

Course Name: An Introduction To Urban Ecological Heritage: Theories and Applications

Professor Dr. Jenia Mukherjee

Humanities of Social Sciences

Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur.

Week: 01

Lecture: 03

Lecture 3: Historical Urban Landscape (HUL) – Approach, Toolkit, and Actions

So, this lecture is on Historical Urban Landscape Approach Toolkit and Actions. So, here I will discuss, you know this particular concept of HUL or it is also known as an approach the historical urban landscape approach. And, I will explain why you know this is regarded as a point of departure in heritage conservation and management understanding recommendations and guidelines. Then I will discuss a little bit of the historical context the trajectory and development of this concept of HUL. Finally, you know the definition it is a big broad, but very comprehensive and robust definition of what this approach is all about. And then, the toolkit because a toolkit is needed for the implementation of this approach into action.

So, what about the toolkit and what the toolkit is all about. And then of course, further details of the approach and the achievable outcomes that are expected if this approach is implemented into actions. Finally, I will end this presentation with a discussion on the applications and criticisms and criticisms by I mean criticism also to the application of SWOT through a SWOT analysis strength weakness opportunities, strengths weaknesses opportunities and threats. Now coming to the trajectory.

So, HUL is a concept. So, you can see here that in 2011 this approach the HUL approach the historic urban landscape approach was adopted by the United Nations recommendation, but it has a history it has a context it has a trajectory you know of development. So, what happened is that in the like first decade in the early part of the first decade of the 21st century lot of clashes and conflicts were actually going on with, among the different lobbies, you know lobbies including the tourism lobbies the tourist sector the currents and trends of globalization and hyper urbanization. And also you know the development experts about the future of cities because it was quite clear by then that you know very soon the urban context will be different because the rate and scale and intensity through which this urban was kind of expanding the world was becoming urban was I mean it was phenomenal. So, within this changing context within this transforming context it was very important about how like all these I mean the different aspirations of the different interest groups and lobbies could actually be taken into consideration.

And there are a lot of debates going on about the construction of very high buildings I mean the residential buildings and also office spaces where we could actually see skyscrapers in cities like Dresden or Vienna, Budapest and all European cities mainly. So, in 2005 this Vienna memorandum was signed and it there was a declaration on the conservation of historical urban landscape and this was the 11 declaration on the conservation of the setting of the heritage structures sites and areas you know I mean deriving from eco mosque. So, and then like several workshops, several programs, several debates and case study applications where I mean they were pilot case study applications of you know this larger concept of preserving historical urban setting or landscape. And then there were like important conferences held in 2007 in Saint Petersburg and also one in Olinda, but there were multiple other discussions and debates among the experts, world's experts on heritage conservation. And finally, in 2010 in the 33rd session of the UNESCO general assembly this draft was recommended and there was a mandate which was you know kind of put forward by the World Heritage Committee that this Historic Urban Landscape recommendation had to be finalized and adopted by the UNESCO in the next year that is 2011.

And from there on there are the trajectory is still moving and India is also now part of this game and we will discuss it separately, but it is important for us to know that how the implementations are also taking place and how more and more countries are, have become interested and they are also trying to adopt this approach. This is a big definition, but this is a very very important definition you do not need to mug it up, but you just need to you know pick up the keywords because the keywords are important and they are not, they should not be when I say keyword there is a danger that you know you may segregate them from their larger context, but that should not be the case, but you just pick up keywords and then you also position situate and place them within the larger context and understanding then I think you will be able to internalize. So, this definition where you know in the recommendation is said that what is HUL what is historic urban landscape it is the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering. Now, this layering is very important because in the previous conventions also we like do not see this we do not get to know about or we do not I mean the previous conventions did not discuss this layering and you remember the way you know Sardowski and the other critics try to critic the other conventions. So, they brought out this particular you know argument that you know the city as layers as strata how the city building processes had been how the city had interacted with its you know environment with the socio political cultural milieu these layers you know did not find much mention or space or understanding in those previous convention.

So, here it seems that united UNESCO it seems that UNESCO actually picked up from

those criticisms and then the experts tried to include that to accommodate all those critical perspectives and develop this robust understanding and you know approach called HUL or historic urban landscape. So, this concept of layering is there that city as understood you know as a city as an outcome as a result of historical layering of cultural and natural values. So, this is very important and attributes. So, cultural and natural values and attributes extending beyond the notion of historic sense this is also very important that preserving an urban area is not just safeguarding its historic center, but also the peripheral you know aspects the larger settings that actually shape urban nature or urban in that sense. So, it is beyond you know extending beyond the notion of historic nature or ensemble to include, to include what, to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting.

So, this wider context includes what notably the sites topography, geomorphology, hydrology, and natural features, its built environment both historic and contemporary. So, large scale long term temporalities and long term spatial attributes and values. Its infrastructures technology above and below ground, also below ground. So, city is not only what we see at the surface level, but it also has invisible layers. For example, if we think about like water structures so far as a particular city is concerned the wires and even the you know electricity, electric wires and the galvanized iron wires and several.

So, it is like just the water supply system if you can think of or if you can think of sanitation system. So, they are also the part of the heritage of you know built environments and the urban. So, it is important to include the surface level phenomena, events, components, materialities and also the hidden attributes. Its open spaces and gardens, its land use patterns and spatial organizations, perceptions and visual relationships as well as all other elements of the urban structure. So, this is so comprehensive.

It also includes social and cultural practices and values, economic processes and the intangible dimensions of heritage as related to diversity and identity. So, understanding our cities in this way provides us with important knowledge to guide planning decisions and manage change. So, that is why you know HUL is considered to be a very landmark you know point of departure kind of a policy, guiding principles that try to take into consideration all the several aspects when they interact and interact with each other how you know the urban, the how the urban you know shapes itself and also in turn kind of shapes all other components that are part of this larger historic urban fabric. So, you see this like layers of the city. So, everything is there you know in whatever you had learnt in the definition cultural processes, urban structure, economic processes, topography, diversity, built environment, geomorphology, hydrology everything you know all the different layers.

The layer understanding will also get more important when I will show you another picture from another you know case study. So, this is the whole approach all about because and also its its also understanding the integration across all these different components layers, heritage, setting and management. So, layers old new across multiple temporalities, heritage, different aspects, tangible, intangible, hard, soft everything, setting, nature and culture and nature and culture as an embedded whole and management the stakeholders, partnerships, community and everyone who are part of this process. So, it like the HUL approach it is about you know kind of focusing on the integration among cultural, economic and social aspects and where you cover everything like from built environment to intangible heritage to cultural, diversity to socioeconomic activity to environmental features and local community values. So, these are the key factors in HUL and these are the key parameters.

So, again you know like this HUL approach is very very comprehensive because it integrates several aspects together and this is from the again like if you, if it is possible you can go through this HUL guide book. It is not a very large document and it is like it is very interesting because it has lot of interactive elements in its full of photographs and it is very vibrant you know I personally like this HUL guide book a lot. So, these are some of the key important features or dimensions that are there in the concept. So, what is this concept all about? It integrate social, cultural, environment and economic characteristics together in the planning process, it encourages doing that. Then it is a very flexible dynamic approach what do we mean by this it, we mean by this is that you know there are like not universal standardized guide, guiding principles that are suggested, but there are guiding principles, but it can change, it can you know transform because when the local specificities also change.

So, what you are taking or what you are deriving from Budapest may not be similar from Berlin, even Berlin you know the even another European city. Then again what is what you pick up from Berlin may not be similar in Kolkata because different old and new layers different types of cultural in and natural heritage for different cities. So, flexibility is the key word flexibility and dynamism has to be there and it actually you know kind of offers that kind of flexible and dynamic ambience or setting. So, then it is also important because it considers various urban issues and focuses beyond heritage conservation and helps to increase city livability. This is also very very important because it is not only about you know just conserving big structures and then from conservation of big structures to conservation of the historic city centers ok.

Then also to include maybe the marketplace there fine, but you know when we are kind of thinking of restoring a marketplace and building it in like eco friendly or in a like

aesthetic manner what should not be missed and misrecognized and also the livelihood aspirations and the livelihood needs and interest of people, communities you know and also the more marginalized communities. So, the livability of the city has to be ensured. So, here also there is a stress on livability of cities. Then it also focuses on developing sustainable planning solution because you know I must tell you that why this HUL is so important because here you see urban heritage or urban natural and cultural heritage is understood from a larger conceptual framework which also establishes clearer links with sustainable development processes. So, that is also one of the very significant dimensions of the HUL approach.

Finally it also focuses on developing and providing high infrastructural services and involve the people in the process this is very important because everyone has to be involved no one can be missed out and it is important to, because for city utilities is so important if the water system, if the sanitation you know do not work then the city whether you preserve a palatial building or a marketplace or a city center do not make much sense. So, that understanding is also there in the approach of HUL. So, now you need a toolkit because ultimately it has to be implemented practically. So, there has to be ground actions. So, HUL also offers wide range of interdisciplinary and innovative tools which are broadly you know kind of classified under this four categories civic engagement tools, knowledge and planning tools, regulatory systems and financial tools.

And here are the you know explanations about each of these tools and what do they imply and mean. So, for example, civic engagement tools it empowers to identify diverse stakeholders and help to understand and learn about history of community tradition values needs and aspirations. So, the citizens, the community they need to be engaged they have to be a very important stakeholders in decision making otherwise you know because experts they have the expertise, because they have the standard knowledge and they really are the experts of the field, but they may not be experts so far as a particular locality is concerned. So, when you are applying you know this expert knowledge on a particular locality the understandings, the experience, the aspirations of the local communities, local stakeholders also need to be taken into consideration. So, that is what has also been emphasized in historical urban landscape tool kit the engaging civic, engagement tools.

So, this is the way through which they are talking about you know accommodating or including the local stakeholders. Then knowledge and planning tools so, why this the tools knowledge planning tools are important because it help to protect the integrity authenticity of the area. So, you need to have that local knowledge again. So, and it also helps in developing the database which will help to improve quality of life for the area. So, you have need to have data you need to have information so, that you know you can

manage or you can come up with a step by step methodology so, far as the conservation of the restoration processes are concerned.

Then there are regulatory systems so, regulatory system are important to set up rules and regulations of course, norms and acts for managing of tangible intangible elements of heritage including social economic environmental features. So, after all you need a like you know, you need legislations you need acts, you need laws, you know that people would obey people would adhere to people would follow you know because those laws and legislations will then ultimately make the model work in action right. And finally, finance this is also very important. So, financial tools they focus on how to generate income yes in using innovative financial mechanism. So, support and safeguard the heritage values of areas because otherwise it is a very costly process.

So, there also I mean some form of revenue generation has to be, has to be kind of thought upon otherwise you know this projects by themselves are not sustainable. So, financial tools is also one of the very important you know categories in this toolkit of HUL. So, the HUL approach in action on the left hand side there are it talks about the four steps that are involved in this HUL approach in action. It include you know service, service is very very important again a key word and this also makes this approach distinct and unique from the previous, all the previous conventions that we are covered in the other lecture and the charters and several other policy documents on heritage. Because this is unique because it provides lot of emphasis on surveys and mapping of you know the city's resources because once the survey, once the situation, once the situation analysis are not done then you do not know a city and once you do not know the city and it is urban fabrics and how can you plan you know heritage conservation and actions.

Then to reach a reasonable degree of consensus because everyone has to be on board there may be disagreements, but then a consensus has to be reached using participatory planning and stakeholder consultations, stakeholder analysis which we had all already discussed in one of the it is also of course, in one of the tool it is part and parcel of one of the toolkit in whole in civic engagement. Then assessing the vulnerability of the attributes regard to socioeconomic pressure impacts of climate change. So, these also the one another important feature of this whole approach is that it like really stresses a lot so far as the changing environment like, the new sets of stresses that the cities are facing now within the larger context of the Anthropocene or climate change or global environmental change for that matter. So, one needs to assess the vulnerable vulnerability first and then plan you know heritage preservation. Then integrate urban heritage values and their vulnerability status into wider framework of city develop, because I had told you that you know that the departure point in whole is that it establishes a clear a link

with sustainable development and planning processes.

So, that is what is there in this fourth step. Fifth step is about prioritizing policies and actions for conservation and development and the sixth step is this is important again part of the financial tools in the toolkit establishing appropriate partnerships and local management frameworks. So, it is also part of the civic engagement tool as well for each of the identified projects. So, who will run this identified projects? So, it is important that you know you kind of identify and activate a local network of people who would then regularly monitor and execute and also enforce the different components of the project and that you know expert supervision or guidance where there is lot of scope for open discussions and consensus right. Thus the picture at the, or the image at the right hand side is very important because we discussed about the layering thing right and in the definition that the of the city is a layered entity that is very much there that understanding is there. So, you see you know this is from the Ballarat project in Australia. So, it is a success story how whole has been implemented in Ballarat and Ballarat like I personally been there and of course, you know go there and you see you feel that the you can, you can actually feel part of multiple historical times. So, you go there and you see artifacts you see things, but it is not still just like you know it does not give you a feel of a monument as when you enter into a monument, but it gives the feel of a city. But a city you know as an outcome of layered and differentiated and diverse you know temporalities and spatial and cultural components and attributes. So, here you see the layering all these different layers that shape urban, the shape the urban fabric these are there from geology to you know infrastructures to built environment to tangible intangible dimensions.

So, it is important you know identify all these layers because once you also identify these layers from the practical point of view you are also able to you know select the priority areas of action. So, this is that is why quite important. So, what are the expected achievable outcomes? Of course, if you do not need to even go through this slide because you just think about you know the dimensions you think about the approach and you think about the categories in the toolkit and you understand like what should be the achievable outcomes. So, the feasible achievable outcomes would be strengthened sense of place, very important, improved planning design, higher land property values is again is something which where the social scientists have tried to criticize this concept a bit. And then more high end service sector businesses attracting more tourism activities, high revenues for heritage management and maintenance efforts achieving the sustainable development goals for the new urban agenda this is also quite important.

So, wide scale application is taking place. So, if you remember the trajectory slide from 2001, post 2011. So, in 2011 after this was adopted and you know finalized then in the

next few years from 2012 to now there has been applications, there have been application in several so far as several cities and several projects and programs are concerned. So, from Ralpindi in Pakistan to Ito in Ecuador from Suzhou in China to Ballarat, I already discussed in Australia to Istanbul, Turkey, Morocco several cities have taken up several projects you know applying this whole approach, but there are some challenges as well. So, again I am referring I would I should refer to Sadowski because I had learned this from his article mainly and some from some other sources that it is also the approach it is not that it is totally you know innocent and absolutely linear and it is you know it has only positive things in it because there are also some disincentives, there are also some like limits again, limitations and it had made grave application challenges so far as some cities are concerned including like Hong Kong and Stockholm in Sweden, Toronto in Canada and all.

So, we will not go into the details of it, but this gives us an understanding that you know every approach also has its own limitations. And one major point that has been raised by the critics is that there are lot of ambiguities in terms of like how do we define values, what do we understand by attribute because you know there is not a common or general understanding about values or attributes because it also changes it also change across space time cultural context. So, how could this experts you know kind of talk about values and attributes as sacrosanct categories and then this is a very important point raised by Veldpaus that there is a little bit of lack of clarity on power and responsibility distribution between stakeholders ok. We know all that stakeholders you know all the local stakeholders, but then you know the cognitive like configuration that we always have like differentiating between expert and non expert. Are we always ready to really listen to the voice of the so called quote unquote non expert whom we think are non expert because we are experts in the field and that makes the situation very messy.

So, how to co create design and cope implement actions when we have not been able to you know overcome the cognitive appetite and if we say that we have overcome that cognitive appetite. So, how can we prove that that is the real situation. So, these are some of the you know criticisms to the whole approach and I will not go through the details of it, but these two slides it you know this SWOT analysis is there what are the strengths of you and this is internal when applied in a particular space or context. So, for example, just let me give one example and they are like also two sides of one coin. So, for example, whole is defined as management approach.

So, you know the six critical steps already, but then the weakness is the implication of focus on processes are hidden. So, how to move from one step to the other, where the results can be broadly radically different and if you know if you like start moving from one step to other, another in you know so far as different city context urban context are

concerned then it is not true that you will actually achieve similar sets of outcomes or results right. And then the Sadowski again for example, he has pointed out that this 2011 recommendation on whole is a large step forward true as it brought a shift in the ways of thinking yes, but it is not free from criticism often proving to be difficult to implement. Yes, it is beautiful it is really constructive in terms of you know what it had laid out really, but then it is I mean from theorization to implementation to enforcement and evaluation these are big things it is not so easy you know I mean even if the policy is beautiful, but what are the ground level challenges. So, one can really talk about that after 20 or 30 years from the implementation of you know the approaches of any approach.

So, so that we have to wait a bit and also learn from the challenges and mistakes at different city levels as well. And also another important point that he raises is that above all still remaining only a recommendation right this is a recommendation it is not a mandate it is not an obligation by for every city government for every municipal you know administration to actually apply. So, this is beautiful this is important, but how I mean how can we ensure you know its application in the most inclusive and comprehensive manner possible these are questions that are still that still needs to be need to be answered. Similarly opportunities and threats what are the opportunities again two sides of the same coin. So, for example, system of attribute I am taking up the picking up the
fourth
one.

So, system of attributes and values can support revealing differences in place time culture. And the threat is that there are implicit preferences bias there are bias you know that shape every stakeholder. So, how can we you know kind of overcome those biases there is not much discussion on that and you know I honestly for me like personally I believe that the pilot tests case studies and the programs the events where HUL has been applied from all this case studies only we will be able to understand the approach better and also inform the approach from the empirical outcomes that will be generated in each of these urban context. So, we have to wait a bit for that more I think. These are the references go through some of them because you like for example, you know you can go of course, go through the HUL guide book that will be very important, but also go through Sadowski's points of views and criticisms and Veldpaus for example.

And Sadowski is also important because he is not only talks about whole, but he talks about urban cultural heritage as a whole and also provide some important information about the even conventions and charters UNESCO conventions and charters. So, here we had learnt and we had studied the whole concept and the context also toolkit, approach, outcomes and of course, the concept has been placed and understood within the larger historical context of its need and adoption. Then we know now that how otherwise very

comprehensive and robust this approach is and that is why and how it is a point of departure. And then we had also you know discuss a bit about the inadequacies and the limitations and problem areas that have been identified by critics for more efficient and effective course of actions in the future.