

The Dynamic Nature of Fluid Cultural Landscapes for Preservation and Management

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Abstract

Cultural landscapes are tangible manifestations of the transformation wrought upon natural landscapes through cultural processes. This study aims to broaden the notion of cultural landscapes, introducing the concept of 'fluid cultural landscapes.' Unlike fixed formations, fluid cultural landscapes are characterized by constant evolution, shaped by human interventions, thereby influencing the past, present, and future in a holistic manner. Such landscapes offer a realm for creative spatial organization, inviting fresh perspectives and innovative interpretations of space. A detailed case study of the Korean Folk Village in South Korea and Central park in USA is presented to highlight its transformation from a traditional folk museum to a dynamic cultural landscape. By exploring the idea of fluid cultural landscapes, the paper underscores the dynamic nature of fluid cultural landscapes and their potential to redefine our understanding of cultural landscape conservation and management.

Keywords: Cultural landscape, fluidity, creative space, Korean Folk Village, Central Park

1. Introduction

Culture, being an intrinsic part of human existence, drives significant transformative changes in our lives and shapes our experiences. Historically, cultural engagement was predominantly limited to the privileged classes. However, with the establishment of accessible cultural spaces, cultural experiences have been democratized and integrated into our everyday lives. The broad spectrum of culture encapsulates the myriad of human creations and phenomena that interact with the natural world and ultimately leads to the formation of cultural landscapes. Thus, human-engineered constructs are deeply intertwined with our existence [1].

Carl Sauer's perspective elucidates the natural landscape as an encompassing entity, comprising elements such as climate, soil, rivers, underground resources, coastlines, and vegetation. These elements evolve gradually over extended periods. As cultural processes gradually mold these landscapes, visible transformations occur and give rise to what people understand as the cultural landscape [2]. Expanding upon this understanding, this paper seeks to transcend the notion of a static cultural landscape and

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acknowledge it as an ever-evolving manifestation shaped by human agency. By terming the new concept of ‘fluid cultural landscape,’ this paper explores the overarching phenomena that perpetually influence the past, present, and future experiences. The paper concludes with the proposition that understanding and implementing fluid cultural landscapes can significantly contribute to innovative methods of cultural landscape preservation and management.

2. Fluid Cultural Landscape

2.1 Understanding Cultural landscapes

The establishment of UNESCO in 1945 aimed to reconstruct cultural education following the devastation of the World Wars. It was in 1992 that the term ‘cultural landscape’ officially emerged, prompted by efforts to designate The Lake District Park in the UK as a World Heritage Site. During this period, UNESCO faced a lack of standardized definition for cultural landscapes, leading to the establishment of specific criteria. According to these criteria, a cultural landscape is regarded as a testament to the enduring evolution of human society and settlements, shaped by physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by the natural environment. Furthermore, it recognizes the continuous interplay of internal and external social, economic, and cultural forces upon these landscapes [3]. Consequently, each designated heritage site serves as an exceptional exemplar of a cultural landscape, encompassing a harmonious amalgamation of historical, aesthetic, ethological, and anthropological elements that highlight the symbiotic coexistence of human activity and nature throughout time. However, it is important to acknowledge the vulnerability of these landscapes to irreversible changes [3]. In order to facilitate the registration process of cultural landscapes, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee revised the World Heritage Convention Operation Guidelines in 1992, introducing provisions specifically addressing cultural landscapes [4].

Cultural landscapes can be categorized into three principal types as shown in Table 1. A clearly defined landscape exhibits distinct boundaries and is intentionally designed by human agency; an organically evolved landscape, which emerges through human activities and reflects the historical development of the area; and an associative cultural landscape, which appears natural yet possesses religious, artistic, and cultural significance within its realm. The second type, an organically evolved landscape, encompasses two subcategories : a relic (or fossil) landscape, characterized by the cessation of evolutionary processes in the past with notable remaining physical features, and a continuing landscape, which perpetually evolves while preserving its traditional aspects within modern life [5].

[Table 1] Types of Cultural Landscapes in World Heritage Sites

Type	Concept	Representative Examples
A clearly defined landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A landscape deliberately designed and constructed by humans. -Encompasses gardens and parks created for aesthetic, social, and recreational purposes. -Often associated, but not exclusively, with religious or monumental groups and ensembles. 	Wat Phu temples and ancient dwellings in Champasak Cultural Landscape (registered in 2000)
An organically evolved landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -An essential outcome of early social, economic, administrative, and/or religious activities. -The local landscape reflects the gradual evolution of its form and components. -Classified into fossil landscapes, where the evolutionary process has concluded in the past, and sustainable landscapes. 	Terraced rice fields of Cordillera, Philippines (registered in 1995)
An associate cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Refers to a landscape where natural elements hold strong religious, artistic, and cultural significance. -Physical and cultural evidence may not always be prominent or may be absent. 	Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Australia (Registered in 1994)

2.2 The Concept of the Fluid cultural landscape

The emergence of the term cultural landscape, denoting stationary, artificial, and human-fashioned architectural, landscape, or natural environments, necessitates a reevaluation of the concept from a novel standpoint by introducing the notion of a fluid cultural landscape. As the understanding of cultural sustainability expands, it becomes imperative to perceive the cultural landscape as a dynamic entity that continually evolves and retains its significance across time, transcending a narrow focus solely on cultural assets. Landscape architect Christophe Girot underscores the importance of challenging conventional cognitive frameworks when contemplating landscapes. In his work, *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, he asserts that to achieve a deeper understanding of landscapes, it is imperative to question the restrictive frameworks that confine people's perception. Rather than viewing landscapes as static, compartmentalized frames, we should adopt a novel perspective that integrates the continuous interplay of time and space. This necessitates a shift towards more appropriate tools of observation that align with our contemporary understanding of reality. Notably, digital landscape imaging has emerged as a valuable tool for nuanced observations, while landscape videos have evolved as a distinctive genre, distinct from stationary music clips and video art [6].

In 1997, Charles Waldheim expanded the conceptual boundaries of landscapes, attributing qualities such as fluidity, non-determinism, expansiveness, evolution, and the potential for necessary decomposition. He broadened the notion of urban landscapes beyond their visual dimensions and

introduced the term 'Landscape Urbanism' and it encompasses city planning and design approaches rooted in a landscape-oriented perspective. Borrowed from his concept, this paper seeks to catalyze the transformation of static cities into organic entities capable of autonomous adaptation and evolution. The term 'fluid cultural landscape' is necessary to explore the cultural landscape of contemporary society as not solely the creation of humans but as a novel cultural entity in its own right.

A fluid cultural landscape is a concept that extends the traditional notion of cultural landscapes, emphasizing their dynamic and continually changing nature rather than viewing them as static entities. This concept recognizes that landscapes are not merely shaped once by human activities but continue to evolve over time due to ongoing cultural processes. These processes can include shifts and parameters in societal values, changes in land use, urban development, and other activities reflecting human interactions with the natural environment. As such, a fluid cultural landscape is shaped by the past, is reflective of the present, and is poised to continue evolving into the future. The fluid cultural landscape concept encourages a reorganization of space and the creation of innovative environments that offer fresh perspectives. This understanding opens up new avenues for the preservation, management, and appreciation of cultural landscapes, taking into account their dynamic and evolving nature.

3. Case study

3.1 Korean Folk Village

The Korean Folk Village, originally established as a means to stimulate the national economy, encompasses the Yongin Korean Folk Village, serving as a remarkable folk exhibition that vividly portrays life during the late Joseon Dynasty. Commencing operations in 1974, this cultural haven transports visitors through time as they set foot on its expansive 99 square meters. With its charming architectural features, including tiled and thatched houses, the village exudes an ambiance reminiscent of bygone eras. A key highlight of the Korean Folk Village lies in its collection of 270 traditional houses, each meticulously representing the unique characteristics of diverse regions. Within this assortment, one can find common dwellings alongside Yangban houses, eloquently embodying the distinct traits of the southern, central, northern, and island regions. Additionally, the village offers the opportunity to explore local religious structures, such as temples, Seonangdang, and fortune-telling houses [7].

As a domestic cultural landscape characterized by fluidity, the Korean Folk Village unveils a novel perspective. Initially conceived as an open-air folk museum in the 1970s, dedicated to preserving traditional folk culture, it underwent a transformative evolution in the 1990s, transitioning into an

edutainment park with a strong emphasis on educational and recreational activities. In the 2010s, the village further elevated its spatial atmosphere by incorporating popular traditional cultural themes and solidified its position as a distinctive and widely recognized cultural landscape as shown in [Fig. 1]. Naturally, these evocative changes garnered attention and contributed to a notable surge in visitor numbers. The Korean Folk Village stands as a testament to a unique and continually evolving cultural landscape that captivates audiences across time.



[Fig. 1] Yongin Korean Folk Village

3.2 Central Park in the United States

Since its inception in 1858, Central Park has emerged as a distinctive feature setting New York City apart from other urban centers as shown in [Fig. 2], maintaining its exceptional status in contemporary times. Over the course of its history, Central Park has undergone multiple transformative processes, adapting to the evolving needs and circumstances of urban residents while preserving its fundamental values [2]. As a human-created space, Central Park invites a reevaluation of the significance and worth of parks as dynamic cultural landscapes. Boasting a diverse range of cultural amenities, the park has been subject to selective renovations to address shifting demands, carefully striking a delicate balance between safeguarding its original foundations and embracing necessary adaptations. Such flexible policies and management approaches have been instrumental in fostering the enduring vitality of Central Park across an extensive timeframe.

The park's notable branded attractions and events, including scenic carriage rides, captivating Shakespeare performances at the esteemed Delacorte Theater, and acclaimed shows by the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic, captivate the attention of visitors. Central Park Conservancy, in conjunction with community engagement, spearheads an array of cultural and sporting programs. The park hosts a wide range of initiatives, such as volunteer programs catering to retired seniors, youth-centric ecological observation programs, weddings and celebrations, as well as a comprehensive management system incorporating expertise in soil, trees, and water quality. Additionally, the park extends services such as medical support and offers souvenir sales, including delectable cookies, while overseeing a breadth of operations and management, including the promotion of its image through cinematic productions [8]. Central Park exemplifies a comprehensive approach to planning and managing a cultural landscape, embracing diversity and catering to a multitude of interests and experiences as shown in [Fig. 3].



[Fig. 2] Central Park, New York, USA

Regarding changing exhibits or attractions over time, Central Park has a rich history of adapting and evolving to meet the needs and interests of its visitors. The Great Lawn in Central Park has undergone significant changes over time. In the past, it was a reservoir known as the 'Croton Reservoir' but was eventually transformed into the expansive grassy area it is today. The Conservatory Garden is a beautifully landscaped formal garden within Central Park. It has undergone restoration efforts to maintain its historical integrity and preserve its exquisite beauty. Visitors can explore different themed sections

within the garden, featuring a variety of flowers, sculptures, and serene pathways. Another example is Belvedere Castle, a prominent architectural feature in Central Park. It has served various purposes over time. Originally designed as a lookout tower, it now houses the Henry Luce Nature Observatory. The observatory offers interactive exhibits and educational programs focused on nature, ecology, and wildlife found within the park.



[Fig. 3] Spots to see and do map of Central Park

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, as cultural sustainability continues to evolve, there is a growing recognition of the need to understand and evaluate the future impact of cultural landscapes. This study has endeavored to explore the emerging significance and influence of the fluid cultural landscape, with a particular focus on its implications within the broader context of cultural landscapes. Traditional cultural landscapes have conventionally been perceived as static entities characterized by human interventions and physical

structures. However, the concept of a fluid cultural landscape introduces a paradigm shift, emphasizing the reorganization of space and the creation of dynamic environments that foster fresh perspectives.

Despite the extensive research conducted on cultural landscapes, there remains a notable gap in the literature concerning the specific study of fluid cultural landscapes. Therefore, further comprehensive investigations are warranted to deepen our understanding of this concept and its various dimensions. Such inquiries will contribute to the advancement of new methodologies for the preservation and management of cultural landscapes, utilizing the creative spatial compositions inherent within fluid cultural landscapes. It is envisaged that the outcomes of this study will enrich the scholarly discourse surrounding cultural landscapes, paving the way for innovative approaches that align with the evolving dynamics of our cultural heritage. By embracing the fluidity and transformative potential of cultural landscapes, this paper expects to foster a more sustainable and adaptive management framework, ensuring the preservation and continued relevance of these valuable cultural assets for future generations.

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