

Review Report ISVSej_12.02.05_Nhi
Compiled from Two Reviews

Please use this number to identify the revision.

Title of paper: **Historical and Cultural Value of Abandoned Structures in Bokor Mountain and Kep City: Preservation Strategies**

General

This paper examines an issue related to the historical and cultural value of abandoned structures in Bokor Mountain and Kep City of Cambodia. The paper is reasonably well written. However, it has some issues that need to be resolved.

Title: Title is reasonably well composed. However, it does not reflect the study well. Following title is suggested:
Strategies for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Values of Abandoned Structures in Bokor Mountain and Kep City in Cambodia.

Language: Language is reasonably good. However, there are some grammar errors in the statements. Please pay attention to language. Write short and meaningful sentences and make sure that a line of argument is constructed. Start a new paragraph when a new idea is talked about.

Formatting: This paper has a number of issues of formatting. The template used is the right one. Font must be Times New Roman. There should be no spaces between the sub title and the paragraph below, but the subtitles must not be glued to the paragraph above. Moreover, there should be a space between a paragraph and a figure below as well as the source and the paragraph below it always. However, there should be no spaces between the paragraphs. First line of every paragraph must be indented from the left. Line spaces must be always single. Moreover, bulleted or numbered text must be left-justified.

References are not formatted properly. Please use the second name first. Page numbers should be without p. or pp. Some missing. Be consistent

Please use the ISVS e-journal template to the last dot.

Abstract

Abstract is reasonably well-written. Introduction to the issue is adequate. It also says what is examined clearly. Research methods are explained well. However, it uses 'will' which is inappropriate. Third paragraph talks about aims which is wrong. An abstract must not talk about aims. First sentence of the fourth paragraph is part of the issue and must have been part of the first paragraph. Rest of the fourth paragraph appear to be the conclusions but is not written as the conclusions. Please remove the final paragraph. The abstract must be succinct. It must be within the first page including the keywords.

Paper

1. **The introduction:** Introduction is written reasonably well, in terms of introducing the issue. It rightly explains that these buildings, once symbols of the power and influence of French colonialism in the region, are now largely abandoned and severely deteriorated. It argues that without timely action, these structures risk permanent loss, meaning that a significant part of Cambodia's history and culture could disappear. An introduction must introduce the issue, say what it investigates and then end with the aims and objectives. It should not declare aims before saying what it investigates. This introduction does so. It says that 'therefore, this research aims to address the urgent issue'. Please remove all that is written afterwards and articulate meaningful aims and objectives. Do not talk about aspirations. Focus is not an objective.

Please note that aims are noble, unmeasurable, long term, almost-impossible-to-fully-achieve expectations while objectives are practical, measurable, short term, achievable intentions. Objectives must be always listed starting with 'To'. The introduction must end with them. What is written as aims are objectives. There should be preferably only one aim, but not too many.

2. Theoretical Framework: This paper must present a theoretical discussion about 'historical and cultural values, abandoned structures, and preservation strategies', and other theoretical notions explored in this paper. It must refer to the most outstanding theoreticians who have articulated these ideas. A theoretical framework must be produced employing the voice of the authors with statements such as 'according to Godman (1999), or Lawrence (2000) argues, instead of the author making statements and putting references within brackets. The author of this paper cannot theorize because she/he is not a theoretician. Currently, there is nothing written.

3. Review of Literature:

A review of literature should discuss the major research that have examined the issue previously, to show the status of current knowledge and where the gaps of knowledge exists. The issue here is 'strategies for the preservation of historical and cultural values of abandoned structures'. The review should not be only about the research on Cambodia, but general and then be specific about Cambodia at the end.

A review of literature must be written employing the voice of the authors with statements such as 'according to Oliver (1999), or Rapoport (1969) points out, instead of the authors making statements and putting references within brackets. It should be a 'critical review'. Please see 'how to write a review of literature' in the ISVS e-journal web site and follow suit. Write in the present tense because it discusses current knowledge. Sum up at the end and show what the status of current knowledge is and where the gaps of that knowledge exist. 12-15 references are needed. Currently, only few comments exist also only related directly to the Bokor mountains and only two research have been examined, such as Rapoport and UNESCO. This is totally inadequate.

4. Research Methodology: This is not done well. The research employs a qualitative case study method. Case studies can employ either quantitative or qualitative data gathering techniques, and this must be mentioned first after which, all the data gathering techniques employed must be listed and explained in detail. Use present tense nevertheless. List them first and explain how each was carried out, with full details. Separate paragraphs and explain how data was collected and not only which data was collected. Continuously making statement such as 'methodology is designed based on a robust framework that integrates data collection and multidimensional analysis to ensure comprehensiveness and scientific rigor' and 'methods and tools were selected with precision, tailored to the research context and heritage preservation objectives' are meaningless. These should be evidence for these. Produce a list of abandoned structures first, and then say which one was investigated. Produce a location plan showing where they are located.

List the data gathering techniques such as the following.

- a. Gathering historical documents and archives, including photographs and records from the French colonial period. Explain how this was done.
- b. Observations documented through notes, photographs, and videos to create a comprehensive profile of the current state of the buildings. Explain how the observations were done, where? When? How?
- c. Field surveys carried out at the research sites to assess the physical condition. where when and how. Show locations and buildings.
- d. Interviews with experts and local communities: explain how the respondents were chosen, what type of interviews? How many? When where and how?
- e. Following statements are not part of the methodology. Please remove them. "Based on the analysis, the study proposes three main preservation strategies. First, in-situ preservation is recommended for structures that retain architectural integrity and historical significance, aiming to maintain their authenticity and cultural value. Second, adaptive reuse involves repurposing the structures to suit modern contexts, such as transforming them into tourist attractions or cultural spaces. Third, community-based preservation emphasizes the role of local communities in managing and conserving heritage, thereby enhancing community awareness and active participation in the preservation process."
- f. Research methods and data gathering techniques must be explained in such a way that another person can carry out the same task and see if they will get the same results. That is the test of science. This paper lacks these details.

5. **Case study:** Before the findings, introduce the case study area and where the observations were conducted. Provide a location plan and a general descriptions to the case study including the abandoned heritage sites. This should be done before the findings in section 4.

6. **Findings:** Currently, there is no sub heading to identify which are the findings. In any case, everything presented after the research methodology are findings. Findings begin from the section 4. Please produce data first.

Please produce data and acknowledge sources when presenting data and information. There is no data from the historical documents and archives, field research, observations, and the interviews. In the long paragraph under item 4, only Wikipedia has been cited and this is not acceptable in research. Everything in history is written as if the authors know them; this cannot be. All the materials have been taken from other sources without acknowledgements.

Throughout the findings, only following sources have been cited.

David, 2008; Nhi, 2024; Wikipedia, 2024; Jennifer et al., 2011; Dupuis, 2008; Phyllis, 2011 ; Laurajane, 2006 ; Peter et al., 2011 ; Ashworth, 2011 ; Cantell, 2005 ; Sara et al., 2009 ; Yoshiaki, 2000

David and Peter are first names and the references are therefore wrong.

Moreover, there is no evidence of any archival research. No references to any such sources.

Nguyen Khoi, 2014; Yoshiaki Ishizawa, 2000; two names are cited.

List the abandoned structures examined: Only Bokor Palace, Bokor Church, and colonial-era villas are mentioned. What are the historical and cultural values of them? Where are they located? What did the experts and communities say?

Findings also present case studies referred to as 'examples'. Examples are used in essays and not in research. This has not been mentioned in the research methodology. How the case studies were selected are not known. How data was generated from the case studies are not known.

Findings are very problematic. Historical and cultural values are not clear. Preservation strategies are not clear enough although the table articulates them.

7. **Discussion:** This should discuss the findings of this research with other research that have examined the same issue and what the findings mean and what their implications are. However, the discussion in this paper does not do so. Instead, it summarizes what the research did. This is not acceptable..

8. **Conclusions:** Inadequate and poor. Again, the writing just summarize what this research did. It says that this study reveals that the historical and cultural values of the abandoned structures at Bokor Mountain and Kep are immensely significant. There was no proof of that. In any case what are these values. List them. what is written are not clear conclusions. Please list the specific conclusions referring to the key findings of strategies. List them as 1, 2, 3, 4. Currently, it says what the paper did, instead of presenting the conclusions. Please note that 'concluding remarks for an essay' is not acceptable in research.

Conclusions must relate to the issue of preservation strategies. Be specific. What are the preservation strategies discovered. Making general statements is not acceptable as conclusions. Please discuss the strengths and weaknesses after the conclusions separately.

9. **References:** References are poorly done. Some of the page numbers are missing, some use p. and some pp. some nothing. Books do not require page numbers. Pay attention to details and be consistent. Use Harvard system as per the template. For books, places of the publishers are missing.

Follow the template to the last dot. Left justify the list, and indent the second line; complete each reference.

Final Decision: Major Revisions

Summary of the overall observations of the paper:

This is a very valuable paper that could potentially make a significant contribution to knowledge about the strategies for the preservation of historical and cultural values of abandoned structures. This paper presents a specific case study of the Bokor Mountain and Kep City in Cambodia. However, it needs major revisions to bring this knowledge to be meaningful and cohesive supported by clear findings.

Abstract is not written well. The introduction to the issue is too long. Research methodology is not clear. Conclusions are not presented well. Introduction needs to end with proper aims and objectives. Introduce a proper theoretical framework, and write a proper review of literature.

The research methodology requires to be organized well with the techniques employed to gather data and explanations of how each was carried out with precise details so that the research can be reproduced. Re-organise the findings to be meaningful and to show the main finding of what the historical and cultural values are, that need to be preserved, as well as the preservation strategies derived from the case studies from around the world. They should not be presented as 'examples' but case studies, and at the end of each case study, list the strategies with positives and negatives.

Write the conclusion with only the specific conclusions arising from the findings related to the case study as related to two things: 1. Historical and cultural values of the abandoned structures 2. Preservation strategies. Do not make general statements about what the paper did. This should not be 'concluding remarks' but 'conclusions derived and substantiated by data'.

At the end, discuss the strengths, weaknesses and limitations of this research. Re-examine and reproduce the references to be compatible with the ISVS e-journal template/standards.