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**ABSTRACT**

Recent efforts at the preservation of cultural heritage sites have raised questions about the purpose of heritage preservation. Whether it is to preserve traditional material culture in a world where it is increasingly threatened or to create a new market for cultural consumption; heritage conservation efforts constantly struggle with the idea of 'authenticity.' This paper analyzes recent heritage conservation efforts in the Emirate of Dubai. It contextualizes these efforts with respect to their social meaning and relevance to the society they claim to represent.