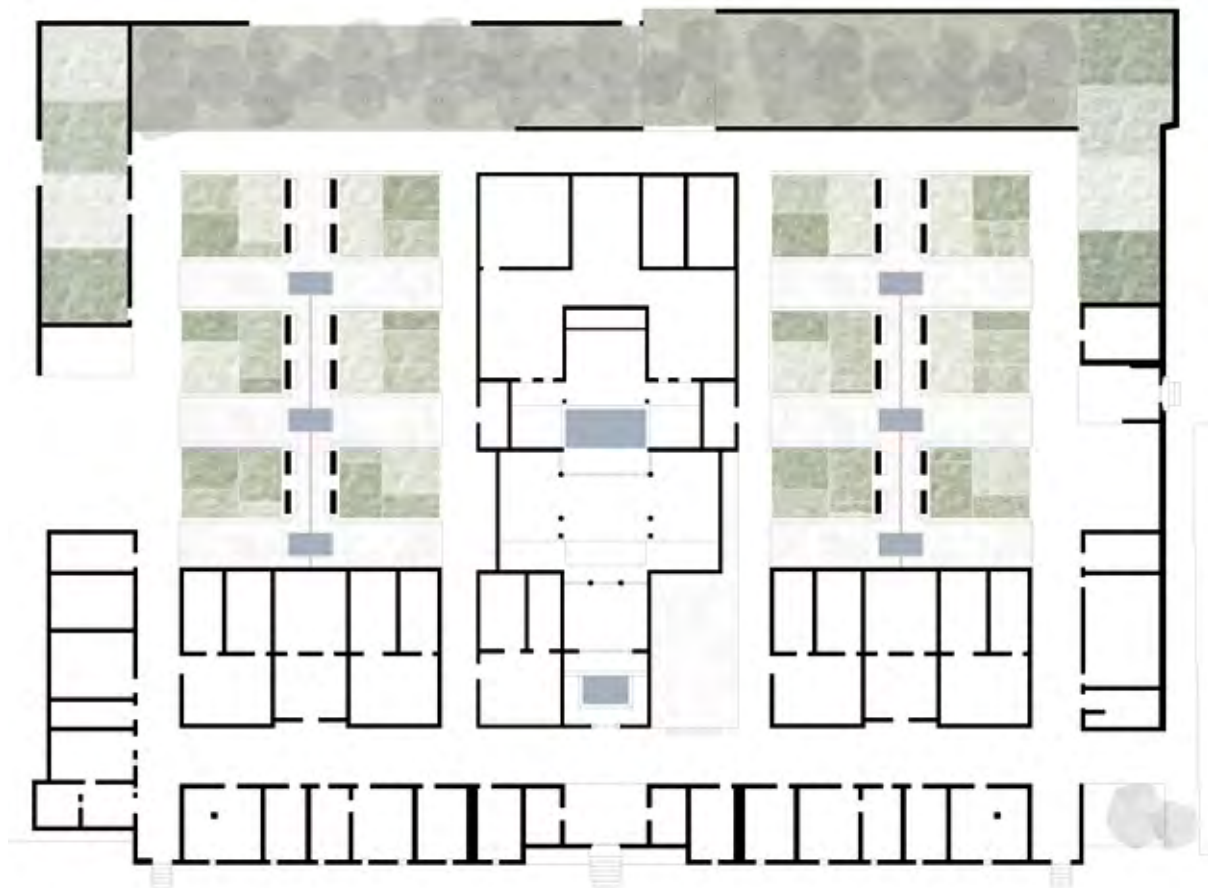
*On the opposite page in the center and below:*

The Hakka village of Jang Tian Nan Yang ShiJu in a state of ruin: *main facade, ground plan and roof plan.*





Jang Tian Nan  
Yang Shi Ju



*On this page:*  
The Hakka residence Jang  
Tian Nan Yang Shi Ju Garden  
Design: ground floor plan and  
roofs plan.





*On this page:*  
 The Hakka residence Jang  
 Tian Nan Yang Shi Ju Garden  
 Design. Detail of the sequence  
 of the pavilions: *plan, section*  
*and view.*

*On pages 154-155:*  
 The Hakka residence Jang  
 Tian Nan Yang Shi Ju Garden  
 Design: *views of the plastic*  
*model.*





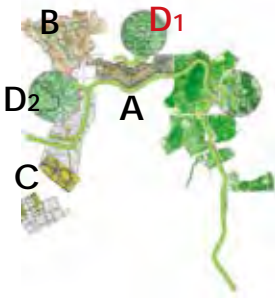


Jang Tian Nan  
Yang Shi Ju



## D1\_Area Xiang Ling Village.

*Maurizio Meriggi*



### Geographical position.

The D1 area collects several clusters of villages on the hills in the surrounding Xiang Ling village.

In its territory was located one of the two “minor markets” of the Qiuchang “commune” - placed on the west bank of the Danshui river in the sub-village of Niu Lang Jing<sup>1</sup> at the north side of Tie Men Shan village area.

The east side of the area is crossed by Huinan Provincial Road No. 245 to Huizhou; the Xiang Ling village is crossed by Town Road No. 225.

In the central valley between the hills of the area runs the river originating from the Jixinshi reservoir.

### Situation (2013 -today).

The area is a peri-urban countryside densely cultivated with not mechanised agriculture and more than 13 relevant Hakka villages and the open hamlet of Xiang Ling.

A complex of greenhouses was located at the south border Niu Lang Jing village, today in the transformation process.

On the northeast side of the area, in the territory of Lian Tang Mian village is present a residential district with villas type, part of Sanhe industrial park expansion.

Some industrial activities are located also in the south part of the area between Xiang Ling and Tie Men Shan villages in between the river of the Jixinshi reservoir and the new west-east axis of the Jiangjun Town Road No. 225, today almost completed.

The hills of this part of the area have been partially flattened for the construction of an industrial compound still under construction.

### Landscape and historical value.

The area still conserves a rich agricultural historical landscape, untouched by urbanisation in the north side of the river of the Jixinshi reservoir.

The nearly thirteen hakka villages of the area are in a variable state of conservation<sup>2</sup>.

Of some of them remains only the traces on the ground of the walls of the buildings; some others conserve part of the buildings; only Ting Xiu Shu Yuan, which originally was the Confucian academy and later a Medium School is fully conserved<sup>3</sup>.

### Masterplan 2008-2020, 2021-2035.

The masterplan 2008-2020 envisaged an intensive urbanisation of Xiang Ling area with mainly residential blocks with some areas for commercial uses and facilities in correspondence of a sort of a central axe following the path of Town Road No. 225.

In this plan, the agricultural land disappears being completely occupied by new urbanisation blocks.

The new masterplan 2021-2035 as the former one forecast an intensive urbanisation of Xiang Ling area but as a huge industrial compound substantially deleting the existing agricultural landscape surrounding the historical villages.

The new master plan has moved to Xiang Ling village territory industrial compound which in the former one was placed in Tie Men Shan and Lin Hu village's territory.

The area plays an important role as one of the element of the “Park way” system of areas and any hypothesis of transformation should take into account the character of the local landscape of hills and planes with rivers.

1. About the “minor market of Niu Lang Jing, see: M. Meriggi, 2018, pp. 40-44, 48-52, 108.

2. About these villages see here: Z. Tan, The Typology of Hakka Residences in Qiuchang “commune” (Huiyang District), pp. 180-188.

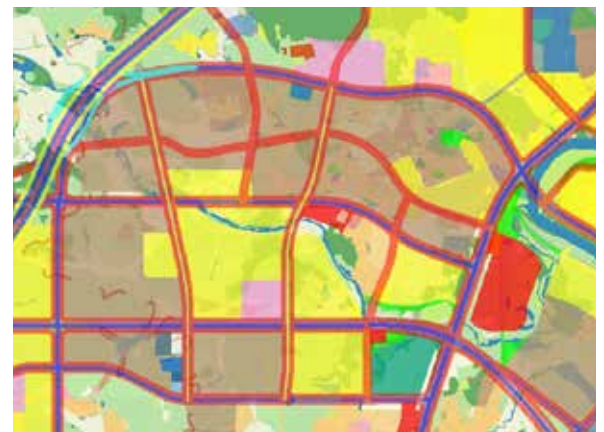
3. About the confucian academies in Hakka villages see: M. Meriggi, 2018, pp. 51, 63, 67-70.

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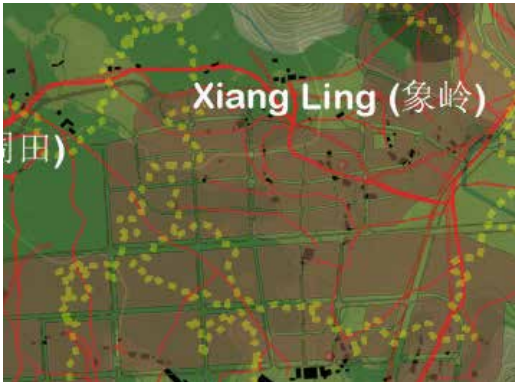
*At left: Huiyang masterplan 2007-2020. Black historical settlement and historical road network (Elaboration by the author). At right: Huiyang masterplan 2021-2035.*

*On the opposite page at the top left:*

*Land occupation in the 2012 variant of the Huiyang master plan 2007-2020: deep brown - built up area in 2012; black historical settlement; red - historical road network (Elaboration by the author).*



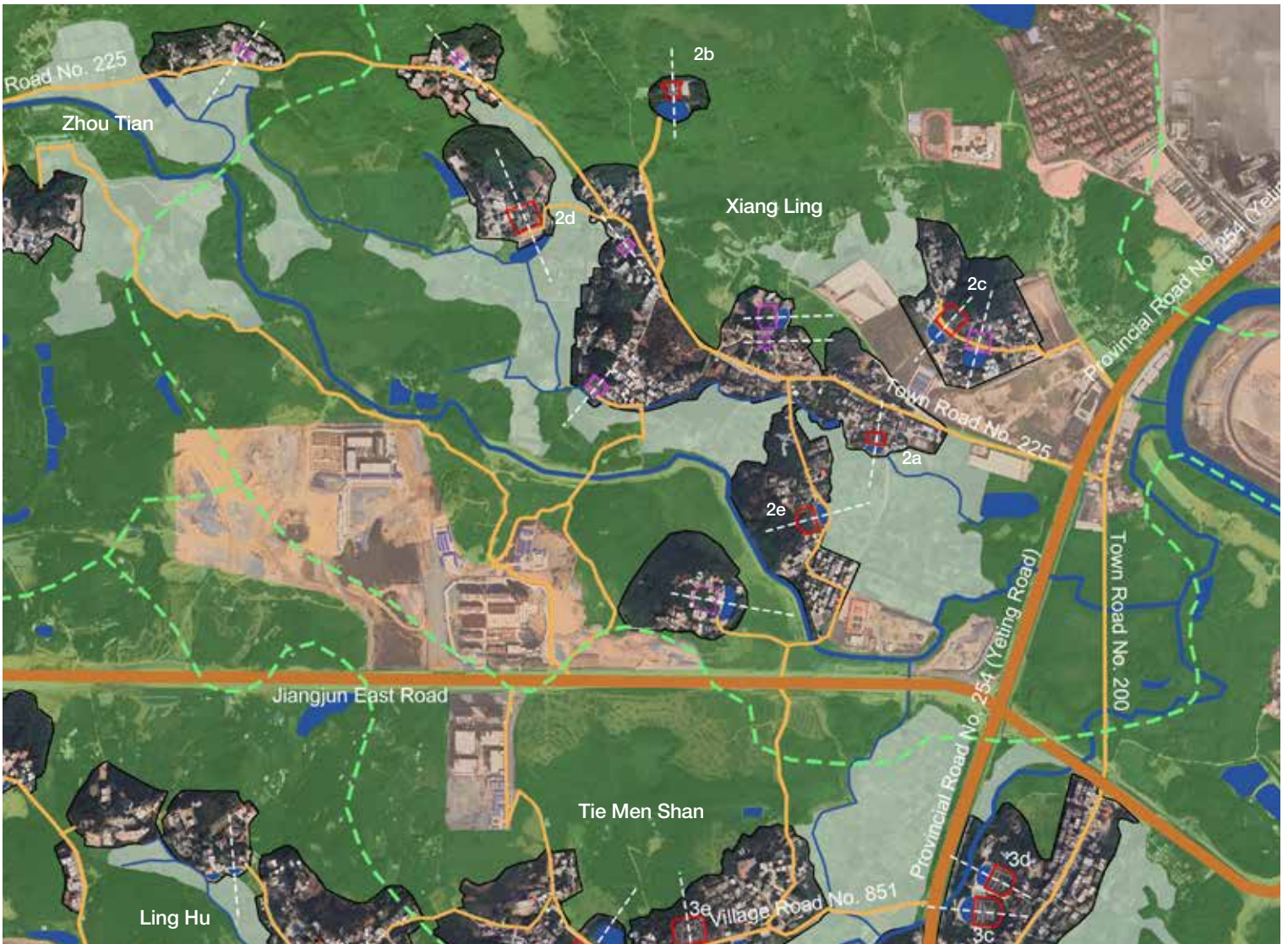
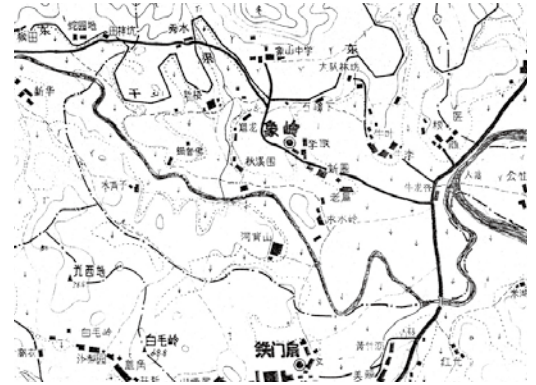




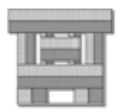
On this page on the right:  
Extract from "Qiuchang Commune Map", 1979.

On this page in the center:  
Built up area, main road network, historical villages and road network, with indication of Hakka residences (© Xiang Li, 2023, base Google Earth 2023).

On this page at bottom:  
Roof plan of most relevant Hakka residences in the area (© Zhu Tan, 2023).



2b  
TING XIU SHU YUAN  
1760



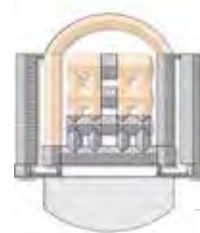
2d  
YU QING LOU  
1850-1900



2c  
NIU LANG LOU  
1772



2e  
QI SHUI LING  
1725



2a  
YI YI LOU  
1850-1900





## Yu Qing Lou New Dwellings in Xiang Ling village.\*

Maurizio Meriggi  
with Eugenio Belli

\* The material here published are extracted from: E. Belli, "Huiyang, Guangdong China. Designing for the preservation of Hakka culture architectural and landscape heritage", Master degree thesis, Politecnico di Milano, supervisor M. Meriggi, 2015-2016.  
Text by M. Meriggi and E. Belli.

One of the central instances of the urbanization of peri-urban rural areas is the definition of suitable settlement types for the maintenance of part of the agricultural activities and the landscape characteristics of the countryside.

The historical typologies of the Hakka villages in Guangdong (see Meriggi, 2018) show different solutions of settlements of even relatively high densities of the *tulou* and *weilong* types, based on communal models of social organization through the clan system. These clusters of compounds form soil-modelled aggregates that are organically composed of the elements of the natural landscape and the artefact for cultivation.

The hilly orography of the villages of Xiang Ling and Zhoutian offers the opportunity to experiment with different solutions of residential compounds that follow the principles of respect and integration with the characters of the local landscape.

In the project proposed here for one of the residential urbanization areas according to the Huiyang Master Plan 2007-2020, three types of Hakka residence composed in the hilly site were used, exploiting the orographic structure of the land located between three existing settlements. Here are still present some historical buildings including the residence of Yu Qing Lou (second half of the XIX c.).

The Masterplan proposes a system that forms with the existing nuclei a cluster of buildings with several interconnected centers maintaining the historical vocation of the urbanized countryside area.

The project forecasts the maintenance of some agricultural activities such as the fruit tree on the parts of the hill not occupied by the new residences.

Car circulation inside the compound is almost in tunnels passing under the slopes and the hill.

The residences follow three different types of the Hakka architecture adapting them to the housing contemporary needs of new single-family houses and apartments. Part of the apartments are located in two quadrangular *weilong* type, revisited with buildings aligned on a central axis and spaced by courtyards (such as the Hakka Wei Yuan residence in Longhuazhen, Meriggi 2018, p. 106). Another part of apartments, duplex type, are placed in semi-open *tulou* that form secondary clusters (such as the *tulou* of the village of Makeng in Shangraozhen, Meriggi 2018, p. 91). The single-family houses are composed of curtain shapes so as to form a secondary fabric of linear villages.

*On this page:*  
Yu Qing Lou New Dwellings in Xiang Ling village:

*Master plan and view from northwest. In the Huiyang Green City Plan: the block are built following the contour lines of the hill among the residence of Yu Qing Lou and other two sub villages at the border between Xiang Ling and Zhoutian villages.*

*The view shows the residential compound composed by buildings types derived from Hakka traditional residence: at left - linear hamlet with terraces of single family houses; in the centre - quadrangular weilong with two copartyards; on the right - cluster of tulou types.*









## Tulou type

Four of these types are placed on top of the reliefs forming the hill.

They follow the traditional model of tulou by assuming a continuous smooth surface with holes for lighting in the exterior wall, and loggias for the interior courtyard.

The courtyard delimited by the crescent can be used as a communal collective ground or as a garden with trees and is directly connected with the green space of the hill by being open on one side.

The mass of the crescent is divided into groups of units accessible by a balcony that are following the gentle slope of the reliefs.

In this way, they register tiny differences in levels of the hill morphology, which is enhanced also by the different heights of the roof of each segment.

The apartments are organized in a duplex on two bands overlapping.

One is accessible from the level of the courtyard and one from the balcony on the third floor.

Each unit located on the ground floor has a private green space overlooking the street.

Each module is equipped with a double-height covered outdoor space that provides lighting to the entire living space.

From the outside, this allows openings that do not have the character of windows, which the Hakka villages lacked - this element works like a "sky well".

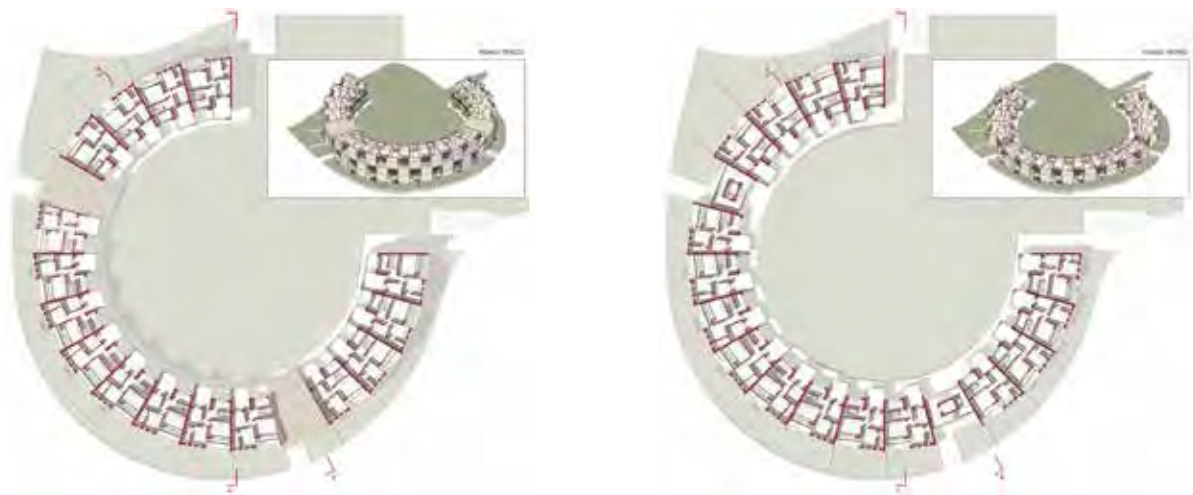
*On this and on the opposite pages:*

Tulou type of Yu Qing Lou New Dwellings in Xiang Ling village.

*On the top: sequence of the floors plans from ground to roof (from right to left).*

*In the centre: facades and sections.*

*In the bottom: sequence of views.*









## Weilong type

Six such buildings are included in the compound.

They are modelled interpreting the type of the rectangular weilong made of three linear blocks with two courtyards connected by portals.

The buildings, which constitute two groups with variations, rest on the slopes of the two valleys of the hill.

In this way the natural slopes substitute the walls that usually close the two sides of this type of weilong.

The group to the west is the most representative for the presence of the two ponds recalling those of the Hakka weilong.

The buildings take the shape of a bridge between the slopes, passing over a water stream between two ponds and their sequence creates a system of courtyards connected by portals.

The residential unit consists of duplex modules having in its core an internal patio, sided by a deep balcony – both double heights.

These modules allow having a balcony every two floors and the front is made of screens that allow domestic environments to be shaded (considering the subtropical climate) and natural ventilation and privacy of the rooms.

Each accommodation located at ground level has two green spaces on both sides to be used as a private garden or vegetable garden.

The first group of buildings is served by an underground road that allows access to the garage.

*On this and on the opposite pages:*

*Weilong type of Yu Qing Lou New Dwellings in Xiang Ling village.*

*On the left: sequence of the axonometric sections and floors from roof to ground.*

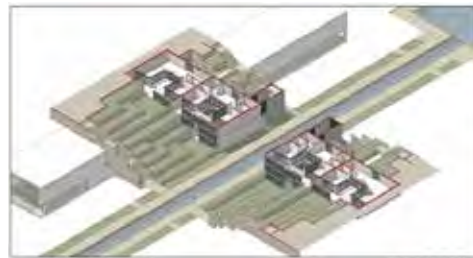
*On the right: section and facades of the bridge building. In the bottom: sequence of views.*



PIANO TERZO



PIANO SECONDO



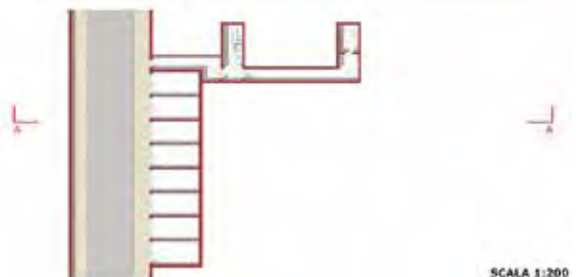
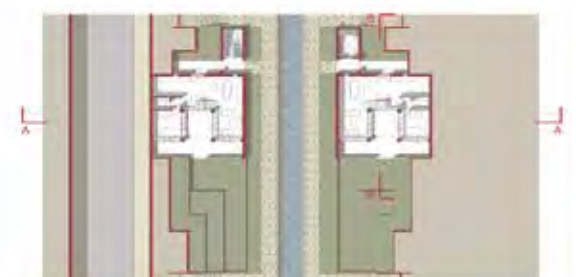
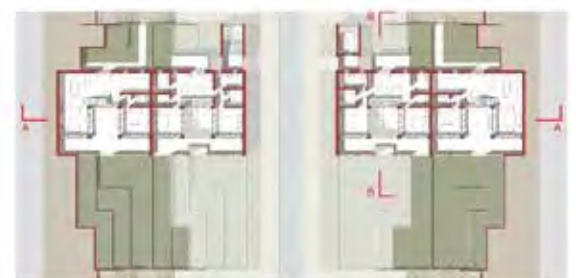
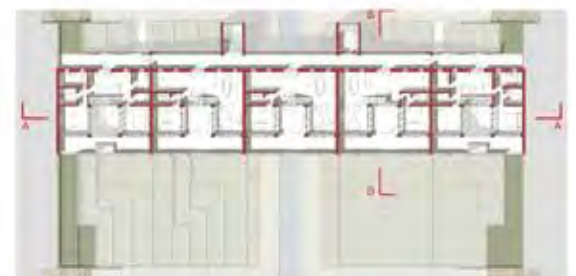
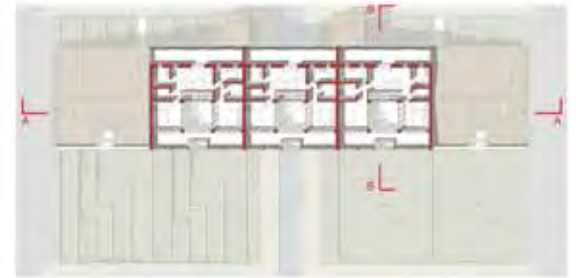
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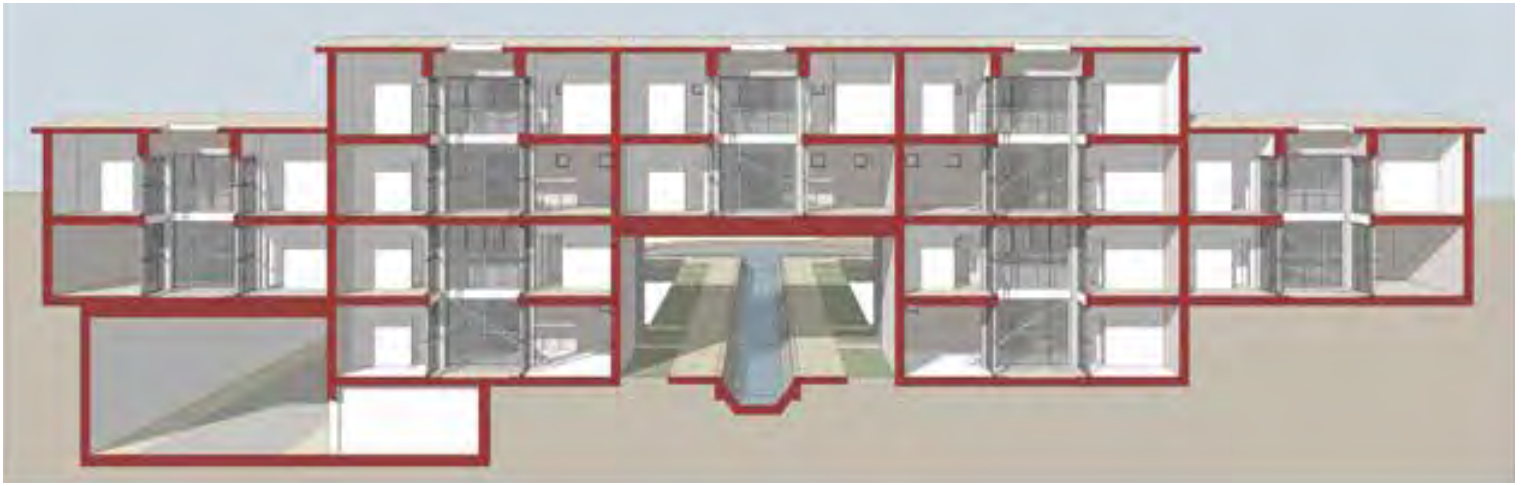
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SCALA 1:200











## Terrace type

The terraces are composed of three different types of patio houses similar to each other, differing only in the distribution of the interior spaces, the size, and the relationship with the slopes of the ground.

We have thirteen groups of dwellings in total, each consisting of four units.

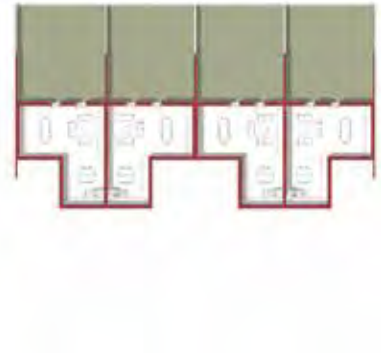
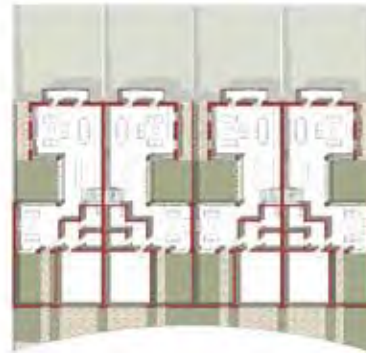
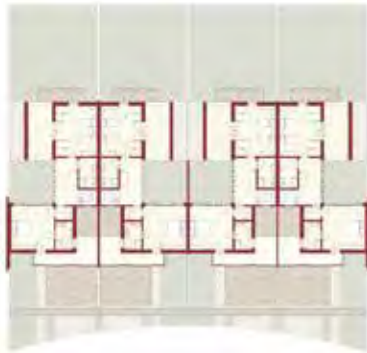
The modules can be mirrored and arranged in a different way, thus allowing to have different planimetric solutions and avoiding the repetition of the same buildings, thanks also to a variety of roofing compositions.

For all three types, we have a front on a closed road, with access to the garage and the entrance to the house through an entrance placed on a boundary wall.

In all cases we have a difference in height of one floor between the front of the road and the back and the different types are composed of the same elements arranged differently to compensate for the dimensions.

The living spaces are developed on the succession of two open spaces, a courtyard at the entrance and a patio in the center of the house.

Each unit also has a green space at the back to be used as a garden.



On this and on the opposite pages:

Terrace type of Yu Qing Lou New Dwellings in Xiang Ling village.

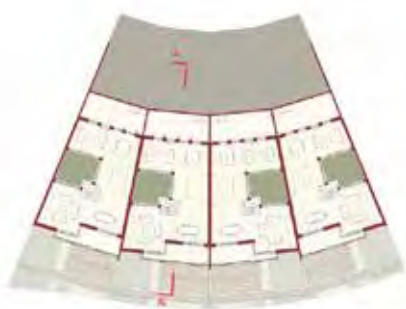
On the top: general view, sequence of the axonometric sections and floors from roof to ground.

On this page below: plans, axonometric section of the linear type.

On the opposite page below: the right: plans, axonometric section of the crescent type.









## The network of facilities of the “green city” in the hubs between the villages.\*

Federico Acuto, Maurizio Meriggii



\* The material here published are extracted from: J. Lin, L. Parenti, S. Vismara, K. Zodo, “Urban landscape and historical heritage: a new role for Pearl River Delta urban region. Proposal for an agricultural park with collective facilities and research centre in Huiyang”, Master degree thesis, Politecnico di Milano, supervisors F. Acuto (urban planning), M. Meriggii (architectural design), 2012-2013. Text by F. Acuto and M. Meriggii.

Our assumption is that that hybrid form of settlement that is “no longer clearly urban or rural (...) but a fusion of the two” of the on-site urbanization areas of the Pearl River Delta mentioned above (see here: Acuto, Meriggii, pp. 88) is the contemporary evolution of the traditional form of Chinese urbanism of the urban-rural continuum.

This project, the result of a master’s thesis at the School of Civil Architecture (2012-2013), experiments with a series of procedures for translating an almost spontaneous form into a codified form.

The project is developed along a portion of the Huiyang “green way” project of the Politecnico di Milano in 2013, addressing the theme of the internal structure of macro-areas A and B of the agricultural park and macro-areas D of future urbanization.

### Morphology

The territory of the Qiuchang “commune” is characterized by the presence of a dense network of settlements both in the form of the weilong of various sizes and in the form of hamlets. As we have seen, all the villages occupy precise positions in the hilly landscape following the rules of Feng Shui (see here: Chen, pp.76-82). The very fact that all types of settlement of residences in weilong as well as foothill hamlets are located sharing the same rules makes the landscape a coherent composition.

Unlike the design for quadrangular blocks originating from the road network of the Master Plan 2007-2200, the project, therefore, assumes the hills as a minimal landscape unit, defining, in relation with their position and their shape, the blocks of the future city.

These are macro-blocks functioning like the compounds of traditional Chinese planning, accessible at defined points with a local circulation separate from the one outside the compound.

### Circulation

The circulation in the territory of the Qiuchang Commune develops from its “core” consisting of the “central park” of the villages of Tie Men Shan and Ling Hu, where several Hakka residences are located. This is lapped to the south by the “parkway south” and to the north by the “parkway north”. The first connects with the natural green areas of the Danshui River valley to the east and with the agricultural areas of the west side of the city. The second connects with the new districts



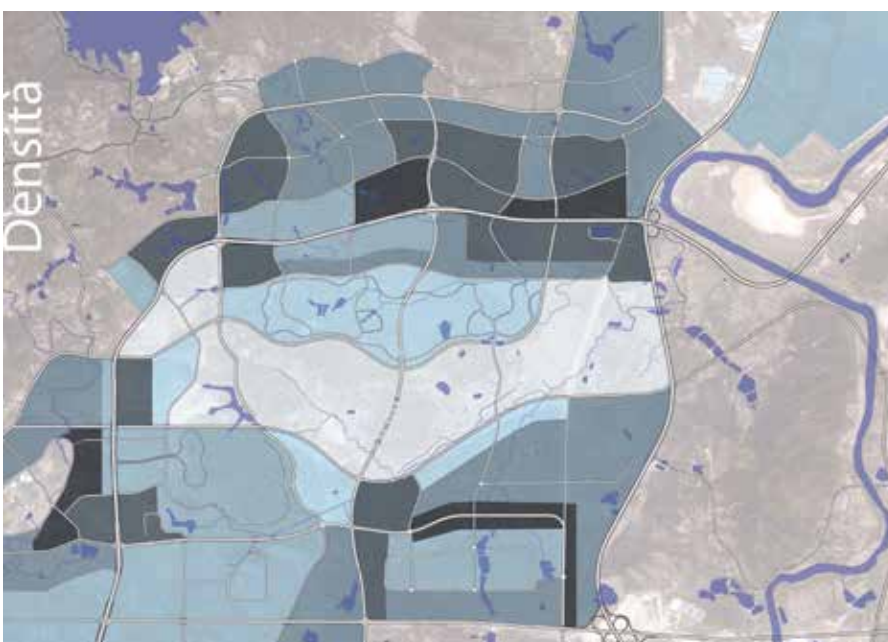
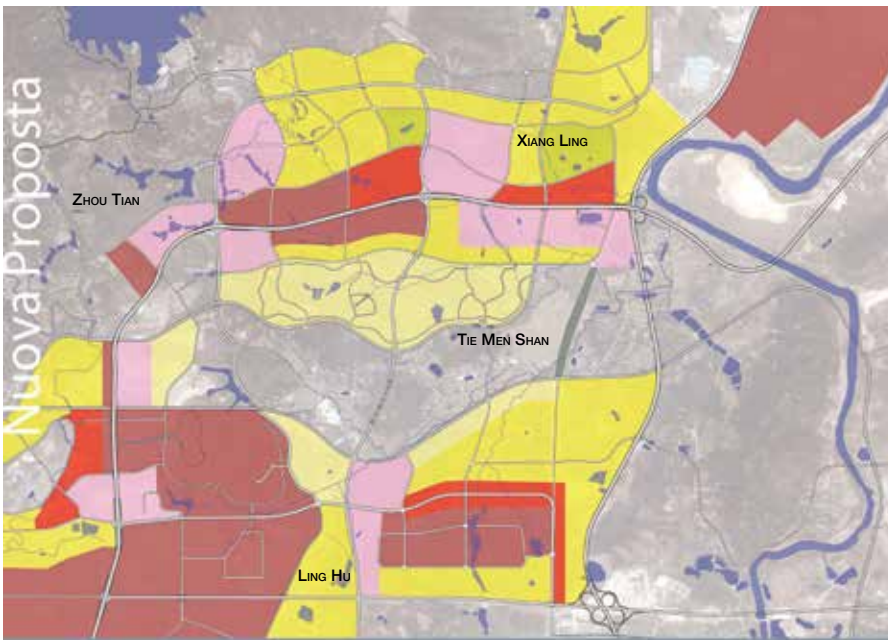
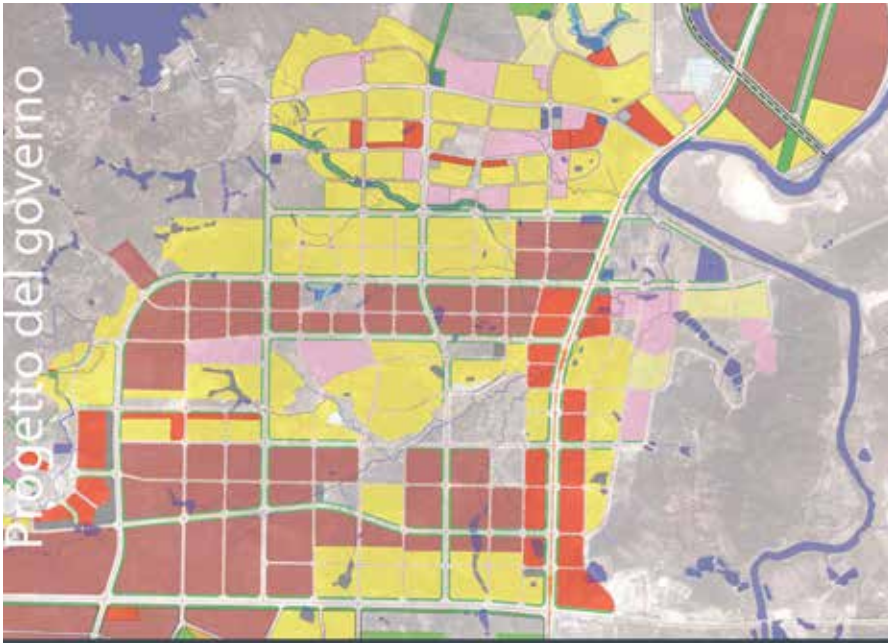
**Table 1**

“Huiyang Green City”. System of the green corridors and park-ways between the territories of Zhou Tian, Xiang Ling, Tie Men Shan and Ling Hu villages. The green corridors collect: protected Hakka heritage, agricultural landscape, natural area, collective facilities (education, hospital), research center (techno-park) and morphologically regulated new residential compounds.









of Xiang Ling Village to the northeast and the “agricultural park” of Zhoutian Village to the northwest.

The Shenzhen-Huidong express road from the west crosses the territory between the villages of Zhou Tian, Xiang ling and Tie Men Shan to continue east towards Huidong; at the bend of the Danshui River, this road intersects the express road coming from south Dayawan-Huizhou.

Circulation within the sectors between the southern junction of the express-road system and the network of roads and parkways described above takes place through loop circuits connected to the main skeleton at selected points in order to discourage circulation in the area of the contiguous block type (as in the road scheme of the Master Plan 2007-2020).

#### *Land use and density*

The Master Plan 2007-2020 provides for this area a building density of blocks not controlled with respect to the landscape characters. In fact, it provides for the complete elimination of the hills and presupposes a tabula rasa of the orographic characters in order to be able to easily assign functions and densities according to purely speculative principles (Table 2).

The design proposed for the area is based on the adaptation of the road network to the hilly morphology. In addition, the project proposes a differentiation of the isolated hills based on a geographical criterion of definition of landscape constraints, due to the different values of the presence of the historical heritage of the Hakka villages.

Following the route of the “parkways” the areas they lap are those with a very modest density and nothing in the “central park” - since no new buildings are planned here.

The blocks of hills farthest from the “parkway” are instead characterized by higher densities where services, higher-density residential neighbourhoods and commercial activities are located.

This reorganization is partly achieved by reviewing the proportions between land uses and reducing the absolute quantities of residential volumes and their composition between high and low-density types (see Table 5).

The increase in the system of services and green areas that benefit from the correction of the proportions of the program of activities is functional to the development of a more qualified production sector – an industry with high technological content and research and low environmental impact (Tecno-park).

The increase in green areas is thus functional to the system of “parkways” and “green corridors” used as conservation spaces of the Hakka residences and their agricultural landscape for the development of tourist activity by the approximately 37 million inhabitants of the PRD (according to the most up-to-date estimates).

#### *Green corridors*

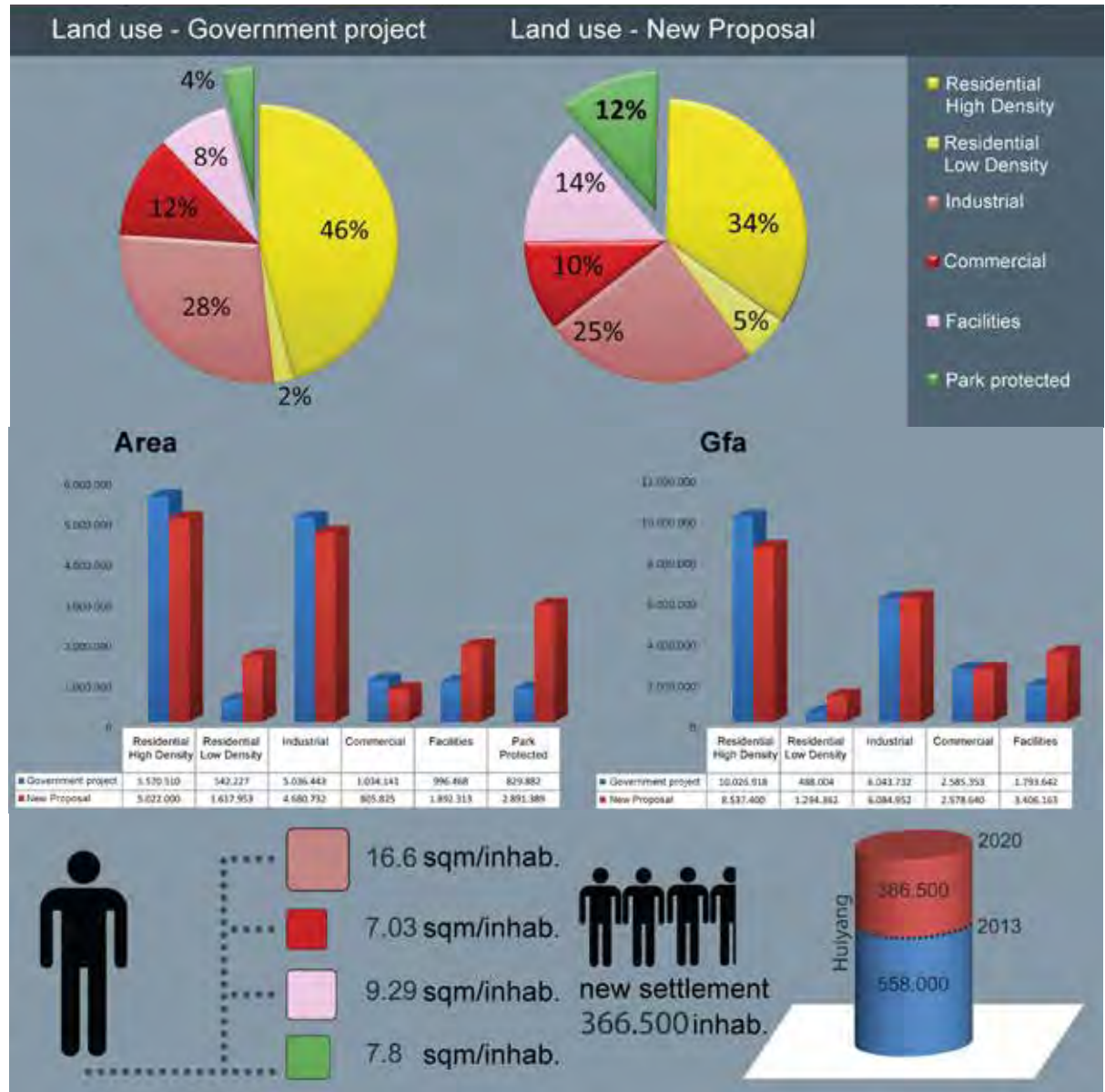
The rigidity of this scheme made of strips with increasing density along the “parkway” is compensated by the introduction of two south-north corridors on the



On this page.

**Table 5**

Comparative datas between Government project and New proposal Land use and densities for Ling Hu and Tie men Shan villages territories.



west and east sides that intersect the bands and relate through a continuum of green spaces (agricultural and park) service systems and Hakka residences of the “central park” (see Tables 1, 6, 7).

These are intended to accommodate part of the services themselves for the activities of associated life and for education. The green corridors and the central park thus become spaces of connection between a system of services aimed at training (Agricultural School) and research (Tecno-park) in the village of Ling Hu and the health-care area (Municipal Hospital) located at the intersection of the Shenzhen/Huidong and Dayawan/Huizhou express-ways.

The medium-low density residential neighbourhoods along the edges of the “central park”, designed following the free-plan morphological patterns in the landscape of traditional Hakka villages, are equipped with large green spaces that enrich that of the “green” corridors.

**Settlement Types**

Regardless of the intended use, all the proposed building complexes develop the theme of the “hill-shaped

building”.

The most literal in this sense of the proposed buildings is the Hospital, whose volumetric profile follows the shape of a hilly relief with the departments organized in a system of plates of gradually decreasing extension towards the centre connected by a hollow semi-cylindrical heart that constitutes the tower of general services, research and reception.

The two complexes of the techno-park exploit the existing reliefs by arranging the workshops and laboratories along the slopes, offices and services on the summits and are served by a tunnel road inside the hill for loading-unloading.

The pavilions of the Agricultural School are arranged along the contour lines of the slopes of a slope of the hill - from the top (direction, administration, halls) to the slopes (classrooms and services), towards the plain in front (sports field and gym).

The medium and low-density residential compound consists of large weilong (closed and semi-open variants) and smaller units arranged in a free plan according to the characteristics of the hilly landscape that hosts them.

On the opposite page.

**Tables 2-4**

Comparative diagrams between Government project and New proposal Land use and densities for Ling Hu and Tie men Shan villages territories.





**WEST CORRIDOR**

**Hakka Residences**



**Transformations and Resources**

1. Cha Yuan Village. Future tourist compound by Municipality.
2. Ling Hu Village. Project of a Tecno-Park with Laboratories.
3. Ling Hu Village. Proposed agricultural Park.
4. Ling Hu Village. Project of a low-medium density residential compound.
5. Zhoutian Village. Agricultural Park by Huiyang Municipality.
6. Water reservoir and Qiuhu Lake.



**EAST CORRIDOR**

**Hakka Residences**



**Transformations and Resources**

7. Wei Bu Village. Project of "green corridor" and agricultural Park.
8. Wei Bu Village. Project of Higher School for Agriculture.
- 9.10. Tie Men Shan Village. Proposed agricultural Park.
11. Tie Men Shan Village. Project of Municipal Hospital.
12. Xiang Ling Village. Project of "green corridor" and agricultural Park.











At pages 170-171.

**Table 6**

General Scheme of the “West and East Green Corridors” among the villages of Zhou Tian, Xiang Ling, Cha Yuan, Tie Men Shan and Ling Hu.



Hospital



New Residences



Tecno-park



Secondary School



Hakka Residences

On this page:

**Figure 1**

Zenit view of the model of the project of the “West and East Green Corridors”.

H - Hospital; RC - Residential compound; GF - Green Factory; SS - Secondary School.



Metro Line



Express Road



Primary Roads



Local Roads



Water



Green Corridors



Future Urbanization



# Hospital

The Hospital Hill complex suggests the image of a relief crowned by a Tulou (Hakka building type widespread in Fujian and eastern Guangdong).

From the point of view of hospital typology, it is a hybrid between the overlapping plate type and the tower type.

The complex consists of two distinct parts connected by the entire floors: the day hospital to the south.

The complex with the plates of the departments and the tower of general services and management, to the north.

The two complexes are linked by a covered area located at the top of a driveway ramp for ambulances and other vehicles.

From this covered square connected to the covered passage from the metro station, you can access the day hospital to the south, to the emergency room and, to the north, to the emergency department with attached departments (traumatology, cardiology, intensive care, operating block) on the upper floors of the plates.

The plates are potentially divisible into two parts so that depending on the size of the department the entire floor (Surgery and General Medicine) or one half of it (Orthopaedics, Infectious, Paediatrics, Oncology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology) can be occupied.

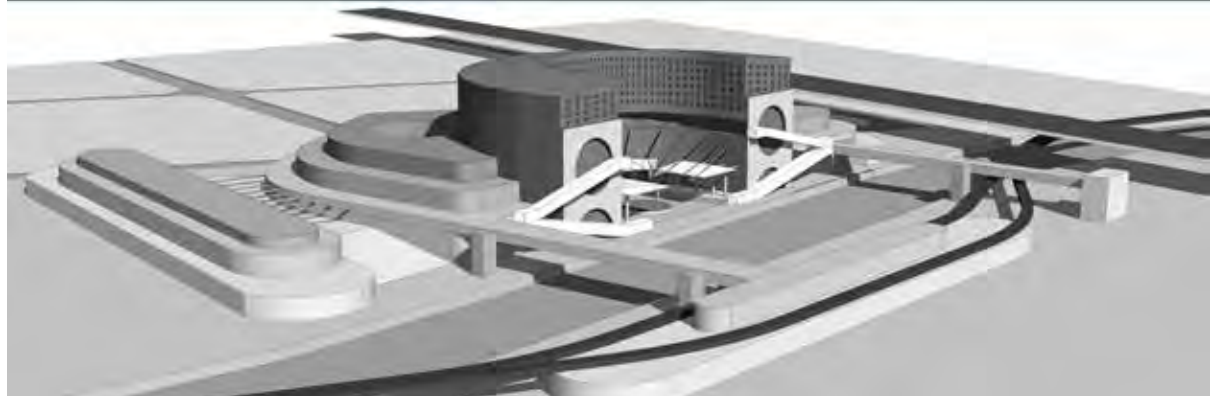
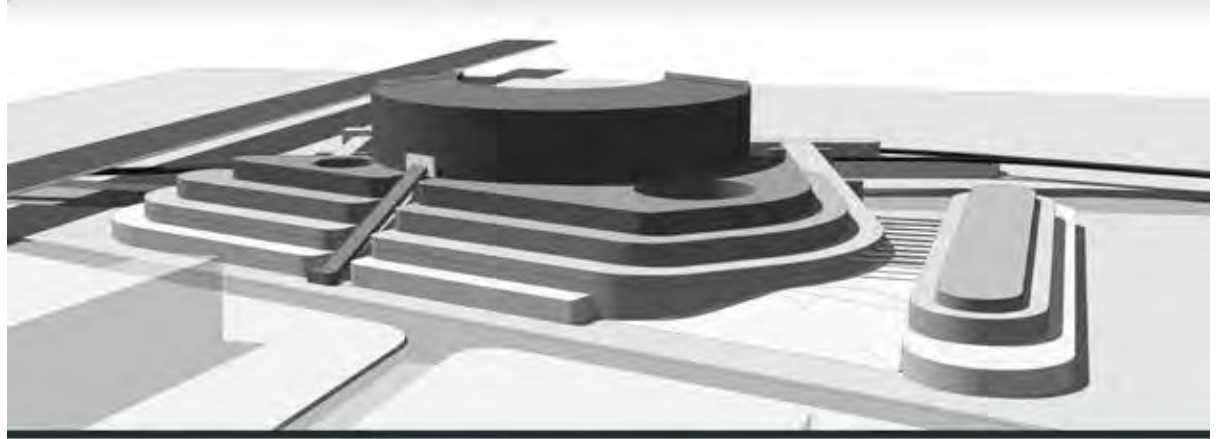
The wards are located in the perimeter part of the plates with windows facing the hilly landscape of Tie Men Shan and Xiang Ling.

From this side, there is secondary access on a mobile ramp and stairs.

The half-moon tower is accessible from a semicircular square connected by suspended passages to the subway station.

Here we can find: the reception, the administration, the medical offices, the library, multipurpose rooms, doctors' and nurses' quarters, the archive, the computer center, training rooms, laboratories and service spaces.

The sizing of the hospital was conducted following the Chinese legislation for hospitals of this class, adopting the volume provided for by the Huiyang Master Plan 2007-2020 which provided for the new city hospital in this position.





## Medium-low density neighbourhood

The residential compound is inspired by the morphology of the Hakka agglomerations of the Xingning countryside (area of origin of many Hakka families of Huiyang).

The arrangement of the different types of weilong follows even the smallest differences in altitudes of the depressions of the hilly site and uses the water basins as fulcrums around which to form agglomerations.

The weilong type has been reinterpreted by synthesis: a closed or open enclosure with a complex of patios in the centre.

The green space between the weilong is mainly wooded and participates in the system of "green corridors".

In the large square-shaped weilong in the perimetral building, vertical patio types are developed, reminiscent of the patio types of traditional weilongs.

Digging on the façade surface of a large cubic void allows to easily arrange duplex residential units - with double volume open space memory in this case of Le Corbusier's "immeubles villas".





## Techno-park

The project aims to demonstrate that even industrial warehouses with their logistics system can be composed respecting the hilly landscape of the urbanized countryside of Huiyang.

The system is simple.

The Tecno-park consists of two complexes located on two hills that face each other.

The first is the production complex (west hill) the second is the complex of research laboratories (east hill).

On the west hill, a tunnel road dug inside it follows the curvilinear path of the contour lines of the relief.

A series of exits from the tunnel road emerges in the manoeuvring yards between two sheds.

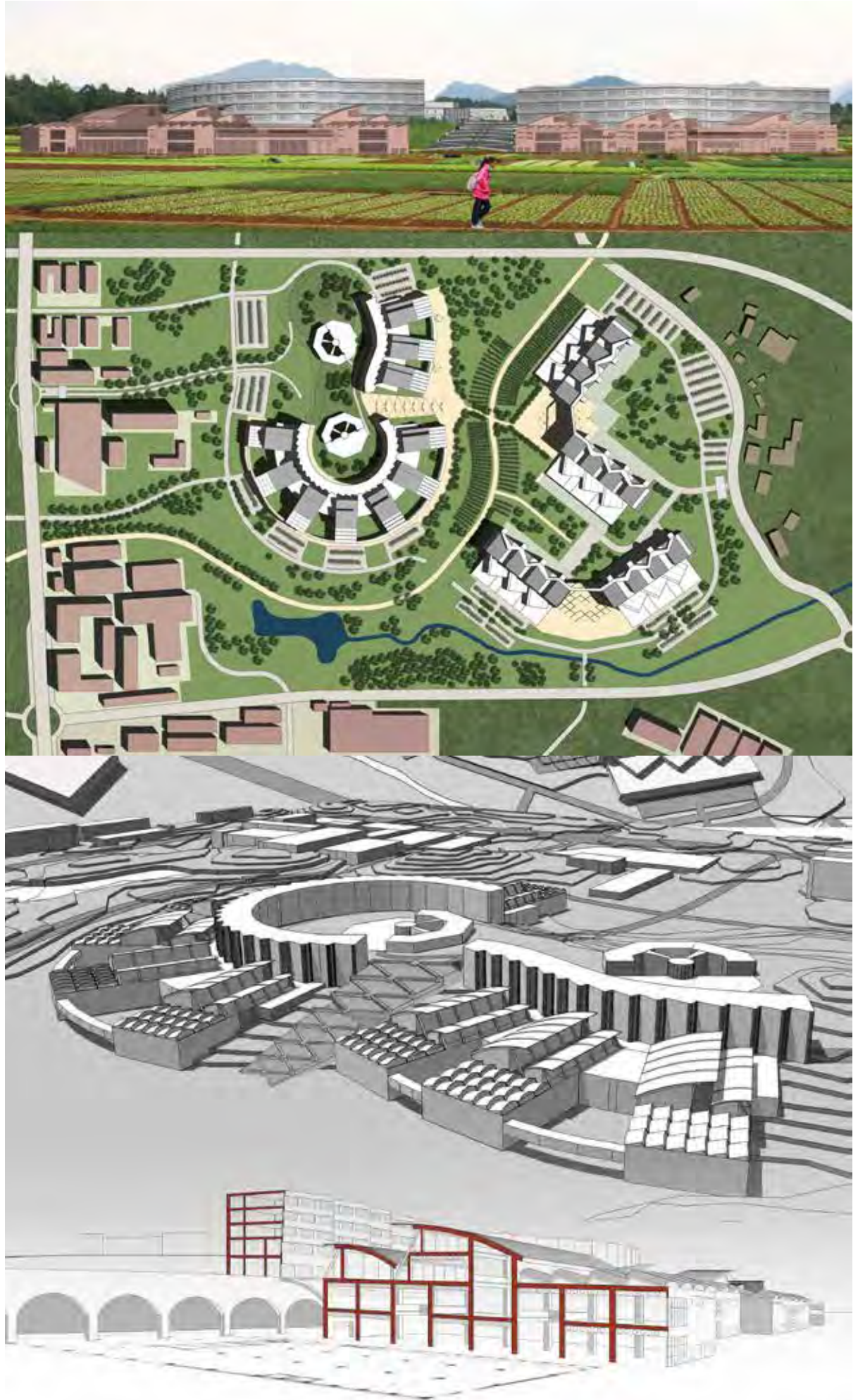
The sheds are partly dug into the hill and have spaces of variable height, covered by sheds.

At the contour lines at the halfway height of the hill winds a curved slat building following the morphology of the relief.

On the top of the hill, there is a green plateau where the canteen of the Techno-park is located – this is a memory of the Olivetti canteen in Ivrea by Ignazio Gardella.

The complex of laboratories develops leaning against a relief of lesser height. It consists of two buildings connected by a square built at a depression of the hill.

The small valley between the two complexes of the Techno-park is part of the “west green corridor”.





## Secondary Agricultural School

Considering the survival of large agricultural territories in the villages of Ling Hu, Tie Men Shan, Zhou Tian and Xiang Ling, it is proposed the construction of an agricultural high school that can exploit the surrounding cultivated fields as a laboratory for training and experimentation in the agricultural sector.

The higher education complex is conceived as a system of rows of classrooms arranged on terraces of the hill.

The ranks form a sort of village with linear segments converging on a system of covered squares arranged on the axis of the complex.

The axis is generated by a dominant tulou-shaped octagonal building where the management, conference rooms and special classrooms are located.

The gyms are located towards the plain in front of the hill in front of the football field.

In the interstices between the covered squares are the canteens of the School.

The volumes of the complex are modelled to form a single complex with the nearby village of Ling Hu.

