

IDENTIFYING CORE VALUES WITH A COMMUNITY PARTICIPATORY APPROACH FOR CONSERVATION PLANNING OF URBAN HISTORIC DISTRICTS IN VIETNAM: THE CASE STUDY OF HANOI ANCIENT QUARTER

TA QUYNH HOA*

National University of Civil Engineering, 55 Giai Phong Road, Hai Ba Trung District, Hanoi, Vietnam.

*Corresponding author: hoatq@nuce.edu.vn

Submitted final draft: 17 Aug 2020

Accepted: 10 September 2020

<http://doi.org/10.46754/jssm.2021.07.014>

Abstract: In order to ensure an effective preservation of urban heritage in historical areas, it is critical that a science-based conservation methodology be applied, taking into account various aspects of the development process. The first key task is to identify the core values of the area, tangible and intangible values alike, while the development work will seek solutions to restore lost values, preserve other existing values and strengthen core values in a new context. The Ancient Quarter in the heart of Hanoi city has been selected as the case study for identifying core, both tangible and intangible, values of historical urban areas with community participation approach. Such findings reveal a relatively sophisticated and inter-linked combination of various elements including urban morphological structure, historical street network and architecture, commercial space, indigenous knowledge in traditional business and social management, folk festivals and traditional gastronomy. The application of the community participatory approach in identifying and analyzing core values of historical districts made the results more comprehensive and meaningful. The community plays an instrumental role in proposing a value-based conservation process while consolidating the visions and major strategies for developing historical districts in a sustainable manner.

Keywords: Urban heritage preservation, historical district, core values, Hanoi Ancient Quarter, community participation.

Introduction

In the field of heritage conservation, the conservation of historical urban areas is often considered to be one of the most complex tasks. It requires a good understanding of heritage values as well as integrated framework of scientific theories and practical solutions for sustainable conservation planning. In order to gain an explicit perception and full assessment of values of a heritage site or urban heritage areas, the conservation institutes have evolved over a long and multi-step process. Since the Athens Charter of 1931 only focused on the field of conservation, restoration and excavation of historical monuments, the Venice Charter 33 years later recognized that the values of urban space include both tangible and intangible values. (The Venice Charter, 1964, c.1). According to this Charter, in addition to preserving monuments, valuable single heritage,

the charter also mentions clusters of monuments, heritage, and pays more attention to the works and spaces of cultural significance over time.

As mentioned in the Washington Charter, the conservation story was upgraded to a higher level to “protect historic urban areas, large and small, including cities, towns and historic centres or quarters”, along with “promoting harmony” of both private and community life in these areas and to encourage the preservation of those cultural properties, however modest in scale, that constitute the memory of mankind” (The Washington Charter, 1987).

The Venice and Washington Charter have referred to a type of urban heritage that is “a space of cultural significances”, and “a cultural asset that creates a sense of place”. This gives us a better understanding of some spaces that are not yet officially known as heritage and protected by the law but can still be considered

and preserved if it has cultural significance over time.

According to Marta (2003), value has always been the reason underlying heritage conservation. It is self-evident that no society makes an effort to conserve what it does not value (Marta, 2013). In order to ensure heritage areas be protected by regulations or law, they must be proved in their values, both tangible and intangible, to decide suitable responses to these heritage areas. These are necessary steps to conserve, restore as well as to develop and adapt those urban heritage districts to contemporary life.

At the conference “Linking Universal and Local Values” organized by the Netherlands National Commission, UNESCO promoted the concept of protecting heritages not solely dependent on intervention from top-down government or professional actions of experts in the field of heritage, but also required the engagement of the local community. Special emphasis was placed on the integration of traditional knowledge and local values in management plans.

Vietnam is recognized as a rich country in terms of cultural resources with more than 40,000 relics/monuments, converging the diversity of culture, history and fine traditions of all 54 ethnic groups. Cultural heritages in Vietnam are classified as follows: World Heritage Sites; Asian - Pacific Heritages; Special national heritages; National heritages; Provincial heritages and Local heritages. Vietnam has several historical districts including Hoi An Old Quarter, Hanoi Ancient Quarter, the French Colonial Quarter, etc. The challenges in conserving the historic districts in Vietnam are inherited in the fact that urban heritages in historic areas are all living entities.

The concept of cultural heritage values is a living idea (Szmelter, 2013). Under the old, strict spatial covers of historic towns there are vivid and dynamic urban social and economical lives. This reality often triggers internal contradictions in historical urban areas. Economic development sometimes causes negative impacts on social,

historical, architectural and environmental values.

Therefore, in order to effectively preserve the urban heritages, it is necessary to develop a scientific conservation methodology with a holistic view on many aspects of development processes, in which the causes of conflicts must be defined as the basis for specific responsive policies. The first and fundamental task of preserving urban heritages in ancient urban areas is to identify its core values including tangible and intangible ones. It raises questions of “what are the core values of historical districts? How to identify the core values of a historical urban area that can be preserved, promoted and managed?”

This paper selected the Hanoi Ancient Quarter (HAQ) as an object of the research on core values of historical urban areas. A community participatory approach to identify core values of the historical district has been piloted and investigated.

This research concluded that tangible and intangible core values of HAQ present truly important inputs in ensuring preservation and spatial planning proposals for this historical district are relevant to achieve desirable outcomes of both preservation and development. The applicability of this method to Vietnamese context has been examined for effective urban heritage preservation towards sustainable development in cities of Vietnam.

Literature review

Perceptions of Urban Heritage and Urban Historical District

The actual term of “urban heritage” was first mentioned in the early 20th century by the Italian architect Gustavo Giovannoni, in the publication “*Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova*” of 1913 (Zucconi, 2014). Giovannoni argued and promoted the protection of heritage in urban areas, without excluding the importance of urban development as he defined a historic city as a monument and a living fabric at the same time. He introduced the concept of “mutually supportive, harmonious coexistence:

avoiding conflict and allowing the distinctive characteristics of both to be respected and given the freedom to evolve creatively”.

With Giovannoni’s vision, the notion of conservation has been extended to the entire urban sector. Gustavo Giovannoni and Patrick Geddes also emphasized that every building within a city can convey meaning and value, also, that the urban ensemble, the structure as such, and the human activities within such structure, can be of cultural significance. (Veldpaus et.al 2013). They integrated “heritage management” into the general conception of territorial planning and urban development and both see people as integral part of the city (Veldpaus, 2015).

In Vietnam, currently there is no clear definition of urban heritage. According to Hoang Dao Kinh - a leading Vietnamese expert in conservation, urban heritage is a material-architectural-social complex formed during the evolution of each city. He stated that “urban heritage is shaped in architectural, landscape aspects, with historical - cultural - architectural values intertwining with material - technical specifics, which need to be maintained as fulcrums - starting points and genetic resources in the development of the city “ (Kinh, 2012).

Vietnam’s law on Cultural Heritage No. 28/2001/QH10 and its amendment in 2009 have definitions of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, but have not yet defined the notion of urban heritage. According to the Law, tangible cultural heritages are “material products of historical, cultural or scientific value, including historical-cultural relics, famous landscapes and beauty spots, vestiges, antiques and national precious objects” (NASRV 2001).

Thus, based on the amended Law on Cultural Heritage (2009) and practical requirements for conservation, historical urban areas should be assessed from the combined angles of both intangible and tangible cultural values, not solely the latter. A part of urban architectural heritages, historic urban areas also contain cultural values, typical spirit of the community and the sense of

the places (NASRV 2009).

Notions of Community and Community Participation in Urban Heritage

As community engagement becomes increasingly relevant in the preservation, management and promotion of heritage in the whole world, it is important to develop a common understanding of what community involvement in urban heritage is refers to.

According to Ripp (2017), the notion of community is often closely connected with common interest “A community is a group of people that have something in common”. Such communities can be distinguished in three groups:

- 1) geographical communities: people that live in the same area;
- 2) cultural communities: people that have similar cultural, religious, ethnic backgrounds and characteristics;
- 3) social communities: people that have similar interests, believes, attitudes and objectives (Ripp, Goettler and Scheffler, 2017).

The community participation is defined by the World Bank as “an active process by which beneficiary/client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view on enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish” (World Bank, 1996).

Community participation as such can be interpreted as a process through which communities take part in the making and the implementation of a decision. In terms of urban heritage management, community participation is about “involving, including and the common acting of people, institutions and organizations, that are interested in the urban heritage, affected by the urban heritage or live within or close to the urban heritage, in the preservation, management and promotion of the urban heritage and its beneficial use for the local communities” (Ripp et al., 2017).

In Vietnam, community is defined in the Vietnamese language dictionary as “all the people living in a certain territory that are well connected and organized into a society and share similar characteristics”. The community participation in Vietnam has been determined in the 2013 Constitution (Point 2, Article 28) as follows: “people have the right to participate in the state management and social planning, discussions and recommendations with regard to development issues to the local authority, as well as the provincial/central government” (The constitution of Vietnam, NASRV 2013).

The community participation in Vietnam has been reflected so far in the collection of the public opinions and relevant organizations only for establishing spatial planning solutions. Central to the idea of community participation is nevertheless found in whether the community can really contribute to decision making and decision implementation process. This aspect has been displayed very differently depending on the level and scope of participation (Ta, 2009).

Nhu D.T, in her article, states that in the Vietnamese context of urban heritage management, communities should be categorized according to their level of participation and their impacts on heritage conservation such as: direct and active players, resonant groups and passive communities (Nhu, 2018). However, there are no clear criteria to classify the communities from the first stage of urban conservation process. Therefore, in most of urban heritage preservation research projects in Vietnam, the communities have been classified based on spatial and social aspects. The level of community involvement is assessed following Arnstein’s ladder of community participation (Arnstein, 2015).

Materials and methods

Theoretical frame on core values of Hanoi Ancient Quarter (HAQ)

Covering 83 hectares and located at the heart of the city, HAQ is one of the oldest areas in Hanoi

(Figure 1, 2). HAQ embeds the remnants of historical periods that can be seen from physical architectural heritages such as temples, pagodas, shrines, ancient houses, and street typology. HAQ has been recognized as the National Historical Heritage 2004. Functionally, HAQ is a multi-functional zone comprising both residential and commercial area. It is ranked among the most thriving commercial and business areas of the city where various types of both wholesale and retail trading of commodities and services can be found. HAQ offers a great deal of economic opportunities for people in the area. In terms of population density, it is also the most densely populated zone in Hanoi with about 823 people per ha (Thanhnie News, 2015).

From a cultural perspective, HAQ is considered the core of Hanoi with its location on the very main cultural axis of Thang Long connecting Imperial citadel, Ancient Quarter and Co Loa citadel. It has always played an important role in shaping cultural core values of Hanoi. In HAQ, under the tangible architectural cover are the abundant and unique characters of lifestyle, customs and commercial atmosphere of urban traditional values.

However, HAQ is confronted with critical fading of its values in almost every aspect. This problem has emerged as a consequence of all kinds of contradictions, namely, overloaded physical environment vs. vital social environment, poor infrastructure vs. thriving economic activities, inadequate living environment vs. wealthy material conditions of local residents, overcrowded population vs. limited spaces, and tourism development vs. heritage and identity preservation of the district. Thus, sustainable development of the area has become an ever more mounting challenge to its key stakeholders including Hanoi city government, local residents and professional organizations.

If we consider HAQ from the perspectives of economic, social and physical values, presentable in the form of a circle for one type of value, it is easily notable that the commonly shared part of the circles represents those values



Figure 1: Location of Hanoi Ancient Quarter in the city center (Background map: Google Earth, year 2019)



Figure 2: The boundary and grid pattern of the street network in Hanoi Ancient Quarter (Background map: provided by Hanoi Architecture and Planning Authority)

which have their very own standings while making no clashes with other values. Such values, as they exist, can be defined as the core values. For example, religious constructions can be classified in the “core values” group because they represent the cultural, historical and architectural characteristics of HAQ, whilst leaving no negative impacts on the economic and social activities of the area. Moreover, it delivers positive social and economic supports through serving as tourist attraction sites and providing public spaces for social integration in HAQ. Figure 3 demonstrates the shift in the structure of core values from the past within a sustainable environment to the present with more sustainability challenges. This movement, created under the impacts of rapid urbanisation, increasing population, lifestyle change, new economic activities as well as the downgrading of tangible heritages, the core values of HAQ are facing the potential risks of being reduced, faded or even disappeared.

With an effort to promote sustainable development and conservation for HAQ, an

integrated study with the collaboration of sociologists, economic experts and urban planners was established within the project “Sustainable development for Hanoi Ancient Quarter” — the largest and the most notable pilot project ever undertaken as part of the Programme “Comprehensive urban development of Hanoi Capital City to 2020 — HAIDEP” sponsored by The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The initial step was to redefine the core values of HAQ which are regarded as important inputs for coming up with relevant preservation and spatial planning proposals of this historical district to achieve the two-in-one goals of preservation and development.

The core values include different aspects of tangible and intangible significance which require different tools to identify. For HAQ, intangible values can be defined as core values only when they reflect the spirit and characteristics that embody the “soul” of the Quarter, and these values need to be preserved or revitalized if they are in danger of gradually losing.

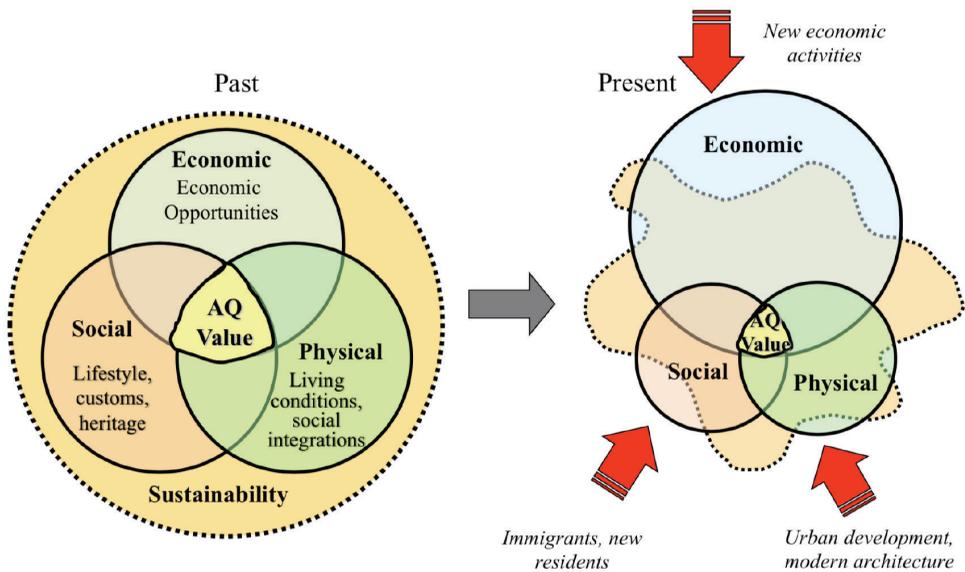


Figure 3: Diagram of core values of HAQ in the past and at present (Source: HAIDEP, 2007)

Methodology

Previously, in order to evaluate tangible or intangible elements as core values, the common method often employed was knowingly the one-way assessment approach, which primarily relied on archived documentation sources such as old books, newspapers and bibliographies with the subjective judgment of concerned scientists.

Today, the evaluation method has changed significantly. It is a combination of several methods all of which are based on community opinions, bearing in mind that the community is the very key stakeholder of the concerning cultural heritage. The purpose of this method is to take consideration of people's ideas, compare them with documentation, scientists' opinions and real-time situations in order to answer questions that have not been clarified such as: According to local residents, which values are the core values (including intangible and tangible values)? Who are these values preserved for? Who should be responsible for preserving these core values? Who will benefit from preservation work?

In this study, the research team set up and piloted a participatory approach to identify the

core values of HAQ and proposed vision and strategies for preserving and promoting these values.

Besides the historical method of desk studies based on the main sources such as scientific monographs published in the form of books or articles in specialized magazines, literary works written on the subject of Hanoi, newspapers, reports of projects or scientific research work, legal documents, the methods used in this study include *observational survey*, *status-quo mapping*, *questionnaire survey with community participation*. In undertaking this methodology, the experts conducted observational surveys, took photos of existing conditions of the areas. In addition, experts worked with local residents to identify the existing state of cultural heritages. The research team conducted a questionnaire survey of 253 households in Hang Buom ward on basic information of households, the opinions of householders on existing core values of HAQ and their expectation from development solutions for their living spaces. By using tools such as mapping with community participation, organizing community meetings and focus-group discussions, the research group has gathered community's opinions on existing and core values of HAQ.

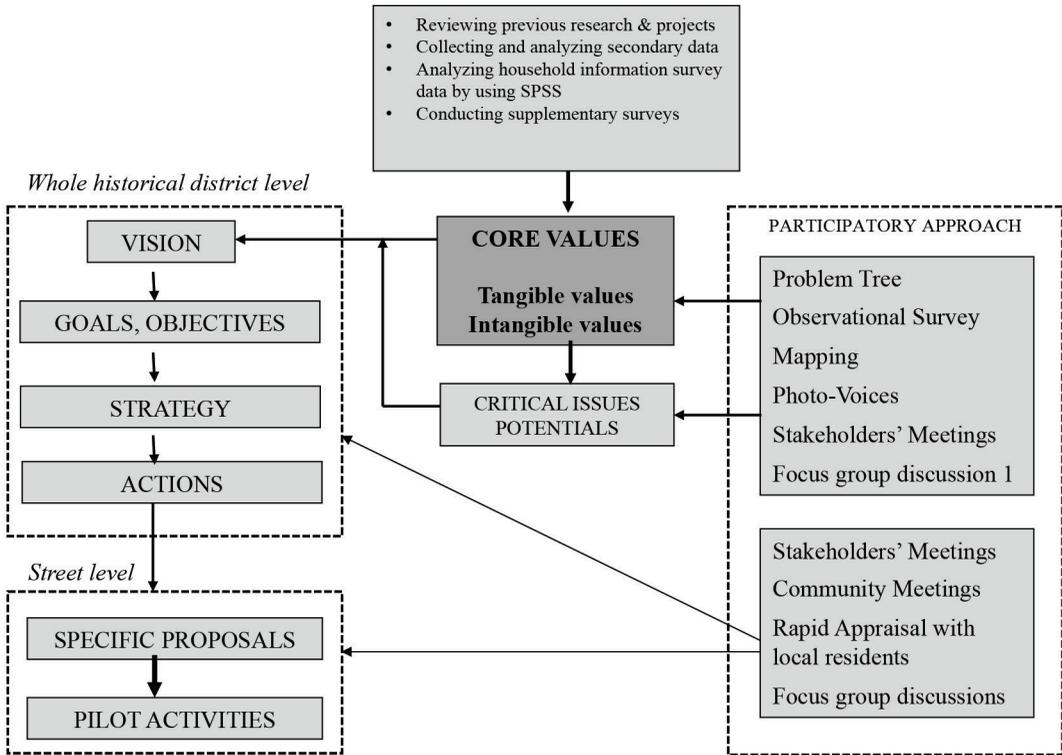


Figure 4: The process of core value identification with participatory method integrated in the conservation planning process for Hanoi Ancient Quarter in Vietnam

Analyzing and evaluating method with community participation: In this method, local residents were the people who evaluated and proposed the values that they defined as core values. The tool deployed in this method is called photo-voice, or community raising their voices through photo images. As such, 50 local residents were provided cameras to take photos of cultural heritage that they considered representing values of the districts. Their comments and feelings were recorded and used as evaluation results to define the core values of HAQ.

Furthermore, the anthropological filming (also known as direct cinematography) has proven an effective tool with community

involvement in the stage of film making and editing. Through these anthropological films, tangible and intangible cultural values of HAQ were shown clearly and lively with every moment of everyday life. Other quick analyzing tools such as community history timeline, street landscape assessment, values scoring and ranking based on the criteria established by the people are also applied to ensure the accuracy and objectivity of the evaluation.

Results

With the application of the above methods, the core values of HAQ have been clearly defined in Table 1.

Table 1: Tangible and Intangible core values of Hanoi Ancient Quarter determined by local community through 253-household questionnaire survey

Tangible core values	Percentage of local residents' agreement	Intangible core values	Percentage of local residents' agreement
• Fine-grained, fine-textured morphological fabric: similar land plots, similar buildings in volume; human scale; townscape	89%	• Cultural commercial atmosphere: animated, energetic, specialized business	82%
• Historical street network	95%	• Indigenous knowledge in handicrafts and traditional businesses (crafting, marketing skills, credit in business partnership)	94%
• Individual architecture: • Historical “tube houses” as spatial planning model and way of life	96%	• Knowledge of social management and behavior based on a particular social network	89%
• Religious and cultural buildings (temples, pagodas, shrines, churches, theaters, communal houses, etc.)	92%	• Folk belief festivals and traditional games	91%
		• Cultural traditional gastronomy	85%

(Source: Author)

Tangible core values of Hanoi Ancient Quarter

1) Fine grain, fine texture of urban morphological fabric

The urban morphology of HAQ is considered a core value of the area. The typical urban space form found in HAQ are often small in size and homogeneous in characteristics. Plots of land are comparable in size being roughly between three and five metres wide and 20 metres long. The old houses have similar structures. There is a harmony in terms of building architecture and streetscape.

2) Historical street network

HAQ has a unique, stable street network, naturally developed on the basis of old village lanes or river banks, river dykes: For instance, Hang Gai and Hang Bong streets in the old time were once part of the dykes on the west side of Ta Vong lake (Hoan Kiem lake); Hang Ngang, Hang Dao, Luong Ngoc Quyen streets originally were Dong Thai lake bank; Ngo Gach

street could be a segment of the old To Lich river dyke.

HAQ street network is unique and it carries a grid structure: The streets in HAQ are often narrow, intertwined or intersecting each other to create uneven spaces. Originally, it was the alleys radiated from the main dykes or main roads in the village. The link between streets and blocks reflect the connection between villages, displaying a super-village relationship of the rural areas of Vietnam. Observing the maps of Hanoi over time, it is easy to realize that the transition from a town into an urban area (around the end of the 19th century) until present has not changed the morphology of the streets and blocks in HAQ apart from the addition of new roads or streets (see Figure 5).

3) Individual architecture — “Tube house” style

Most of houses in HAQ often have a very long depth (ranging between 15 and 60 metres, with some houses even crossing two streets), narrow frontage, and a corridor along one side of the

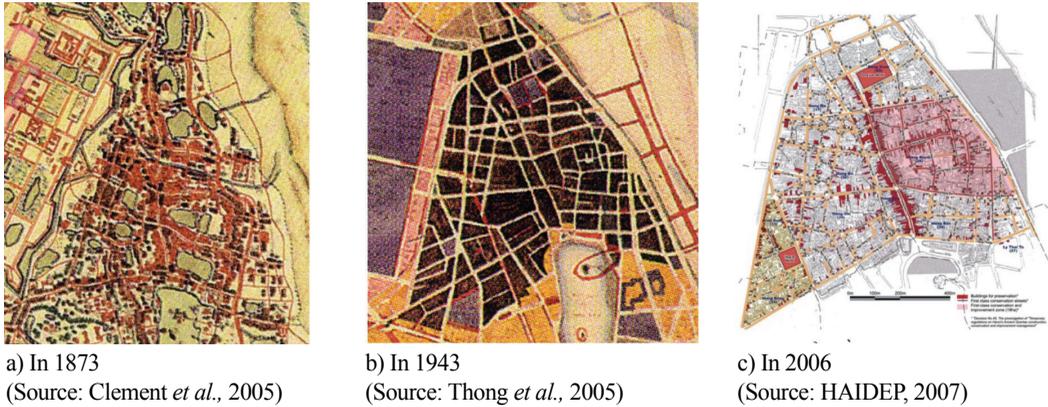


Figure 5: Urban morphology and street network in HAQ from the 19th century to present

house. The height of these houses is usually from one to two floors, with tiled roofs and two or three inner-courtyards.

The old houses often have attic floors and mezzanines. This type of architecture is unique and only available in HAQ, as can be seen from Figure 6 and Figure 7.

The basic values of old traditional tube houses are:

- 1) to demonstrate the vernacular architecture, the construction skills and the aesthetic concept (wooden frame structure, construction techniques, spatial layers of living space, traditional arts);

- 2) to depict the family-centered tradition of living (vibrant activities in the front, quiet courtyards and rear part, common places to preserve traditional family values);
- 3) to demonstrate rural culture and lifestyle in the center of the city: The inner courtyard is essentially a house garden that has been kept as an entity of memory, a link between urban people with rural roots and the nature,
- 4) to feature multifunctional structure (houses, shops, production workshops, warehouses);
- 5) to display the cultural integration of the East and the West.

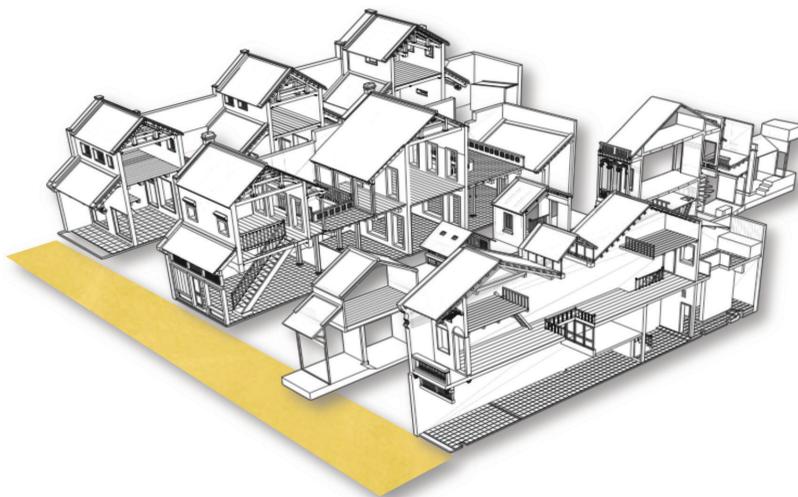


Figure 6: “Tube house” style in HAQ—An example of tube houses in Hang Buom street (Source : Author)

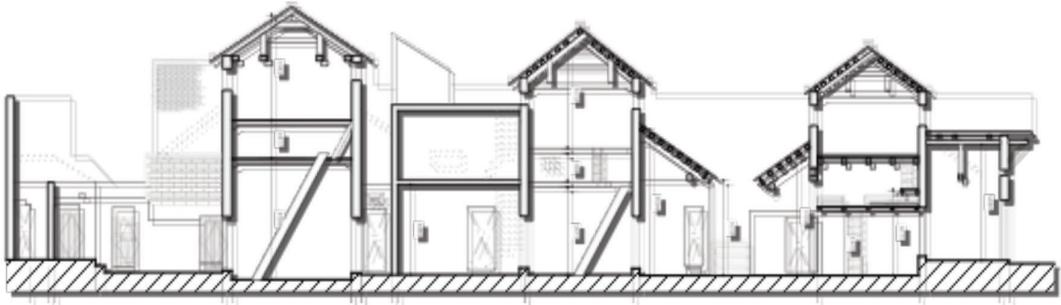


Figure 7: Spatial structure of a typical “tube” house in HAQ (Source: Author)

4) *Architecture of religious works*

Religious works in HAQ include various types: communal houses, Buddhist pagodas, temples, shrines, family clans, Christian churches, Islamic mosques, Chinese assembly halls and so on with many different architectural styles. Most buildings are over 100 years old (which have been recognized as heritages, according to the provisions of the Cultural Heritage Law issued in 2001) and have been defined as historical and architectural values. Bach Ma Temple — a national historical monument, is one of the oldest religious buildings built more than 1,000 years ago. Although it has been restored many times, the temple still retains its architectural beauty and delicate carvings with architectural style from the Nguyen Dynasty.

Chinese Assembly Hall, Islamic mosque, etc... are also examples of architectural value. They are proofs of each different historical

period associated with the history of Hanoi capital city (See Figure 8 and Figure 9).

Intangible core values of Hanoi Ancient Quarter

1) *Cultural commercial atmosphere* (the prominence of commercial activities, the excitement, the specificity in trading): Crowded, diverse and specialized are the unique features of HAQ. The whole area has been involved in manufacturing and trading many different products with each product being concentrated only in a certain street. Buyers can find what they need in the streets named after the product. The whole HAQ can be considered a big market while Dong Xuan market or Hang Be, Hang Da markets are just highlighted spots of this business district.

“The whole Ke Cho (the old name of HAQ) is like a huge market including many large and



Figure 8: Quan De Temple — one of the four sacred temples of HAQ (Source: Author, 2007)



Figure 9: Cau Dong Pagoda built in the 17th century in HAQ (Source: Author, 2007)



Figure 10: Dong Xuan market in the early 20th century, a special cultural commercial space in HAQ (Source: vanhienvietnam, 2014)



Figure 11: Hang Be Street market used to be one the most crowded markets in HAQ (Source: Author, 2019)

small markets spreaded throughout the city while the highest population density was seen at the commercial area in the east of HAQ” (Thuy, 2015)

2) *Indigenous knowledge in traditional craft production and trading*

Knowledge in production and market development are major factors to create intangible values of HAQ. Most of the business activities in HAQ originate from craft villages. The knowledge in craft production is not only

found in the selection of specific products for manufacturing but also in the skill of accessing raw materials, production management skill and market development.

The source of supplying raw materials is guaranteed thanks to a large network of suppliers from many places. The craft production is often a family business, with support from people in the same clan or hometown. The market is developed mainly based on “trust” and information is circulated among local people through the way of “rumor”.



a) Water puppet making in Hang Trong street (Source: Author, 2007)



b) Stamp making in Ta Hien street (Source: HAIDEP, 2007)

Figure 12: Traditional crafts in HAQ with trade secrets and unique products

Occupational skill is a vital condition of the brand. Handicraft products differ in terms of quality and design. The quality of craft products depends greatly on the professional skill of the makers. The acquisition of skills is obtained through the transmission of the previous generations to the later ones and such skills are also improved over time. The transfer of occupational skills often takes place within the family only.

Great integration with new, creative elements: HAQ is the place to concentrate the essence of the production and business activities of the North. This is also the focal point of the trading, with multiple contacts and changes taking place regularly. Thus, old elements that do not suit the market tastes are often quickly removed, while new ones are soon absorbed and developed.

3) Folk belief festivals and traditional games

Festivals in HAQ only take place in the spring, from January to March of the lunar calendar every year. Most of the festivals here reflect the beliefs of the community and the tradition to respect the ancestors.

In HAQ, there are many communal houses and temples dedicated to the gods (according to legends, they have done many great deeds to the city and thus become object of worship for local community), national heroes, cultural celebrities and professional ancestors. The folk belief festivals reflect historical factors of a urban area with rural-agricultural root: Communal house



Figure 13: One Ca Trù performance in HAQ (Source: HAIDEP, 2007)

system is a place of worship of tutelary gods protecting agricultural activities and rural villages. Ceremonies for religious beliefs (procession of water, praying for rain etc.) and folk games (swinging, catching eels in jars etc.) are all manifestations of traditional beliefs of farmers.

Oral literature in HAQ is abundant with various genres such as proverbs, idioms, folk songs and folk dances. This part of culture is not only a reflection of the landscape and vibrant lifestyle but also clearly shows the personality and living philosophy of Hanoians. The oral literature as one of the intangible core values of HAQ is expressed under a range of diverse forms as:-

“Ca trù”— tally card songs: This is a Vietnamese genre of musical storytelling performed by a featuring female vocalist, originating from Northern Vietnam. One of the outstanding features of this art form is always associated with literature. The lyrics to Ca trù songs are usually set by poets. Therefore, although it is a form of folk performance, the lyrics of Ca trù are often quite erudite.

“Hát Vãn” is another traditional folk art, a type of singing with its home from Northern Vietnam. This is a form of folk theater associated with the worship of Mothers — the original native belief very popular in the country. This type of performance combines trance singing and dancing. Its music and poetry are combined with a variety of instruments, rhythms, pauses, and tempos.



Figure 14: Hát Vãn — a traditional Vãn singing and dancing in the annual festival ceremony of Bach Ma temple (Source: Author, 2007)



Figure 15: Image of a festival with lion dance in HAQ early 20th century (Source: HAIDEP, 2007)



Figure 16: Image of Ta Hien Street in HAQ in the mid-autumn Festival in 2019 (Source: Author)

Múa Sư tử or Lion Dance is a kind of a folk game that is both artistic and sporty, associated with the rain-praying beliefs of agricultural-based residents. The lion dance is often performed in festivals at the communal houses or temples, or during the Mid-Autumn Festival.

4) *Traditional gastronomy*

Hanoi is both the political capital and culinary center of Vietnam, with HAQ is the heart of city in terms of gastronomy. In the past, HAQ was a place that provided commodities and services for people inside and outside Thang Long royal citadel. Therefore, many special and unique dishes have been brought to and developed in HAQ. Iconic Vietnamese dishes like “Phở” (beef noodle), “Chả Cá” (grilled fish with dill and turmeric) and “Bún Chả” (barbecued pork with rice vermicelli) all originated from Northern Vietnam and have been preserved and

developed as cultural heritage by the Ancient Quarter residents. In the historical district, there are some gastronomic artists that have unique experiences and skills in cooking traditional and unique foods for special ceremonial or festive events. Some streets in HAQ are famous for the unique foods that are served on those streets such as Chả Cá street with Chả Cá Lã Vọng restaurant, Hàng Giấy street is famous for a beef noodle restaurant, Hàng Buom street is noted for crunchy skin roasted pork meat, etc. Moreover, under the French domination, some foods were created with mixture of French style and Vietnamese ingredients and became famous dishes in HAQ as: Vietnamese sandwiches, Vietnamese egg coffees, Vietnamese beef steak, etc. All of these special culinary arts are identified by the local residents as unique values of HAQ.



Figure 17: Traditional cultural gastronomy is a unique value of HAQ (Source: vietnamvanhien, 2015)



Figure 18: HAQ is the hometown of many culinary artists in Vietnam who can be recognized as the keepers of the soul of traditional dishes (Source: Nhan, 2018)

Discussions

Changes in the perception of cultural heritage conservation and the approach of identifying core values of historical districts

Marta .D.T (2013) stated that the notion of heritage and the practice of conservation had changed significantly since the 1964 Charter of Venice. The scope of cultural heritage expanded, both in terms of type and scale. The Venice Charter recognized the value of urban space with a meaning in both tangible and intangible aspects. Today conservation is well understood to “encompass any actions designed to maintain the cultural significance of a heritage object or place, and is a process that starts at the moment a place is attributed cultural values and singled out for protection”(Marta, 2013). According to Marta, the protection of values and significance was seen to be a unifying principle of practice. These values, which were attributed, not intrinsic; mutable, not static; multiple and often incommensurable or in conflict, can challenge established conservation principles. The nature of cultural values had serious implications for the impact of conservation on the values of a place, the universality of conservation principles, and the protection of the heritage for future generations (Marta, 2013).

In Vietnam, the awareness of cultural heritage values in historic urban areas that should be preserved has also changed remarkably, especially for HAQ. Previously, HAQ was only recognized as a specific area included within Hanoi. Consequently, there was no separate conservation regulation for the area. The conservation was only mentioned in the Hanoi capital city construction management regulations under the Decision No.106/QD-DT dated June 21, 1992 (Nghiem, 2015). In 1995, the project “Planning for protection, embellishment and development of HAQ” was approved by the Ministry of Construction and in 1999, the “temporary regulation on management, construction, conservation and restoration of HAQ” was issued by Hanoi City People’s Committee at Decision No. 45/1999/QD-UB (Tuan, 2015).

The decision then only focuses on preserving the physical values of the area (include zoning for tangible heritage conservation, listing 765 valuable ancient houses to be preserved, naming the historical and cultural legacies that are ranked as National heritages and regulating the height and volume of buildings in HAQ when renovating and refurbishing). However, this decision has not either mentioned yet the intangible values of that exist in HAQ or the protection of these intangible values. These decisions are all decided by the city government and experts (who live outside historic areas) instead of the local residents in the area themselves.

The change in the conservation approach for urban historical district with inclusion of community participation has been piloted in the Project called “Sustainable Development Planning for HAQ” — a component under The Comprehensive Urban Development Programme in Hanoi Capital City of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (HAIDEP), which was conducted from 2005 to 2009. With participatory methodology, the project researchers tested the community engagement in different steps of HAQ conservation planning process for sustainable development, especially in determining the core values of HAQ. The core values that people defined include both physical values as mentioned in Regulations No.45/1999 and the intangible values associated with cultural and spiritual life of the local inhabitants. At the same time, people have pointed out values that once existed but are now fading or disappearing such as kinship relations in a trade village, a neighborhood, or connection with the original village. There are also new values developed in accordance with the tendency of the time.

The role of community participation in conservation and improvement the core values of urban historical districts

Through the case study of HAQ, it can show the strong relationships among members of the community in the urban historical districts of Vietnam. Community members had close

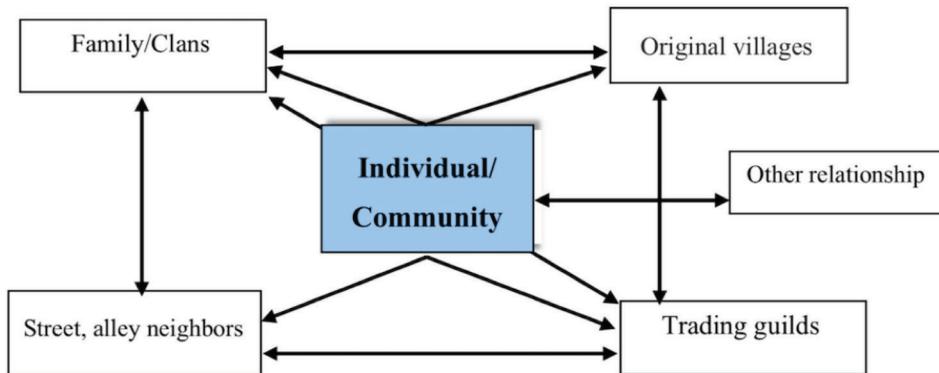


Figure 19: Community based on social relationship among individuals

connections based on a network of relations such as ones among members in a family and clans, among neighbors, among members of specific trading guilds, or the relationship with the original villages, and other relationships (Figure 19).

Local community plays a very important role in all aspects of the district's development. Local residents establish the cultural characteristics of each area such as traditional practices, beliefs, lifestyles, etc. The community participates in all development activities of the area where they live, with regard to build public works such as communal houses, temples, shrines, building village roads, alleys, or to preserve and develop traditional crafts, to preserve and protect the village from the invading enemy. Currently, under the impact of rapid industrialization and urbanisation, the drastic change in population structure and lifestyle as well as the change on conception of values, the social networks in the urban historical district are seriously jeopardized. The social ruptures and gaps have made the relationship, the strength and role of community in the development of the society compared with previously.

Before our research project, the local community did not have any chance to participate in the conservation process. All decisions and policies were made and implemented following the top-down manner. Local authority did not have a clear awareness of the role of the community in cultural heritage preservation.

The current capacity of communities has not yet fully recognized by the local government leading to the consequential failure to mobilize community's resources for the purpose of conservation and planning towards sustainable development.

During the pilot project, local residents had more chances to be involved in the process. The core values of the area were identified by local residents. Since the community is inherently aware of the core values of their area, the community's members expressed their commitments to preserve those values as "senses of place" and proposed suitable solutions to develop the district towards sustainable goals without affecting negatively the cultural heritage of the locality.

Through the pilot case study, it is necessary to stress that the level of community participation in cultural heritage conservation process is still relatively low. Referring to the Arnstein's ladder of community participation in planning process (1969) with eight levels (1. Manipulation; 2. Therapy; 3. Informing; 4. Consultation; 5. Placation; 6. Partnership; 7. Delegated power; 8. Citizen control) and the Kingston's ladder (Colin, 2016) of six levels (1. Public right to know; 2. Informing the public; 3. Public right to object; 4. Participation in defining interests, actors and to determine agenda; 5. Public participation in assessing consequences and recommending solutions; and 6. Public participation in final decision), it is revealed that

the community participation in urban heritage preservation in HAQ is only reaching level 4 or level 5 on Arnstein's ladder and equivalent to level 3 on Kingston's scale.

The community has not actively involved in urban heritage preservation processes and made no (or almost no) decisions for the (re) development of their neighborhood. Thus, for a more effective participation of the community, it is necessary to study the processes to find out some tools to mobilize the community engagement effectively from the first step: enhancing information exchange, not only one-way but also establishing a bilateral informing mechanism (exchange, discuss, understand the requirements of the people, and cooperate with the people) and gradually increasing the level of participation. These enabling mechanism will open opportunities for communal members to engage more proactively in future processes, from discovering the issues as well as finding solutions and making their own decisions.

Challenges when applying community participation method in preserving and improving core values of urban historical districts in Vietnam

Lack of legal documents guiding the implementation of community participation in conservation process: At present, there are no legal documents defining the responsibilities of different stakeholders including local authority, experts, enterprises and the local community in the conservation process for urban historical districts in Vietnam. Moreover, there are no guidances for the coordination mechanism among them to mobilize community participation into conservation and development process at the first steps. Public consultation is only undertaken when the conservation planning project is almost completed, and there is little chance for community opinions to have a great impact on the planning solution. The conservation regulations mostly focus on tangible heritage preservation while there are no documents or guidances for preserving intangible heritage values.

Lack of knowledge, awareness and skills from all stakeholders

Conservation experts: through the case study of HAQ, it is necessary to acknowledge that most of conservation experts for historical urban areas in Vietnam often impose their subjective opinions on the identification of core values in their view that should be preserved. On many projects of preserving historical areas, experts only base their opinions on secondary documents, data or observational surveys of physical heritages sites without asking for community's opinions and consultations. Many experts do not possess adequate skills to mobilize community participation in assessing the existing conditions of urban heritages as well as identifying the core values that have been existing or lost. Then, it will be difficult to obtain community consensus as well as community commitment to preserve tangible and intangible values of a living historic site rather than preserving a static museum.

Management agencies, local authorities: Often accustomed to do work in "top-down" manner, local authorities are not aware of the role of the community as well as the importance of obtaining their support or consensus for the conservation of cultural heritage in the historical districts. Local managers have not been well trained or equipped with skills to work with the community, to mobilize the participation of the community in all steps of the conservation process from the investigation of the existing conditions, collecting community's comments and defining suitable solutions with community involvement (especially in terms of contributing human, material and financial resources to preserve the tangible and intangible heritages of the area). The District People's Committee is currently the direct and comprehensive agency responsible for construction management, conservation, inspection and supervision of a conservation planning. Management officers of the District People's Committee should be trained and learn more about the methods of community participation to have better awareness and more effective skills in working with the community.

All decisions related to historical districts should be made with community involvement.

Business enterprises and investors: Today, in the urban historical districts of Vietnam, there are severe conflicts between conservation and development. The economic transformation towards the market economy has, on one hand, fueled many new tourism-based business activities. On the other hand, tourism has significantly adverse impacts on the conservation of urban historical districts. Enterprises and investors in historic urban areas tend to focus only on economic interests without minding the preservation of the area values. Such business owners have little, if not zero, awareness about HAQ values and the need to preserve them for the district, even though they can see that these values create the “spirit of the place” and the unique characteristics to bring economic opportunities for their own. They have not seen their roles and responsibilities in supporting the community (time, effort, financial resources ...) in preserving the tangible and intangible cultural heritages of the districts.

Community: Local people usually have limited awareness, knowledge and skills to take an active part in urban planning and conservation processes. In addition, they are often not provided with sufficient information about conservation planning works as well as the impacts of the conservation planning projects on their living environment. Likewise, they are not equipped with proper understanding of the rights and responsibility of the community in connection with the preservation project. Community members are not explained clearly what they should benefit from the project and what may be affected when the project is approved and implemented. At the same time, as far as the current process is undertaken, the community opinions are collected through a series of consultations and a number of such ideas can be accepted in the urban planning process. Nevertheless, there is no exact mechanism for getting feedback. Thus, it is uncertain to the community whether their ideas and comments are evaluated as helpful or not,

to what extent their views and expressions have contributed to adjust the planning solutions, and how the stakeholders have to fulfill the wishes and requirements of the community.

Conclusion

Within the scope of the research, this paper has presented a theoretical framework on core values, the method of identifying core values with community participation applied to the case of HAQ in urban heritage conservation process.

In reality, determining the core values of a historical urban area is not simple. The concepts of value are perceived differently for different research subjects. In this research, the method of determining core values emphasizes local community’s consensus and focuses on spiritual and cultural aspects that will contribute to the shaping of the “soul” of an urban historic district. The application of community participation method in identifying and analyzing core values of historical districts made the results completer and more valuable. The community plays the role of proposing a core value-based preservation process and helping to consolidate the visions and major strategies for historical district development towards sustainability. The tangible core values can be visually identified and given quantitative and qualitative assessments for appropriate conservation solutions. However, in order to identify the intangible core values, it is essential to have community involvement in classifying values and evaluating the core values that should be preserved and developed.

A dialectical relationship can be seen in the conservation of tangible and intangible values of historical urban areas. Intangible core values can only exist, be restored and promoted if the subject of activities as well as the spatial framework for containing these cultural values are preserved and developed. From the case study of HAQ, it is useful to note that understanding the heritage value-based approach plays an important role in the conservation process. It will pave the way for proposing a suitable direction to preserve

these values in the development of urban historical areas. In order to apply successfully participatory method in the conservation process, it is important to improve the awareness from different stakeholders about the role of community and the mechanism to mobilize the community participation in the meaningful dialogues for the purpose of sustainability.

Acknowledgements

The research had received great support from: Hanoi Ancient Quarter Management Board, Hoan Kiem District People Committee, Hang Buom Ward People Committee to conduct interviews and questionnaire surveys.

References

- Arnstein, S. R. (1969). Ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216-224. DOI: 10.1080/01944366908977225
- Clément, P., Lancret, N., & Nguyen, Q. T. (2005). *Hanoi — A transition of urban architecture and morphology*. Hanoi, Vietnam: Science & Technology Press House.
- Collins, A. M., Lauren, A. P. B., James, K. E., & Kwabena, B. A. (2016). Community participation in urban planning: The case of managing Green Spaces in Kumasi, Ghana, *Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht*, DOI 10.1007/s12132-016-9295-7
- FoxNews. (2015). Hanoi's crowded Old Quarter an urban planning challenge for Vietnamese officials. <https://www.foxnews.com/world/hanois-crowded-old-quarter-an-urban-planning-challenge-for-vietnamese-officials>
- HAIDEP. (2007). Report of The Comprehensive Urban Development Programme in Hanoi Capital City, Hanoi People's Committee, Vietnam.
- Kinh, H. D. (2012). *Culture and architecture*. Hanoi, Vietnam: Trithuc Press.
- NASRV- National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. (2009). Law on Cultural Heritage (amended), No.32/2009/QH12.
- NASRV- National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. (2009). Law on Urban Planning. No. No 30/2009/QH12, Vietnam.
- NASRV- National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. (2013). The Constitution of Vietnam (amended).
- Nhan, M. (2018). Anh Tuyet culinary artist - The keeper of the soul of traditional Vietnamese Dishes. *Trithuctre eMagazine*. <https://kenh14.vn/nghe-nhan-am-thuc-anh-tuyet-nguoi-phu-nu-luu-giu-hon-mam-co-tet-truyen-thong-20180213205405679.chn>
- Nhu, D. T. (2018). Community participation issues and assessment in urban architectural heritage preservation in Hanoi. *Vietnam Journal of Construction*, 1(2018), 79-82.
- Nghiem, D. N. (2015). To reform the heritage management and to promote the values of Hanoi Ancient Quarter. *Journal of Architecture*, 8(2015). <https://www.tapchikientruc.com.vn/chuyen-muc/doi-moi-cong-tac-quan-ly-bao-ton-va-phat-huy-gia-tri-khu-pho-co-ha-noi.html>
- Ripp, M., & Goettler, M., (2017). *Community Involvement in Heritage Management Guidebook*. http://openarchive.icomos.org/1812/1/FINAL_OWHC%20Guidebook%202017.pdf
- Szmelter, I. (2013). New values of cultural heritage and the need for a new paradigm regarding its care. *Open Edition Journal: Conservation: Cultures and Connections*. <https://doi.org/10.4000/ceroart.3647>
- Ta, Q. H. (2009). Urban planning with community participation — Possibilities to apply into Vietnam's urban context. *Journal of Science and Technology in Civil Engineering*. National University of Civil Engineering, No 06-12/2009. Hanoi, Vietnam.
- Ta, Q. H. (2015). Urban detailed planning with community participation in Vietnam urban context towards sustainable development, PHD dissertation in Regional and urban planning — Code 62580105, National University of Civil Engineering, Vietnam.
- Thanhniennews. (2015). Hanoi to relocate Old Quarter residents. <http://www.thanhniennews.com/travel/hanoi-to-relocate-old-quarter-residents-36712.html>
- The Athens Charter, ICOMOS (1931). *The International Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments*.

- The Burra Charter, ICOMOS (1979). Australian Charter for Places of Cultural Significance.
- The Venice Charter, ICOMOS (1964). International charter for the conservation and restoration of monuments and sites.
- The Washington Charter, ICOMOS (1987). Charter for the conservation of historic towns and urban areas.
- Thuy, H. D. (2015). Old streets of Hanoi. Hanoi, Vietnam: Hanoi Press House.
- Tuan, D. D. (2015). Preservation and promotion of Hanoi Ancient quarter's values: Results and challenges in the process of sustainable development. *Journal of Architecture*, 8(2015). <https://www.tapchikientruc.com.vn/chuyen-muc/bao-ton-va-phat-huy-gia-tri-pho-co-2016.html>
- Vanhienvietnam. (2014). Dong Xuan market. <https://vanhien.vn/news/Cho-Dong-Xuan-22718>
- Veldpaus, L. (2015). Historic urban landscapes: Framing the integration of urban and heritage planning in multilevel governance. Eindhoven: Technische Universiteit Eindhoven.
- Veldpaus, L., Roders, A. P., & Colenbrander, B. J. F. (2013). Urban heritage: Putting the past into the future. *The Historic Environment: Policy & Practice*, 4(1), 3-18. DOI: 10.1179/1756750513Z.00000000022
- Waters, N. (2000). The community-planning handbook (2nd ed.). London and New York: Earthscan from Routledge. https://books.google.com.vn/books?hl=vi&lr=&id=xrVEAwAAQB AJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=The+communityplanning+handbook,+London:+Earthscan.&ots=GEBa6SRj9L&sig=OlBJR1NoBG6nYfwLaopJv iuAatE&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=The%20communityplanning%20handbook%2C%20London%3A%20Earthscan.&f=false
- World Bank. (1996). The World Bank Participation Source Book. <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/0-8213-3558-8>
- Zucconi, G. (2014). Gustavo Giovannoni: A theory and a practice of urban conservation. *Change over time*. 4. 76-91. DOI.10.1353/cot.2014.0009.