

# Analyzing the Progression and Conservation of Historical Artifacts

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## Abstract

Addressing the need for selective preservation in an era where conserving all historical structures is unfeasible, the challenges has been identified in balancing their preservation with developmental pursuits. The purpose of this study is to scrutinize the complexities of managing and conserving historical objects and structures with profound connections to a city's past and its present identity. For this, the ongoing status of development and conservation of these historical objects was examined and their significance, potential limitations and the roadmap towards establishing sustainable landscapes was analyzed. This paper emphasizes the necessity of not only recognizing historical significance but also fostering contemporary connections that lead to a richer understanding and experience of these objects. The study concludes with implications for future academic inquiries and practical applications in the realm of historical object preservation and management.

Keyword : Historical buildings, Historical objects, Cultural landscapes, Sustainability

## 1. Introduction

In the face of the intricate challenge of conserving a multitude of buildings that bear profound symbolic connections between past events, notable figures and present circumstances, there arises a necessity to exercise discernment in selectively preserving a subset of these structures that commonly refer to as historical objects [1]. These historical objects assume a pivotal role in the urban landscape, intricately intertwined with the natural attributes, ways of life and behavioral patterns. They have been meticulously molded over extended timeframes and imbued with the rich cultural heritage of the respective region. Through their tangible presence, historical objects vividly embody the distinctive history and regional identity of a city and position themselves as invaluable resources that afford us direct or indirect engagement and experiential encounters within the fabric of our daily lives [2]. However, it is important to acknowledge that prevailing endeavors in development and preservation predominantly stem from the impetus of central or local governmental entities and often emphasize emblematic symbols that serve to foster ethnic pride.

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In this regard, previous research has been done to provide a comprehensive analysis of the ethics of historic preservation [3] and to highlight the connection between historical significance and ethical considerations in preserving objects, practices and places [4]. Also, the lived experience and perception of age in urban environments were examined to reveal that residents value landscape features and a sense of mystery in both environments while the older environment evokes creative fantasies based on a hypothetical past [5]. Thanks to the renowned and successful example of historical object preservation, the restoration of the Sistine Chapel ceiling in Vatican City, more attention was paid to historical object preservation and management. The artwork painted by Michelangelo in the early 16th century had suffered from centuries of neglect, dirt and deterioration. In the 1980s, a comprehensive restoration project was undertaken to involve meticulous cleaning and preservation techniques to restore the vibrant colors and intricate details of the frescoes. The restoration of the Sistine Chapel ceiling not only preserved a priceless historical masterpiece but also allowed future generations to appreciate its beauty and cultural significance [6].

In the prevailing circumstances, this study is poised to comprehensively evaluate the contemporary state of conservation and development pertaining to historical objects, holistically considering their multifaceted significance and inherent limitations. Moreover, this study endeavors to establish a comprehensive framework wherein historical objects can evolve into sustainable landscapes, proactively encourage visitors to actively partake, engender dialogue and autonomously navigate the profound social and moral implications embedded within the spatial symbolism of these historical objects.

## **2. Development**

### **2.1 Shifting Dynamics in Historical Object Development**

The current landscape of historical object development is influenced by legal provisions such as Article 37, Paragraph 2 of the National Land Planning and Utilization Act, which grants authority to designated entities including the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport, the Mayor/Do Governor, or the Mayor of a large city to establish or modify special purpose districts. Furthermore, the same act recognizes historical objects as areas designated for the preservation of cultural resources. Notably, a significant shift has occurred in recent times with community-led landscape projects emerging as prominent drivers of historical object development to supersede the previous predominantly government-driven approach [7].

Within this framework, historical objects are being strategically harnessed to cultivate local tourist

attractions and products that showcase the unique historical aspects of individual cities and villages. A compelling illustration of this approach as shown in [Fig. 1] can be found in the construction of forty-eight Dondae (high grounds) during the reign of King Sukjong (1679) to safeguard the Joseon Dynasty against foreign invasions. These Dondae sites now stand as poignant military historical sites, offering insights into the history of resistance on Ganghwado Island, a pivotal stronghold for national defense. Ganghwado Island has successfully leveraged the historical significance of the Dondae structures to create captivating historical and cultural tourist experiences and exemplified by attractions like the Ganghwado trail which affords visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in the night-time vistas provided by these historical objects [8].



[Fig. 1] Ganghwa Island Bun-oli Dondae

## 2.2 Significance and limitation

Historical objects wield a significant potential as emblematic representations of a city's identity and they are capable of attracting tourists to stimulate the local economy. These objects with their historical gravitas have the ability to captivate observers with their aesthetic allure while concurrently enhancing the satisfaction of residents. Furthermore, historical objects serve as invaluable educational spaces to cultivate a shared sense of identity and fostering sustainable development. The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Machu Picchu in Peru can be an example. The ancient ruins of Machu Picchu not only offer a glimpse into the remarkable Inca civilization but also provide a platform for educating visitors about the rich cultural heritage and sustainable practices of the past. By preserving and promoting Machu Picchu as a historical and educational destination, Peru has been able to cultivate a shared sense of pride and

identity among its citizens while also fostering sustainable development through responsible tourism, conservation efforts and community involvement. The site serves as a model for balancing cultural preservation, economic growth and environmental stewardship that inspires both local communities and international visitors to appreciate and protect our shared human heritage.

Also, the promotion of tourism through historical objects garners a positive perception as it satiates cultural desires and contributes to an enhanced overall quality of life. However, the translation of this positive perception into tangible outcomes is impeded by a dearth of robust implementation strategies and relevant knowledge. It is crucial to recognize that the development of tourist attractions often tends to concentrate exclusively on historical and cultural knowledge and to prioritize symbolic capital. This narrow vantage point restricts the broader comprehension and appreciation of historical objects. If historical objects are not regarded in a manner that evokes patriotism and an appreciation for their ethnic heritage, there exists a risk of engendering a distorted sense of pride [9].

### **3. Conservation**

#### **3.1 Embracing Community Engagement and Intangible Heritage**

Historical object conservation in the past predominantly revolved around preserving their tangible components such as architectural structures through meticulous maintenance and restoration endeavors. The focal point lay in safeguarding the individual cultural heritage intrinsic to each historical object. With the emergence of the concept of cultural landscapes, the notion of a cultural heritage protection zone materialized including the surrounding areas of historical objects as stipulated in Article 87 of the Cultural Heritage Protection Act [10].

Contemporary conservation practices have undergone a significant shift to recognize the criticality of residents and their dynamic interactions with historical objects including the realms of mere utilization. Historical objects have now evolved into encompassing spaces that encapsulate the lives, significance, activities, lifestyles and cultural practices of the people residing within their physical milieu. Consequently, there has been an augmented emphasis on preserving the intangible facets intertwined with these objects, encompassing narratives, connections and the overarching community fabric. In this vein, the active participation and engagement of local community members prove instrumental and foster integrated conservation practices that aim to perpetuate the well-being of these communities [11]. The conservation of historical objects has transformed from a static artificial landscape into a vibrant and integral facet of everyday life as shown in [Fig. 2]



[Fig. 2] Changes in the concept of landscape conservation

In 2011, UNESCO issued comprehensive recommendations delineating the conservation and management of historical city landscapes that emphasized the significance of incorporating the historical elements of a city as a distinct form of heritage [12]. Scrutinizing the responsibilities and roles assumed by public service providers and private entities in conservation endeavors reveals a discernible reliance on the participation and involvement of local community members and underscores their pivotal contribution to the preservation and perpetuation of historical objects as illustrated in [Table 1].

[Table 1] Responsibilities and Roles for Each Preservation Subject

<b>Government</b>	The integration of conservation strategies with national development policies and agendas is essential. Local governments should formulate urban development plans that consider the values and characteristics of the local community. Recognizing the responsibility for policy implementation is crucial. Policies should be adjusted based on both the overall (public) and partial (professional) viewpoints.
<b>Public service providers and private sector</b>	Recognizing the responsibility for conservation is important for both public service providers and private entities. Public and private partnerships should be established. Local representatives should participate in all decisions related to the conservation management plan.
<b>Non-governmental organizations</b>	Non-governmental organizations should actively contribute to the development and dissemination of conservation tools and best practices.
<b>International organizations</b>	International organizations focusing on sustainable development should incorporate the historical city landscape approach into their strategies, plans and implementations.

### 3.2 Significance and limitations

The significance of historical objects lies in the intrinsic interaction between people and these artifacts in order to form the bedrock of their enduring value. Effective governance facilitated through stakeholder communication on conservation regulations ensures the alignment of expressed value by local government entities with the historical significance attributed by residents and fosters a harmonious integration of these perspectives into future visions.

Furthermore, historical objects play a pivotal role in shaping the identity of a city and provide educational opportunities for residents and augment their overall satisfaction to ultimately foster the sustainability of these objects. For example, as an iconic symbol of the city, the Eiffel Tower represents Paris's rich history, architectural prowess and artistic heritage. Its distinct silhouette has become synonymous with the city and has contributed significantly to its global recognition and cultural identity. The Eiffel Tower serves as a testament to the city's innovation, elegance and artistic expression to make it a focal point for locals and tourists alike. Its presence not only shapes the physical landscape of Paris but also shapes the city's identity as a hub of art, culture and architectural marvels [13].

However, the compensation provided for damages resulting from conservation regulations is often deemed inadequate. The implementation of excessive conservation policies has resulted in the deterioration of surrounding facilities within the cultural landscape of historical objects, thereby impeding overall development. Striking a delicate equilibrium between leveraging the benefits derived from historical objects and the prudent preservation and management of associated resources is of paramount importance. Although extant legal regulations exist to prevent indiscriminate conservation practices that disregard the unique characteristics of historical objects, the effective maintenance and management of these artifacts pose ongoing challenges.

#### **4. Discussion**

Historical objects embody remarkable cultural landscapes that have been shaped through the dynamic interactions between individuals and their historical contexts. Traditionally, historical objects have primarily served as vehicles for acquiring fundamental historical knowledge and establishing connections with the past. However, an exclusive focus on their historical aspects runs the risk of reinforcing narrow ethnic pride and patriotism. In this era of progress and evolution, it becomes imperative for historical objects to transcend ethnic and community boundaries and garner universal appreciation as acknowledged by UNESCO.

To fully engage with historical objects, viewers are encouraged to bridge the temporal gap between the past and the present by actively exploring the embedded symbolism within these artifacts. By immersing themselves in the narratives and stories conveyed by historical objects, individuals can create new experiences and foster meaningful communication that extends beyond a mere recognition of historical traces and knowledge. In addition, it is crucial to foster the participation of residents and cultivate their voluntary interest in the management of historical objects. This can be achieved through

enhancing residents' understanding of maintenance practices, ultimately heightening their awareness and appreciation of these invaluable historical treasures. The key to successfully fostering participation and interest lies in the continuous dialogue and collaboration between the community, government and other stakeholders involved in the preservation and management of historical objects. Several strategies can be included to offer opportunities for residents to volunteer in conservation efforts, to involve them in decision-making processes related to the management and preservation of historical objects and to involve social media campaigns, local news stores, newsletters and public signage. By actively engaging residents and making them feel a part of the process, the sustainability and success of conservation efforts can be ensured.

## **5. Conclusion**

Historical objects are essential to a city's identity and cultural heritage and offer economic, educational and societal benefits. However, their preservation extends beyond physical maintenance to include understanding their symbolic and cultural importance. Community-led initiatives have emerged as vital forces in historical object conservation and development but the balancing act between tourism, economic growth and the preservation of cultural and historical value necessitates robust and inclusive strategies.

This paper examines the current state of historical object development and conservation and meticulously analyze their significance, inherent limitations and the trajectory toward achieving sustainable landscapes. The study underscores the importance of not merely acknowledging and valuing the past through historical objects, but also fostering innovative connections between historical and contemporary contexts. By actively cultivating novel experiences and facilitating enhanced communication across these temporal dimensions, fresh avenues for exploration and comprehension can be forged.

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