Community, Profession, and Policy Practice in Sanxia and Daxi Historical Districts

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Abstract
The implementation of various preservation processes in two historical districts, the Sanxia Minquan District and the Daxi Heping District, yielded different results. In Daxi, old industries and neighborhood networks still exist, whereas in Sanxia, they have disappeared behind the formation of a new commercial community primarily focused on historical tourism. These results were influenced by the promotion and long-term implementation of government policies, the actions of architecture and urban planning professionals, and the formation of historical preservation organizations. Crucial factors for maintaining local characteristics when preserving historical districts are constant governmental investment in historical preservation and district revitalization programs, professional facilitation and assistance in the operation of community organizations, and locally operated community organizations that can propose and execute district preservation and revitalization projects.

Keywords: community practice; community empowerment; historical tourism; professional practice; policy practice

1. Introduction
In Taiwan, the historical preservation movement was established when certain districts risked disappearing because of rapid land development after the country’s economic ascent. In the early 1980s, no governmental measures were applied to historical districts except for normative systems regarding monument designation and preservation zoning (Han, 1981; Hsia, 1992; Hsu, 2001, 2012; Lee and Shih, 2012; Lin, 2008; Yu, 1996). Therefore, landlords in historical districts opposed the preservation of such districts and defended their own interests in development, which halted district preservation.

In response to the complexity of whole-district preservation and opposition from local residents, government and professionals began analyzing and reorganizing the problems and strategies regarding the regional development of historical districts. In addition, they proposed regional preservation and revitalization programs as well as relevant modifications to urban planning laws. When community development and the economic benefits of cultural tourism in historical preservation areas became necessary for community industries, landlords, business owners, and residents shifted their perspectives and began supporting preservation.

Nearly 40 years after the historical preservation movement in Taiwan was established, a preservation system has been established through cooperation and conflicts between communities, professionals, and the government. This system, established through trial and error, influenced the results of preservation of various historical districts. This study analyzed the preservation processes of the Sanxia and Daxi historical districts from the interaction of various perspectives, including urban planning and architecture, community, and policy. We examined how the regeneration of historical preservation maintains local atmospheres and historical spaces in a manner different from general tourism-oriented preservation.

2. Investigating the Practice of and Interaction between Communities, Architecture and Urban Planning Professionals, and the Government Regarding Historical Preservation
In Taiwan, a system for historical preservation was developed by multiple social actors involving the promotion of government policy, the actions of urban planning professionals, and the development of district preservation organizations. This paper discusses the effects of the government, communities, and professionals and their practices on the preservation and revitalization of historical districts through a case study on two distinct historical districts.
Because historical preservation involves regional development and living space for many people, multiple dimensions must be considered before commencing preservation projects; such projects must involve diverse aspects and integrate land usage policies and plans. Preservation provides a platform for local business and property owners to organize, fundraise, and improve local development with governmental support (Elsorady, 2012). The economic revitalization of historical districts requires continual cooperation between the government and local communities.

Historic-district conservation professionals and their relationships with communities play a role in preservation; although these professionals cannot make decisions, they can help communities increase their capacity and knowledge of cultural heritage. Citizens supported by professionals are empowered to promote the development and systematization of heritage preservation (Nyseth and Sognnæs, 2013). The goal of revitalizing urban historical areas is shared by government agencies, landlords, residents, business owners, and local groups because of a common interest; thus, participants are willing to be responsible and lead, and they can transform problems into opportunities (Tiesdell et al., 1996).

Healey (1998) formulated collaborative planning theory to solve problems involving centralized city management in the United Kingdom and the homogenization of European cities attributable to globalization. According to Healey (1998), the key factor in improving community quality through appropriate management lies in the cultural quality of local politics. With satisfactory integration, contacts, and knowledge, people can mobilize themselves to improve their local environments. Conversely, when political power and knowledge resources are fragmented, people cannot mobilize to change their communities.

According to Healey (1998), the importance of collaborative planning lies in unlocking the potential of a community’s stakeholders. The three factors of institutional capacity are knowledge resources, relational resources, and mobilization potentials. Collaborative planning in urban planning enables the establishment of a system through the aforementioned three factors. Collaborative planning theory can characterize the power dynamics of institutions, actors, and structures. The theory was adopted to examine the policy, community, and professional practices of the knowledge resources, relational resources, and mobilization potentials for preserving and revitalizing historical districts and exploring the problems facing the preservation and revitalization of Taiwan’s historical districts.

3. Case Analysis

The two historical districts explored in this study, which share similar characteristics, both emerged through the canal trade and forestry product exchange in Taiwan during the mid-19th century and were modernized during the period of Japanese rule in the early 20th century. The two districts were local commercial centers during those eras. Today, though no longer local commercial centers, the two districts remain the commercial centers for neighboring towns.

The two districts differ in their preservation processes and current models of management. Their differences were investigated to analyze the interactive influences among the government policies, actions of urban planning and conservation professionals, and formation and development of district conservation organizations and their effects on the preservation of the historical districts.

The crucial texts regarding urban design adopted by this study were the official urban plans, official reports, and news reports. In addition, field surveys of historical districts focusing on community organizations, business owners, and residents were conducted, and reports were consulted.

3.1 Preservation Process of Sanxia District

In the Qing dynasty, Sanxia produced large quantities of woad, camphor, and tea. During the Japanese colonial period, the introduction of suits and kimonos resulted in the decline of the traditional dyeing industry, and dyeing shops were converted into shops selling suits, gofuku, and cloth, grocery stores, and hospitals. After World War 2, siltation and river transportation ceased. The center of local development shifted, and numerous residents moved. In the 1960s, the mining industry in Sanxia peaked, resulting in the development of coffin shops, medical centers, and daily consumer services. Sanxia District had eight or nine coffin shops during this peak period, but they gradually closed because coal mining declined, and the prevalence of cremation increased. The local population was moving, abandoning stores. (Figs.1. and 2.).
3.1.1 During the Initial Stages, the Governmental Preservation Policy cannot be Coordinated with Professional Strategies and Population Needs

In the 1971 urban plan of Sanxia Township, Minquan Street was designated to be widened from 8 to 15 meters. As the government was preparing to expropriate Minquan Street in 1989, several residents and the Yaoshan Foundation, which assists historical preservation projects, drafted a petition regarding the widening of Minquan Street, demanding that the government preserve the street.

With the combined efforts of nonprofits, professionals, and scholars, the Council of Cultural Affairs designated Minquan Street as a historical site in 1991. Local residents in opposition to the preservation protested the designation of monuments, citing reasons such as inappropriate monument-listing procedures, loss of interest, appearance of buildings, and insufficient confidence in the government (Mi, 1991). The Council of Cultural Affairs held several meetings to attempt to resolve land development concerns by transferring development rights; however, the Construction and Planning Agency, Ministry of the Interior was unable to cooperate in urban planning because of deficiencies in the relevant laws.

During this period, despite the earnestness of professionals and civil groups, the government was unable to propose supporting measures, such as the financial planning of the restoration, environmental planning, and building maintenance. The designation of monuments was ultimately cancelled because of the opposition of residents.

3.1.2 Opportunities for Building Preservation: Integration of Government Policy to Satisfy Public Demand

After the cancellation of the monument-preservation and street-widening projects, the government and professionals began to seek compensatory strategies in area-specific plans for historical areas and floor-area ratio transfer. In 1998, officials from the government of Taipei County and Sanxia Township office discussed designating Sanxia District as the Sanxia Cultural Landscape Area. Restrictions on the floor-area ratio were loosened, but landlords were required to maintain the original cityscape, including the façades, and to conduct the necessary restorations. A modified urban plan proposed by the Taipei County government was adopted (a redevelopment plan for the Sanjiaoyong historical district) designating Minquan Street as a historical area. In the same year, the deputy mayor established a coordination and promotion committee for street preservation. All problems related to preservation and restoration were solved through cross-departmental and ministerial collaboration.

In 2002, the Taipei County government employed architects to promote the reconstruction and planning of Sanxia. These architects established an on-site office. The repair of traditional Sanxia shophouses included the renovation of interior structures, bathroom facilities, and kitchen pipes. In addition to repair, relevant cityscape improvements for the surrounding and connecting alleys were conducted, including installing underground pipelines for sewage, telecommunications, gas, electricity, and cable television.

In summary, the conservation of Sanxia depended on the cross-integration of bureaus and offices of the central and local governments and communication between on-site professionals and local residents.
3.1.3 Restoring the Buildings did not Halt the Decline of the District Networks

The residents of the district were divided into the Sanxia Minquan Street Self-Help Society, who wanted the historical district dismantled, and the Sanxia Street Redevelopment Committee, who wanted it preserved. Neither organization is currently active. When the restoration of the historical buildings and the landscape and road improvements were completed in 2007, the government allocated a preservation fund to the Sanxia Street authorities for establishing a management committee to handle the follow-up preservation and management efforts. The committee was not established because of internal problems, and the funds were recovered by the government. The organizational mobilization of the district did not persist after the restoration and resurfaced only after the Sanxia Street Business Circle Development Association was formed with the assistance of the government in 2012. Maintaining this association was difficult because of the rapid flow of tenants and the unwillingness of most landlords to participate.

Because the neighboring land had already been expropriated, residents had difficulty reconstructing their buildings; it was not until the central government granted subsidies between 2002 and 2006 that the buildings in the district were repaired and preserved. However, most of the residents had already moved out of the buildings because of their states of disrepair or abandonment. In other words, despite the building and site repairs, the residents had already disappeared, and the community network vanished, undermining the subsequent management of the historical district.

3.1.4 Gentrification and Homogenization Generated by Historical Area Tourism

In 2004, shophouse restoration began in Sanxia, lasting for 3 years. In 2013, statistics on commerce before and after restoration were studied, revealing that it had greatly altered. Analysis of the shops indicated that business opportunities caused by preservation planning reduced the number of home- and community-based retail stores, transforming the district into a tourism-centered district (Fig.3.). By comparing an investigation conducted in 2003 (Lee, 2003) and one in 2013 by the present author, we determined that only 4% of the original shops remained, and the rest had altered operations. Before restoration, residences and stores selling necessities accounted for 65% of shops on Minquan Street. In addition, before restoration, 14 folk art shops were located on Minquan Street, and the development of the cultural tourism industry had already commenced. After restoration, multiple shops that had been repurposed into housing because of declining business had become stores again, but shops selling groceries, hardware, and motor oil disappeared (Table 1.).

| Type of stores          | 2003 (%) | 2013 (%) |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Housing                 | 47       | 1        |
| Daily necessities       | 18       | 6        |
| Temples and folk supply | 4        | 1        |
| Coffin shops            | 2        | 1        |
| Tourism                 | 14       | 91       |
| Abandoned               | 9        | 0        |
| Dismantled              | 6        | 0        |

After restoration, in 2007, average monthly rents in Sanxia doubled and then quadrupled from the previous amount of NT$20,000. In 2013, rent for first-floor shops was between NT$50,000–100,000. Because preservation has revitalized the area, landlords rarely live there: renting their properties produces high incomes, with nearly 90% of shopfronts being rented.

After Sanxia was restored and stores had been in operation for 7 years, revenues exhibited a decreasing trend; however, rent continued increasing, causing financial crises. Currently, Sanxia does not have a major distinguishing industry: its stores are primarily tourism-oriented, offering wares such as antique furniture, ceramics, toys, and souvenirs. The increased rents means that specialized industries that required long durations were unable to survive. The problems that Sanxia has encountered are enhancements and other typical developments that are similar to those of other historic tourist areas.

3.2 The Preservation of Daxi District

During the Qing dynasty, Daxi District was located at the end of the Dahan River transportation route and was a distribution point for economic resources such as wood, rattan, camphor, and mountain herbs. In the Japanese colonial period, Japanese trading companies developed the Daxi mountain area because of its camphor, and Daxi remained a crucial distribution center for agricultural products.

In the 1970s, with economic development in Taiwan and most households valuing altars, their manufacture became a crucial industry on Heping Road. The development of the dried tofu industry in Daxi began in 1975 in the Cihu Mausoleum of Late President Chiang and was built in Daxi for the numerous visitors (Huang, 2008), (Fig.4.).
3.2.1 Professionals Adopted the Mode of Community Development for Historical Districts

In Daxi District, preservation was spurred by incentives for community development and façade preservation. In 1996, historic-district conservation professionals established an onsite team, Caodianwei Studio, which assisted the township to administer a cash-reward strategy for a 5-year façade preservation project. Resources for community development were introduced to cultivate local organizations. In August 1996, residents organized and established the Taoyuan Tashi District Redevelopment Society (TTOSRS). During this process, professional district preservation used a community development approach to empower local residents and assist them to establish local organizations. Through resident involvement in local affairs, the organizations had the capacity to mitigate problems regarding district preservation.

3.2.2 A Locally Operated Community Organization

In 1997, the TTOSRS applied for funding from the government to perform a living-space beautification project on Heping Road. The organization formulated five working directions on the basis of residential consensus: façade archway protection and restoration, underground-pipeline installation, lighting system upgrades, arcade ceiling and floor tile installation, and street furniture acquisition. To coordinate façades throughout the district, the organization planned to remodel the modern façades of 60 buildings as antique-style façades. The organization actively worked to preserve Daxi and prompted the government to repair façade archways and spaces exhibiting local characteristics.

The organization worked not only to improve structures but also to enable local cultural activities by supporting local organizations to obtain auxiliary programs from the central government. For example, funding from a business circle image-consultation project developed by the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Economic Affairs was used in the Daxi Food Fair and Wood and Arts Exhibition to conduct store surveys and organize cultural festivals. Local community organizations maintained the local characteristics of historical districts.

3.2.3 Preservation and Revitalization of Industries Operated by Community Organizations

Since 1996, the Daxi Township office, local residents and professionals have continued to devote themselves to the preservation and revitalization of the historical district. Approximately 30 wood shops still operate in Daxi District, and most are self-owned shopfronts, where the business owners live and work. The development of the dried tofu industry resulted in seven dried tofu stores, located on Heping Road. The wood and dried tofu industries are crucial industries that still exist on Heping Road; these industries help maintain the district’s crucial characteristics.

By comparing an investigation conducted in 2003 (Lee, 2003) and one in 2013 conducted by the present author, in Daxi District, we determined that 46% of the stores maintained the same operating status in 2013 as they did in 2003, whereas the rest of the stores had altered operations. Because of the tourism benefits generated by historical district preservation, buildings used for housing were converted into stores. In addition, the tourism benefits and the aging of business owners resulted in the gradual disappearance of dry cleaning and grocery stores (Table 2.).

| Type of stores            | 2003(%) | 2013(%) |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Housing                   | 24      | 5       |
| Daily necessities         | 15      | 5       |
| Temples and folk supply   | 3       | 1       |
| Wood workshops            | 39      | 31      |
| Dried tofu shops          | 3       | 7       |
| Tourism                   | 12      | 51      |
| Open spaces and construction sites | 4 | 0 |

Daxi residents possess great energy to transform the local industry. During the preservation process and the operation of community organization,
certain phenomena were observed in Daxi. On the basis of interviews and discussions on domestic and international historical preservation by community organizations and the self-learning process that came with TTOSRS operation, most business owners came to share a common vision for district operation and were certain that distinguishable local industries must develop. The TTOSRS also assisted local store owners to have a clear vision regarding the district landscape, the usage of arcades and streets, and space quality. The Caodianwei Studio and TTOSRS shared the same vision: to develop industries with local features, value existing tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and preserve archway façades and arcade space fluency (Fig.5.).

Residents own most of the property on Heping Road; therefore, a high proportion of owners live on Heping Road and run their own shops. Young adults in Daxi also devote themselves to participating in the local tourist industry. Town Tofu Pudding, located at No. 34-2 Heping Road, and Japanese Style Handmade Tofu, located at No. 54 Heping Road, produce distinct products that represent the Daxi dried tofu industry. Yao Teahouse, located at No. 91 Heping Road, integrates the wood industry and food. The young generation also participates in the conceptualization and execution of new family businesses. The TTOSRS held activities for local children, also facilitating children's participation in public affairs regarding district preservation. These connections developed different ideas regarding district preservation development among the young generation. The Gu family of No. 48 and No. 48-1 Heping Road founded the Taiwan Old House Regeneration Association, which cooperated with various professionals and scholars, with the core value of preserving the heritage of traditional techniques and reusing old houses in the process of integrating the operation and repair of their own old house.

Interviews with business owners from Daxi District revealed that local residents had their own ideas and were willing to devote themselves to operating and modeling the district, producing products with local characteristics, after participating in the TTOSRS. Consequently, a community organization comprising local business owners assisted in enhancing self-improvement skills for store operation and forming district characteristics.

3.3 Comparing Preservation Processes in Sanxia and Daxi

Minquan Street in Sanxia and Heping Street in Daxi differed in their preservation processes and outcomes. Although the historical industries and neighborhood networks continue to exist in Daxi, those of Sanxia have completely disappeared, and Sanxia became a commercial district oriented toward historical tourism. The effects of government policies, the practices of urban planning and conservation professionals, and the formation and development of district conservation organizations on the characteristics and preservation of the two districts are visible.

Table 3. illustrates the crucial themes of the three actors. As shown in the case of Daxi, the collaborative planning by a district network and organization, professionals, and the government to acquire knowledge resources, relational resources, and mobilization networks was required to reinforce the in situ and unique characteristics of the historical district.

| Item               | Sanxia                           | Daxi                           |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Community practice | Vital community network.         | ■                              |
|                    | Internal mobilization of cultural resources for economic revitalization. | ■                              |
|                    | Self-management by community organizations in proposing and implementing district preservation and revitalization plans. | ■                              |
| Professional practice | Professionals enter the community and form a studio for in-depth communication with the locals and for connecting the community with the government. | ■                              |
|                    | Professionals successfully promote the operations of community organizations. | ■                              |
|                    | Continual collaboration between the professional and the community organizations. | ■                              |
| Government policy  | Continual funding in community-led historical district preservation and revitalization plans | ■                              |
|                    | Policies promoted the formation of community organizations. | ■                              |
|                    | Gradual establishment of the preservation and revitalization system. | ■                              |
Table 3. also illustrates the differences between the two historical districts in the community, professional, and policy practices involved in their preservation.

3.3.1 Community Practice

In Daxi, approximately 60% of property owners were found to still be operating their own stores, and approximately 80% of them were still resident in the district. The presence of the original district network facilitated the operation of historical preservation organizations. The operation of historical preservation organizations in Daxi indicated that local organizations were largely devoted to local improvement projects regarding building maintenance, district repairs, and industry promotion to obtain government funding, environmental improvements, and the revitalization of the local tourist industry. Thus, community organizations devoted to preservation were necessary in every locality to prepare communities for integrating external resources in the preservation and revitalization of historical districts.

The operation of the TTOSRS can be used as a reference for the operation of other district organizations. First, the TTOSRS maintained satisfactory relations with preservation professionals, scholars, and groups, employing government resources in the maintenance of public spaces, landscapes, and cultural activities. Second, the TTOSRS exhibited concern for women and young people by organizing activities. Consequently, in Daxi, numerous women and young people have become entrepreneurs in the tourist industry. Finally, organization members are unanimous that maintaining the landscape of the district is essential.

By contrast, after the decline of the mining industry in Sanxia, numerous residents moved out. In the 1990s, multiple houses collapsed, and the buildings did not become suitable for human habitation again until the government intervened. Approximately 90% of property owners did not return to live in Sanxia after the district was renovated, and 90% of the buildings were rented to store owners. The stores sold tourism-related goods, lacking local specialties.

In the early stage of preservation, two groups existed in Sanxia District, namely the Sanxia Minquan District Self-help Association, which supported demolition, and the Sanxia District Redevelopment Committee, which supported maintenance. However, by the late stages of preservation work, neither organization was active. In 2007, the government expected landlords to establish a management committee and take responsibility for the subsequent maintenance and management of the district. However, this committee was not established, and the retention funds were recovered.

As revealed in the two case studies, preserving a historical district requires a community organization led by local residents as well as sufficient mobilization potential and relational resources. When the district network forms a new network with the professionals and government and when community training assists the organization to formulate and implement district preservation and revitalization plans, local industries can continue to develop, thereby preserving the in situ and unique characteristics of the historical district.

3.3.2 Professional Practice

During the initial stage of the preservation of Sanxia, local residents either supported preservation or demolition. Substantial conflict divided those residents who supported demolition and professionals and scholars who supported preservation. Professionals and scholars did not interact much with the community in the late stages. In 2003, the entire area was renovated, and a Sanjiaoyong District Planning onsite workstation established by Hsu Yu-Jian Architects was responsible for responding to local residents’ house repair demands. The studio overcame internal resistance and used professional communications to persuade the shopfront owners, including those who initially planned partial repairs, to agree to complete repairs; this resulted in complete district restoration.

During the preservation of Daxi, Tseng Tse-Fong established a professional team, Caodianwei Studio, which extracted a residents’ vision of district preservation through discussion with residents. Simultaneously, the studio assisted residents in establishing the TTOSRS by introducing resources and programs for community development provided by the government. Community organizations established by local residents empowered themselves by implementing district-preservation and community-development programs. Subsequently, numerous professionals, scholars, and groups cooperated with Daxi’s community organization.

Dynamic professional practice is crucial in altering the status quo. To professionally assist residents, empowering community organization and facilitating residents to mobilize the community are vital. The continual support of professionals assisted the residents to operate community organizations and was crucial in preservation.

3.3.3 Government Policy

The preservation of Daxi was supported by community development policy, business circle redevelopment policy, and regional cultural heritage promotion proposed by the central government, and the dedication of the Taoyuan County government and Daxi Township office to Daxi historical reconstruction. The continually operating program and fund investment by the government provided Daxi with the appropriate resources. The government programs facilitated the new thinking and action models in the district, thereby creating a sustainable force for improving, maintaining, and preserving the quality of the historical district.

In the preservation of Sanxia, the government program lacked guidance and building preservation models and provoked the opposition of residents
in the early stages. In the late stages, the residents' unwillingness to preserve the district was mollified by modifications to urban planning law regarding areas with historical features, floor-area ratio transfers, and funding for repairing buildings and surrounding environments. In contrast to Daxi, Sanxia only passively received subsidies or cooperated with programs organized by the consultant company contracted by the government without actively implementing any program.

4. Conclusions

In the process of Sanxia and Daxi historical preservation, we observed that districts where community organizations are prosperous, such as Daxi, developed into districts with rich local characteristics that manufacture products with local characteristics. Historical preservation transformed the districts because industries that integrate culture and business were developed. However, the transformation of the cultural tourism industry lacking further development of the local industry and directed transformation promoted by local community organizations easily results in excessive tourism development lacking local characteristics, such as what occurred in Sanxia. In the preservation of Sanxia, the government implemented integration, persuading residents and landlords who opposed preservation through clear policy guidance and resource input. In addition, the operation of a professional restoration team in the community successfully preserved street spaces. In Daxi, the government consistently provided policy execution programs. Historical preservation was conducted by gradual execution of relevant programs by central and local governments, professionals, and community residents. This highlights the importance of consistent input of government policy and resources regarding historical preservation. Therefore, policy and professional development must be highly community-based because civil society supported by professionals is a powerful factor in cultural heritage preservation development and systematization. For example, in Daxi, professionals facilitated the formation of community organizations, which supported and facilitated historical preservation. Thus, not only were community networks preserved but also the physical environment.

According to actor and action analysis, the operation of a historical district requires cooperation between the government and the community, participation by a diverse range of stakeholders, and emphasis on local knowledge and relational resources. Through collaborative planning to integrate knowledge resources, relational resources, and a mobilization network, the diverse communities and unique local knowledge can be presented.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge Wallace Academic Editing for translating this manuscript into English.

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