

The Governance of Conservation of Historic Cities in Eastern Asian Countries

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In recent two decades, the richness and diversity of historic cities in Eastern Asian countries are seriously suffered due to the rapid and tremendous urban transformations both in the urbanized and urbanizing countries. In spite of the great efforts paid throughout these countries, including the law enforcement, the policy and program implementations, and the extensive involvements of the multiple actors, however the result is still unstable and unpredictable along with the symptoms such as the constructive destroys, the massive tourism, the gentrification as well as the urban poverty and social declines, especially at the local level. Therefore rather to be narrowed on the individual measures and the single countries, **the study consisted of the systematic analysis to each single country level and a comprehensive comparison among the countries, is going to identify the urban conservation governance characteristics at the sub-regional level underneath the analogous phenomenon among the countries and their common deficiencies, including the basic logic for the conservation governance, the general patterns, the implementation of the policies by inventing the instruments, the mechanisms and the multiple actors and their performances**, based on the empirical analysis and the comparisons between the countries with the methodologies of the literature studies, the case studies, the site investigations, and the expert consultations.

Brief conclusions about the urban conservation governance in the sub-region can be abstracted as following:

Three mainstreams of the institutional patterns are identified: the countries including Japan, South Korea, and China have established an specific national system for both city and district levels while the other countries, including Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippine, Thailand, are integrating urban conservation in spatial planning and physical construction systems, and the countries like Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao's, Myanmar, North Korea are still remaining the efforts on the single monuments or built complexes.

The government bodies are indispensable in the urban conservation governance however throughout the countries, the degrees and frequencies of the involvement of

the other actors, such as the organizations of civil society, the private sectors and the individuals actually represent the features of **the conservation mechanisms that collaborate and coordinate the multiple actors between the diverse levels**: Few countries operate urban conservation in the De-centralization manner along with wide engagements of the public, such as Malaysia and Indonesia, while most others adopt the centralized or top-down manner, such as Singapore. **Japan might be very particular that the centralized and public involving ways are well interacted.** However some under developed countries, such as Lao's and Myanmar, are still relatively weak in operating the mechanism due to the uncomplimentary institutional construction and the financial constraints.

Some common instruments and policies are invented and implemented both at the national and local levels, including the planning strategy and instruments, especially designation, zoning and authorization measures, the management policies especially for tourism and heritage utilization, the assistant programs that are the project-based or the inter-sectoral initiations by the nation and the locals, the finance and subsidizing programs, the variant guidelines or technical manuals.

Despite the diversities of the governance conditions, the following deficiencies are tracked for resulting in the common phenomenon and problems, which need to be tackled by the theories and practices of the urban governance of the historic cities in future.

Generally urban conservation governance is still being marginalized between the systems of urban development and heritage conservation, both at the national level and the individual level of historic cities;

Except a few cities, like Kyoto, Singapore, Vigan, the local governance system overlooks in the legal framework construction, the duties-benefits balance between the actors, the allocation of financial resources and the distribution of the interests raised from the urban heritages;

Frequently the target and schemes are not consistently adhered during the whole governance process due to the insufficiencies of the capabilities and the restriction of the resources for appropriately operating the urban conservation;

Lastly but most importantly, in spite of high diffusion of the concept of urban conservation, most of the countries are still used to protect the single and individual built heritages, which have set down the physical oriented logic for the conservation governance and in certain degree impedes the extension of the governance realms.