Identifying the Key Value of Urban Architectural Heritages

vis-a-vis Human Awareness: Case Study in Hanoi

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Abstract

Conservation of urban architectural heritage works (UAH) is an important test for cities to increase their cultural and economic competitiveness. However, UAH preservation mostly focuses on physical value, which results in a contradiction between conservation and development. Moreover, new contexts of 4.0 technology and urbanization are deepening the impermanence, transformation of all things, in which of people and their awareness - the beneficiaries of UAHs. Therefore, heritage conservation is facing a big problem related to the truly worthy values of UAH that need to be preserved to meet the development needs, society's change and the growing maturity of people's awareness. Applying Oriental theories on the code of life, in combination with some Western thoughts on human awareness process and a practical case of community's awareness of UAHs's value in Hanoi, the article explores and identifies the key value of UAHs which is expected to solve the above problem, reaching sustainable targets.

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Introduction

Preserving urban architectural heritage (hereinafter referred to as UAH or heritage) is a major concern of any urban authority wishing to build an urban image of culture, identity, and competitiveness in the context of the flat world and globalization trend. Heritage conservation solutions that focus on physical values or on the heritage object itself (preserve a physical object as an antique) have more and more revealed limitations not only in theory but also in practice. Theoretically, it is not possible to freeze physical objects forever since they inevitably suffer the destructive effects of weather and other external factors, as well as they themselves decompose over time; nor is it possible to fossilize an object that is of a living nature (The role of heritage is not just a building, a place to store the values *through physical expression* of history, culture, art, and architecture of a community, but deep inside, it is created and preserved for generations to serve the psychological needs and spiritual practices of the community. These needs are not constant but always change at certain angles, affected by the changes of the times, society, other living things in a community's urban space, the community's living needs and development as this approach leads to losing the inherent natural living value of the object. Thus these easily lead to a practical problem of the conflict between the need of urban development (towards living subjects) and the need of conservation (towards fossilizing, freezing, and preserving dead-like subjects). Only when conservation also promotes living values, can it coexist and go hand in hand with urban development.

The development and achievements of science, technology and the digital science revolution 4.0 have created a new turning point that has been changing many traditional values, knowledge as well as human awareness. Through the invention of a virtual world, human capabilities are enhanced via the ability to socially connect beyond geographical space and even overcome the challenge of limited time. The concept of community limited by geographical limits (community is people sharing the same place) therefore is no longer appropriate. Now, the concept of the community is defined by change, it is not fixed, and it can be restructured based on the change of human's ability, awareness, and community needs (community is people sharing the same interests) (Burkett, 2001; Neal & Walter, 2008; Smith & Akagawa, 2009; Waterton & Smith, 2010). It could be said that in parallel with the changeable concept of community is the changeable concept of heritage value. In other words, the idea of value characterized as fixed is no longer perfect. Besides, under urbanization, UAHs no longer keep private value for a small local community, but can also become common assets for a larger community since their value transcends geographical boundaries and even cultural boundaries. These changes also create additional challenges for sustainable UAH conservation and urban development, as well as for further human development, as a consequence.

Given this situation, current UAH conservation activities still seem to be struggling with a debate about the value of heritage. What is the real value that can be preserved? What value is worthy of being preserved? Is conservation based on values that are recognized by community (living values from life) or on criteria by city authorities such as historical, chronological, cultural, aesthetic, and architectural values? The fact that, perceived values may be different between one person

and another, between one community group and another, so the question is that whether there is an unified and representative value for all? In other words, apart from the variable or contemporary or changeable values, does the heritage have a permanent value (pure value) that can be preserved and be accepted by all communities despite differences of time, generation, or dominant culture?

In this context, it is important to deeply recognise the pure value of heritage, especially the relationship between heritage and the community in the current context, to shape UAH sustainable conservation solutions towards human development and sustainable goals.

Objectives, Methodology and Contribution
The paper contributes the findings of three in-depth studies of UAH's key values, which are (i) a literature review on heritage value; (ii) a discussion of the nature of objects through in community and human awareness in the view of Oriental philosophy and Western thinking. (iii) testing the community's perception of the heritage value in the context of urbanization in the center of Hanoi capital, Vietnam. These results help to orient the UAH preservation approach based on worthy and permanent value (key value), and can be used as a solution for UAH preservation in other urban areas in Vietnam. These results also imply solutions to encourage community engagement with UAH preservation, contributing to the goal of sustainable urban development and to the development of human beings.

Literature Review of Urban Architectural Heritage Value
Heritages are seen as cultural representations passed from generation to generation that contribute to urban identity and cultural competitiveness. Under the current uncertain and ever-changing urban development context, the evolution of community awareness and cultural exchanges, heritage value is continuously reconsidered and discussed to shape a compatible preservation approach. Different recently emerging perspectives on the value of heritage are summarized as follows.

(1) Heritage value is determined through a specific physical expression representing outstanding values identified by common, clear,static standards or criteria (such as values of science, history, and art). It means that these outstanding values are normally perceived, identified, assessed, and compared by the five human senses. In this respect, a heritage object is considered as an isolated physical entity and differentiated from other objects thanks to its outstanding, unchanged, stable, and differentiated physical features.

The definition of cultural heritage given by the UNESCO organization on cultural heritage sites refers to three physical expressions, which are monuments (separate monuments), groups (in the sense of a combination of buildings and works that present harmony between works in the complex) and sites (in the sense of an overall harmony between works created by people and nature to express harmony and unity), and states that these works should reflect the values of history, art and science (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 2017). This definition is also quite consistent with the definition of ICOMOS's historic monument in the 1964

Venice Charter (Charter, 1964) on the concept of a historic monument, which was that "it not just consists of individual buildings but also the urban or rural setting, where evidence of a specific civilization is found, an important development of historic events." (Jokilehto, 2008). The Vietnam Law on Cultural Heritage 2013 also acknowledges the historical, cultural, and artistic architecture values of a monument (The National Assembly, 2013). In the recent decades, the concept of authentic value has been raised to assess the value of heritage in the context of integrating the cultural context of non-Western world countries and a growing recognition of the role community plays in determining heritage value (Boccardi, 2019).

(2) Heritage value is related to different levels of human perception and human feelings, or in another way it is compatible with levels of human beings themselves inner perceptions which are affected by personal experiences, social relationships and relations to nature and to the whole of life. In other words, the value of a heritage building corresponds to the value perceived by the individuality of observers or a community in relation to a sense of personal identity or community identity, respectively.

Human perception about an entity is normally influenced by external factors such as personal experiences and emotions, and may be affected by social change and development (in Buddhist language, this is level of normal perception or a conventional level of human mind which is always disturbed, led, and controlled by the external world. In other words, human perception is easily dominated by the ego which always wants to react or perceive the outside world by his own and different story to affirm his presence). The value of heritage buildings is therefore identified differently and changeably between one person and another (because everyone wants to build and has their own story different from other's ones); in other words, perceived heritage value is inherently mutable (Purwantiasning, Kurniawan & Sunarti, 2019). At this level, it is challenging (in a way that's both easy and hard) to convince different individuals or communities to preserve heritages through fixed criteria or common standards. That is also a current challenge in convincing different people to protect a UAH. When human perception peaks at a high level that is no longer controlled by the change of the outside world (or in Buddhist language, the human mind reaches the state of concentration or of stable or of emptiness. In this ultimate state, that is, unaffected by anything from the outside world, human beings can return to his inherent and available nature - the True Self - to perceive the world. Only this True Self helps him to perceive things without prejudice. Thus, human beings can perceive things as they truly are), a person's view will not be biased or embroiled by the limits of personal experience or emotions, and thus that person could reach the essence and the truth of an object as it is rather than the truth as I-my ego feel and want, so he could understand the object's nature via his True Self. Thanks to this ultimate level of cognition, a human can deeply understand the truth of another objects or in this case the nature, the root or the source of the heritage could be revealed. At this highest level of human perception, the key value of every heritage object will be found, recognized, and acknowledged in the same way by different individuals and communities. According to Chinese classical cosmology and philosophy, the core or pure value of an object represents the value of harmony with all surround-

ing things and become oneness with all more than individual value [reference the next part of nature of human awareness via reviewing oriental philosophy].

Also, the value assessment of a heritage object doesn't really come from the object itself (because the pure nature of every object is inherently neutral - not good, not bad. Good or bad depend on the evaluator's or observer's inner mind, which normally depends on outside conditions of the object). Therefore, the value of the heritage is recognized, felt, and perceived via the gaze of the human inner mind. One who has a pure inner mind (corresponding to a peaceful stillness and emptiness state) could see the neutral nature of the object. A person with an inner mind full of vibrations of fears or desires affected by his ego will only see everything covered in the color of the ego- thereby seeing the object in a different, biased way versus pure nature of the object.

For example, when the observer's interior is sad, this sadness becomes a sad colored glass separating him from the outside world, causing him to only see the outside world full of gloom, thereby not understanding the scene which is inherently free, freely grown and lost continuously and unrelated to his sadness. When his inner mind is positive, he sees all the positive values of things around him. When he looks at the heritage by his peaceful and free inner, his perception could not be governed by the joy or sorrow which are empty inside him at that time. In the deep emptiness of mind, with no more ego, the observer (now even disappeared as an ego- observer disappears) can reach the intrinsic pure value of things. Accordingly, the value of an object does not just lie in the fixed form itself, but broadly it lies in the process of general balance and harmony between the observer and object. So that heritage value is a continuous creative process to reach harmony generally. The following shares the same idea of heritage's value by some experts. Heritage is identified as everything that people want to save (Howard, 2003) and as a part of the cultural tradition of a society (Nuryanti, 1996). By this definition, awareness of value of a heritage is close to the value perceived by an observer's awareness. Therefore, to identify heritage value, it should be studied at the level of human perception. The meaning of heritage can be interpreted at different levels: i) the outer value layer of a heritage object that corresponds to the basic level of human perception based on physical existence (the external world); (ii) the intrinsic pure value (the inherent pure value) - an embodied value that may reflect and awaken the human's True Self.[1]

Heritage is a sense of belonging and continuity. In its raw form, heritage is simply physical expression such as buildings, cultural objects, and the natural environment, while at a deeper level, heritage refers to a "place where there is joy/happiness and enlightenment" (Millar, 1989; Pothof, 2006). This definition underlines three values of a UAH which can be interpreted as follows. i) Happiness here is not only conventional temporary joy depending on external conditions, but state of bliss and deep peace in the human mind where a person feels more freedom, liberation from dependencies on external factors. ii) Enlightenment here is an awakening of the ability to perceive deeply the "truth as it is" of life or in another way the ability to perceive the spirit/source in all creations and existences in this world which is the pure nature and the living nature concealed under the visible

existence of each individual or object. To humans, this enlightenment is the capacity to reach one's true nature or True Self so that "he" can reach naturally the livings nature surroundings. iii) Sense of belonging and continuity: from the sense of the True Self or pure nature, it is easier for a person to acknowledge the sense of belonging or attachment or sense of being a part of a community and sense of oneness with all things and with the universe so that sense of continuity is built [reference the oriental spiritual philosophy in the following part].

Heritage objects are the physical representations of a community's identity that demand to be passed on to others. Heritage sites would be built expressions of a city that represent the city's identity, places where citizens could recognize themselves (Riganti & Nijkamp, 2004). In this view, the idea of self-realization is a difficult and abstract idea, which can be explained through i) the ability to recognize what is familiar and visible in life (physical recognition), and ii) unconscious awareness of what exists inside their inner minds (invisible and intuition recognition).

Heritage is also identified as a sense of the self (Porter and Salazar, 2005). Self here refers not only to the perceived dimension of an individual's inner feelings (emotions) but also to the highest perception of a human that is independent and transcendent from the impact of the outside world, where a human can be conscious of the pure nature of himself which can be understood as Tao of True self in Taoist language and Buddhist language, respectively. The awareness of True Self is a superior consciousness, where a human understands that he is not an object separated and distinguished from others. It can be said that heritage is a means or a catalyst or a door for evoking or awakening human consciousness, helping human beings to gradually fulfill cognitive processes from the level of exploring and connecting with the outside world to finally connecting with the human mind's inside world, from the consciousness of external cultural values to the knowledge of the hidden meaning of self in particular and of human society in general.

(3) Heritage value is a flexible and variable concept. The value of heritage is not only kept in a physical object (with fixed characters) but in the social process (with transformative and adaptive character, to reach harmonization with others). Heritage and community are not fixed objects, but they customize each other because they are all part of a social process (Bluestone, 2000; Crooke, 2008; Mydland & Grahn, 2012; Waterton & Smith, 2010). Heritage contributes to the resilience and sustainability of urban communities (Denes & Pradit, 2023).

The idea is that there is not any value in a separated status, or stated another way, the value is only confirmed as a whole and in a relationship with others; value is found in the living process or ongoing process. We have been taught that everything has both good and bad sides, like yin and yang. However, the distinction between yin and yang only helps make the human cognitive process simpler. In fact, these two objects cannot exist if they are separated and isolated. They have absolutely no single value. Only when yin and yang transform each other can they create different forms, so that their value is created thanks to this process - continuously transforming, continuously keeping balance, constantly recreating. In

other words, value is created in the process. Similarly, the value of heritage objects is not only in a single entity but in the harmonizing process (ongoing process). Human perception of the value of heritage can be changed by time, space, and social and cultural experiences. For example, when we access a heritage building at different moments or through different experiences, we will receive different values of the heritage. If experiencing a UAH in a normal day with no events and no activities, we only feel its raw physical value such as architectural structure, landscape, etc. in the limitation of a certain space. On the occasion of a festival with living activities, and cultural practices full of sounds, images, interaction with the local community, living stories, and nostalgia, we may experience very different views of heritage value in which both spiritual value (such as a sense of belonging) and other expanded physical value are recorded. This characteristic is often known to be a mutable value, which means that consideration should be given to the possibility of change and transformation of the heritage value when put in different spaces or periods (Dao, 2017). In Vietnam, communal houses, temples, and pagodas often have the same architectural structure (also includes 3 layers of space: public, semi-public and sacred), however the difference in use and functional arrangement based on different cultural and spiritual practices have lead to different basic function between these works.

Nature of Any Object's Value and Nature of Human Awareness of Things in the Universe, the Path of Growth of Human Awareness in Oriental Philosophy View

Tao - Oriental Philosophy Of Cosmology

Oriental philosophy is best known for the I Ching (Book of changes) - the sutra of the principle of birth and decay of all things and the universe. According to the I Ching, although the universe is seen in ten thousand things and phenomena, this limitlessness (or infinite boundlessness) and extreme diversity is not born or lost chaotically, but follows an ultimate law - that is Tao (or Dao meaning the way, the path, principle, or code of life). The majority of Chinese philosophies acknowledge the presence of the Tao: Confucians call it Great Ultimate, Taoists call it Golden Elixir and Buddhists call it Complete Awareness. Everything is controlled by Tao (Reninger, 2020). Tao is oneness that includes yin and one yang (these two forces are so-called Liangyi). This means that everything exists in a unified entity thanks to 2 indivisible opposites including yin and yang. Each contains the seed of its opposite. Yin and yang are in a constant state of dynamic balance, which is maintained by a continuous adjustment of their relative levels. When either yin or yang is out of balance, each necessarily affects the other and by changing their proportion they achieve a new balance. Nothing in the natural world escapes this opposition. It is this very inner contradiction that constitutes the motive force of all transformation, birth, change, development, and decay of things.

Transformation, Impermanence are Nature of Things, Objects and Phenomena and Key Value of UAHs

Transformation in nature is manifested by two contrasting states, yin and yang (Reninger, 2017). Transformation is the way of arising and passing, birth and death, living cycle. Transformation is a process without a beginning or an end, but is a process of continuation to keep the value of the balance and harmony of life.

Looking deeply into this transformation process, we will see that all things are inherently interlinked, have mutual relationships to each other, and have a sharing with each other at a certain level.[2] Under this classic oriental viewpoint, when an object dies, they only die materially (forms) but an inner root (or qi or living, soul or source) is always maintained and will continue to transform, grow, reincarnate, and become a source of an emerging thing.[3] In experimental science it has been found that there is an invisible material form that exists in all appearances, which is energy. According to the law of energy conversion, energy can change forms but is never lost. It also means that a physical object can disappear as a result of the decay of all material things by time but the Way (or qi or living, soul or source, Tao, Dao) of making the living, that could be so-called energy, is eternal.

In the sense of transformation to create life, the significance of living life does not lie in the impermanent existing physical objects but in the transformation process, and it also does not lie in trying to strengthen its physical appearance to strengthen the affirmation, but to strengthen the harmony with and integrated into everything around in order not to interrupt the life cycle or not break the close metabolic relationships.

The above implications are also affirmed in the ultimate law of Buddhism, the Heart of Perfect Wisdom Sutra: "Form is emptiness, emptiness is form. Emptiness is no other than form, form is no other than emptiness." Heart Sutra teaches us the true nature of all phenomena is "no being, no non-being" or there is no birth, no death, nothing defiled, nothing immaculate, nothing increasing, nothing decreasing. The nature of everything, objects and phenomena, is always pure and illuminating, neither caught in being nor in non-being. All things are caused by transformation and they are not always expressed in a real and static form. The nature of all (visible) things is impermanent, only the transformation is eternal. The interpretation of this sacred formula is: The outer body (form or physical expression) of a human or of anything which is considered as rupa (affirmation) is only temporary; then when this form (physical expression) dies, this affirmation will turn into negation, and this negation of the previous form is the cause/route of the next form (next affirmation). The insight of this verse is the most liberating insight that helps us overcome all pairs of separated opposites such as birth and death, being and non-being, defilement and immaculacy, increasing and decreasing, etc. and this is the way to touch the true nature of no birth/no death, no being/no non-being, etc. That is the emptiness nature of every phenomenon (Hanh, 2011; Soeng, 2010; Tolle, 2004). "It is like a flower that is made only of non-flower elements. The flower is empty of a separate existence, but that doesn't mean that the flower is not there." - Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh.

Looking at it from these points of view, it is impossible to grasp the value of an object (a fixed object is something that does not really exist because "its physical manifestation" is continuously formed and decayed due to transformation nature) but only the value of the whole and harmony unity. When we see a flower, the surface value of the flower consists of the beautiful color, the good fragrance, the nice shape. However the key value of the flower is to show us the beauty that comes

from nurturing and the magic of life in that moment. UAH is a special object because of its cultural depth and attachment, therefore its role is more special than an image, a material or even immaterial expression. UAH has the value of awakening the human beings' awareness about a special message rather than a surface message from conspicuous physical expression or material. The special message that we can feel and need to explore through UAH is that there is a natural cohesion or the original harmony between people and everything around them. This message is believed by Oriental viewpoints to help people towards the values of truth, goodness, beauty and a sense of peace, fulfilled in life. That is the key value of urban architectural heritage works.

Nature and Levels of Human Perception of the Nature of Objects

There are 3 stages of human perception of the world, which may be independent or follow in order. Level 1 (basic level): Awareness through 5 sensory channels (sensory perception including listening, touching, looking, tasting, smelling) to collect data information and transmit signals to the cortex to analyze. Awareness at this level is not different from that used by ordinary animals to ensure basic living needs, such as the need to identify and distinguish objects of the outside world and respond appropriately, and to establish a sense of habitat. Level 2: After being aware of the outside world, a human comes to the level of awareness of the inner world of his mind, where the information is processed to form unique values characterized by human and individual marks. At this level, people discover and perceive the outside world not only based on what they see (through outside input from the five senses) but also based on input from personal experiences and social experiences (through social interaction, social culture, education, social prejudice, etc.) as well as their desires, interests, and ambitions (At this level, human's perception of the external world or object is the result of seeing through a ego's colored prism, filled full of desires and fears that hinder wisdom about the object's truth). At this level, people perceive the world to build their own stories, to express their very limited and ultimately fictitious sense of identity - the ME. This perception is therefore influenced by individuality, distinctness, and the need to create good stories making up each person's image, history, and identity (conditioned mind). In Buddhism, it is called the perception of The Self - the perception influenced by the conditions of the outside world and the conditions of the inner world such as attention and the desires of each person (hence according to oriental philosophy, at this level of awareness, people are only aware of one part of the truth of the object and the living truth or even a false part of the truth, since awareness is limited and influenced by conditions and external factors). At this level, people build value for themselves, and a group builds the value of the community. The UAHs of a certain community will reflect the value of the community members who created it, preserved as well as influenced by members, culture, lifestyle, and prejudice. This community value is also harmonized with the value of the community group's awareness. Therefore, this value may differ from that of another community. The value of a community's heritage is acknowledged when it promotes a sense of belonging or sense of attachment for every member of that community. Different communities establish different heritage values. And one community may not fully feel the value of another. Awareness at this level of things or phenomena is very temporary, and can be changed in and by other dimensions,

times, contexts, or generations, or even from persuasion, manipulation, control and domination from outside life or with changes of cognitive experience.

Level 3 (The highest degree of awareness) is a human beings' ability to naturally interpret events and phenomena in their context, seeing an object as its natural being, not to be influenced by the story of the observer. It means that his perception of an object's meaning is not conditioned by external factors, or even by the observer's internal experiences or thinking. At this level, man has freed himself from the aforementioned ego's colored prism that is full of fear and anxiety. The liberation of his mind help his awareness to escape from the delusions and inferences of the ego) so he can see the truth of things as they are.[4] This level is the so-called super-level awareness or the level of spiritual awareness[5] as this level connects not only with the object's external physical information but also with the human True Self and decodes the information hidden deep within the object - the truth. Buddhism calls this level as enlightenment or the awakening state - Non-Self or True Self; Christianity calls it the salvation or God- liberation of awareness from dependence on external conditions. This status is characterized in Taoism by human perception merging with the Tao-source of universe life. At this level of awareness, one perfects his consciousness of the world as he can see things as they naturally are and then unconditionally accept, share these things. Thanks to this awareness, one experiences the state of absolute peace as well as the state of perfection and immortality due to the ability to open up to everything, totally interbeing, embrace everything, so can share love, compassion, gratitude, and enjoyment with objects. That is also the way he can feel oneness with the universe. The sense of belonging in this level is broadened. At this revolutionary state of human perception, the person develops his or her full intellect, intelligence, and development in harmony with life and with other objects. Also, in the theory of a hierarchy of basic human needs by psychologist Abraham Maslow, the ultimate development need is self-actualization toward self-perfection and growth. It seems that Maslow shared the same idea on the final step of human perception. At this level, the human perception of the object is a profound awareness that touches the original nature (source) of the object and life so that this knowledge will not age or become outdated with time. When everyone reaches this ultimate, there will be no more community groups with different values of benefit, but only a unity and solidarity community group sharing the common value which can develop their love, compassion and reach the values of truth, goodness and beauty in their own lives. The figure 1 below shows the 3 levels of human awareness of the outside world.

Until now, human beings see, explore and develop the physical world through levels of awareness. The first level of awareness depends on the basic needs of life for a safe living space and second level awareness depends on the desire to build one's own identity, social cohesion comes from the ego still be required and vital. More and more, people's perception of the world in its entirety - level 3 of perception - has been and is being developed through other supporting doors such as inside meditation (practices), dharma study (languages), or valuable architectural spaces, especially in the oriental UAHs. From this perspective, we can see more clearly about the noble value of heritage for human development, not only accompanying human beings for their development in the physical, social and spiritual life of individuals but even higher role, heritage helps human beings reach and

touch the beauty in true value of life, to realize the truth of the world as well as beauty of oneness (whole). UAHs preservation focusing on keeping and developing the layout, architectural organization, and decoration representative for the spirit of liberation, of freedom, of tranquility, of emptiness, of harmony- are representative for key value of UAH- could support a person to achieve mental tranquility and concentration, and help him to connect more easily with his inner mind and sometimes reveal his True Self. It can be seen that heritage is one of the important bridges to help people realize the pure value of surrounding things and their lives. That is the reason, normally and naturally, when entering the spiritual holy places or just walking through the traditional temple gate, Vietnamese people easily get rid of worries, hopes, insecurities from outside life to fall into serenity and peace of mind. In other words, it can be said that the deep and key value of a heritage is to help people touch their own purity and return to their true nature.
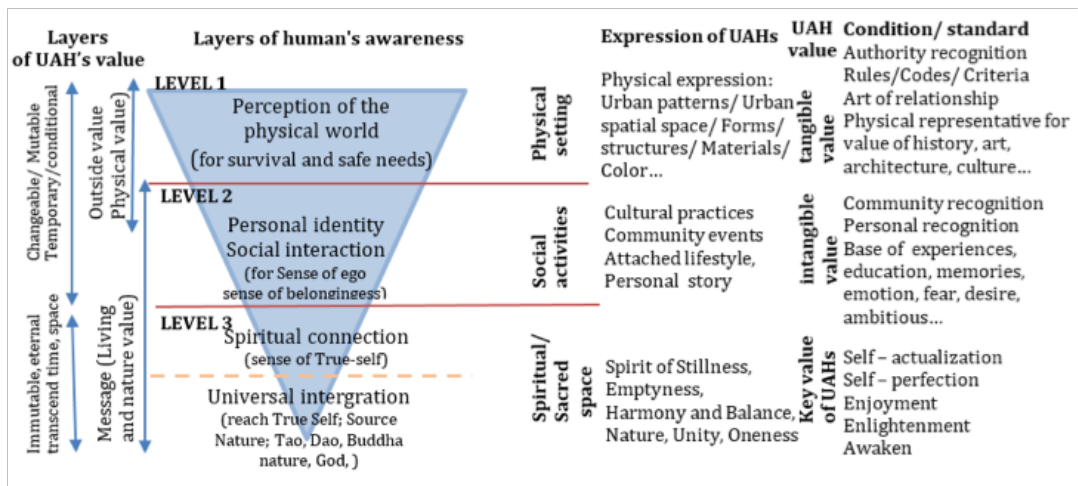

Figure 1. Diagram showing 3 layers of human's awareness and corresponding recognized value of UAHs. (Source: The author).

Figure 2. Icon of the impermanent, ever-changing nature of life- Taijitu and metaphorical representations embodied in a UAH in Viet Nam. (Source: Taijitu ,Zen_meditation, Buddha-under-the-tree, Keo Pagoda Vietnam- a special national historical site).

Field Survey on Local Community Perception of UAH in Hanoi

To explore heritage value in the present context, the survey focused on seeking UAH value in the relationship with community's awareness in Hanoi - the cultural capital of Vietnam - which owns and preserves a large number of valuable urban architectural heritage works and is under the great influence of different urbanization dimensions. The author focused on the sampling of survey sites that met the following criteria: 1) It is an area that includes many types of UAH running different functions to facilitate access to many target community groups, helping to understand the different objective perspectives of the community on UAH value; 2) The area also should represent a dynamic urban space where connect to diversely contemporary functions such as commercial activities, tourism, work, and public space, helping to meet variety of community and to able to explore different roles of UAH. So that, heritage space around Sword Lake (Hoan Kiem Lake) - a cultural center with a long urbanization process and heritage space around West Lake (Ho Tay Lake) - a cultural center with a later urbanization process were selected for the survey and community interviews. Figure 3 shows two survey sites.

Thanks to open surveys with local residents and others presenting in the two above sites, the author found a range of factors affected the community's assessment of UAH value as well as willingness to engage in conservation activities. These factors are: i) Community culture, traditional perspectives, social perspectives, or long-standing prejudices are still implemented in contemporary life; ii) Time/Experiences. The time of local community connection, degree and frequency of interactions between heritage and community, personal experiences with heritage, strong memories, nostalgia, and deeper knowledge of heritage stories; iii) The meaning of the heritage to the community and its member. The meanings of heritages are often influenced by and associated with the dominant culture. It can be messages that have been fixed, recognized, or messages that have not been officially recognized. For Hanoi UAHs, with an overwhelming amount of spiritual heritages long affected by oriental philosophy, the significance of the UAHs indicated in the survey is related to the three following characteristics. First is the ability to connect people with the local community and society. Second is the ability to connect people with nature. Third is the ability to help humans to reach a state of freedom, of emptiness, and deep peace of mind where they can enjoy permanent happiness and attain enlightenment. Heritage should awaken a feeling of belonging or a feeling of being a part of the community, society, and life and a feeling of being spiritual connection, feeling of be "fulfilled" in observer's mind; iv) The contemporary development context of urban and community areas. For example, practical and economic values have received increasing attention compared with cultural and materialistic values; actual and clear benefit values are more often mentioned rather than unrealistic or vague interest ones; v) Programs/projects that catalyze propagating and spreading knowledge of the heritage value as well as increasing the community's engagement to UAHs (Dao, 2017).

Figure 3. Survey sites in central Hanoi: left, Sword lake and right, West lake. (Source: The author).

Conclusion on the Key Value of UAHs, the Sustainable Way to Preserve UAHs and Encourage Community's Involvement

This article has used philosophical and scientific arguments of the Oriental and the Western and a practical survey case to clarify the changing and transformation nature of the world, of all objects existing in this universe, and also the changing nature of human perception. This reality has been reshaping the values of UAHs through different spaces, periods and context. Therefore, preserving the value of heritage is also an ongoing process to match the requirements of life and the beneficiaries - contemporary communities and future generations also.

At the first two levels of human perception - it can be said that the dominant awareness level of contemporary people to meet the basic needs of feeling, connecting and interacting the outside world, gathering external information then building particular social, community's and individual's stories under influence of the egos (The ego tends to be biased, changeable, and temporary). The highest level of human perception is level 3 where human perception is no longer governed by personal stories and outside influences, but by an intellectual understanding of the true nature of things, no more by ego but by true self - human cognitive ability that transcends external conditions. People takes time, maturity, and many other conditions to perfect and reach this perception level. However, only at this high level of awareness can people really know and realize the key value of heritage that is not changed, immutable, eternal despite the fact of time, space, and other conditions. And only through this level of awareness do we know that the key value of heritage is not a good or bad evaluation on an outside object, but as "the door" to help people discover and recognize and understand the ultimately sacred, spiritual nature of human beings in this life, which is strongly connected with nature and with all life.

 At each stage, each society needs to clearly identify the needs and awareness levels in order to determine the appropriate methods of heritage conservation. In fact, in society, each person will reach different levels of awareness, therefore, we could consider the need for a harmony between three methods of heritage conservation as follows: i) conservation of physical values, outer physical expression - corresponding and consistent with the awareness level 1 – satisfy the need of survival and safe in the physical world. ii) preservation of intangible values - messages that reflect the ego's needs to build self-identity and a certain identity of

a community. iii) preserving and calling out the key values of the heritage – that is to support human awareness maturity to be able to see the world in its true and to strengthen the significance of truth - goodness - beauty of human beings towards harmony and balance life.

Accordingly, there is no real value in an object separate from the whole, but only value in the whole. While preserving the value of a separated object serves temporary and mutable significances, preserving value of the whole could reach more sustainable targets. The article supports UAH's key value that arouses the maturity in people's awareness. Realizing the value of harmony with the whole facilitates ideas of social cohesion, sustainable development, the more people focus on an object, the further away they are from the common value. In this paper, the key values of the heritage are suggested as expression of the spirit of emptiness, freedom, transcendence, harmony, balance, equality, transformation, impermanence etc., – metaphorical representations of the immutable principles of life. The oriental UAHs in general and Vietnamese UAHs in particular can apply this conservation proposal to not only meet people's needs in contemporary life but always ensure the key value of the UAHs that is oriented towards human beings, is "the door" to help people develop, mature in awareness ability and find their True Self. That is also the way of sustainable conservation.

Endnotes

1   True self is the human cognitive ability that transcends external conditions. While The self is the human perception governed by the effects of the individual's desire to build and reinforce the personal story in a desire to separate the self from the whole.

2   For example, we do not exist independently, but we exist because we have borrowed clean outside air to breathe, food from the soil to eat, water to drink, learning from others to live, etc… In our body, not everything belongs to us completely, but they belong to nature that has been transformed into us to nourish us.

3   For example, when we look deeply into a flower, we see in it there is water, there is soil, there is the care of the farmer, there is raindrops, there is sunshine of many days that have nourished and transformed into the flower.

4   The truth here implies that everything is neither good nor bad, but neutral.

5   Level of spiritual awareness or can be so-called sacred space of mind is where human awareness completely focuses, connects with the whole meaning rather than focusing on distinguishing and divisive objects.

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