

Final Review Report ISVSej_13.03.10_Emre Compiled from Two Reviews

Please use this number to identify the revision.

Title of paper: **Contextual Compatibility in the Adaptive Reuse of Small-Scale Historic Buildings: Muvakkithanes in Istanbul's Historic Peninsula**

General

This paper examines the contextual compatibility of small-scale historic buildings that have been adapted for reuse specifically the Muvakkithanes in the historic peninsula in Istanbul. However, it has some issues to be resolved to bring coherence and meaningfulness to the paper.

Title: Title is reasonably well composed. However, some improvements are needed. Following is suggested:

Contextual Compatibility of Small-Scale Historic Buildings after Adaptive Reuse: Insights from Muvakkithanes in the Historic Peninsula of Istanbul, Turkey

Justification: This paper intends to offer insights into contextual compatibility of small-scale historic buildings after adaptive reuse. It generates these insights specifically by means of a case study of Muvakkithanes in the historic peninsula of Istanbul, Turkey and therefore, the sub title must make this very clear. It is necessary to say that it gains insights from this place, which is in Turkey.

Language: Language is reasonably good. However, there are some issues in terms of grammar and the use of phrases. Pay attention to definite and indefinite articles.

Please follow these language standards.

Formatting: This paper has some issues in formatting. There are some areas where this is not the case. Tables and Fig titles must be always 10 points. Line spaces must be always single even inside tables.

Abstract

The abstract is very well written. An abstract must be in three paragraphs as per the ISVS standards. The first paragraph must introduce the issue This is presented well. At the end of the first paragraph, after introducing the issue, it should say what it examines It does this well too. The second paragraph must present the research methods. It does this well too. The third paragraph must present the specific findings and conclusions. Currently, the last part of the abstract says what the findings are but there are no conclusions. Please add conclusions. Research must have conclusions.

Key words: Identified reasonably well. However, 'Muvakkithanes' is missing. If anyone is looking for research on Muvakkithanes, using it as a keyword, they may not find this paper. That is the purpose of keywords. Please add.

Paper

1. The introduction:

Introduction is written quite well. The issue is framed as an issue of contextual compatibility related to adaptive reuse of historic structures. It moves onto Muvakkithanes only as just one situation where this is pronounced. However, Muvakkithanes are not introduced well. It does not say that they exist in Istanbul, Turkey. Surely, they do not exist in Pakistan or Nepal. This must be said. It is also not clear if they exist all over Turkey. It says that "In Istanbul's Historic Peninsula, they are not situated within a single type of urban setting." Does that mean that elsewhere, they exist differently. Unclear. At the end of this paragraph, it should say what exactly is examined. at the beginning, it only says that "Muvakkithanes make this problem especially visible." Does not say anywhere, they are examined.

Afterwards, define what the aim of doing so. There should be only one aim and several objectives. List the objectives starting with 'to' and STOP. An introduction must introduce the issue as related to the title, and as claimed in the abstract. It must then say what this research specifically examines, followed by the aims and objectives.

Please note that aims are noble, unmeasurable, long term, almost-impossible-to-fully-achieve expectations while objectives are practical, measurable, short-term, achievable intentions.

'To examine' and 'to discuss' cannot be objectives. They are not measurable.

The introduction must end with the aims and objectives. No more writing. Nothing about methods or what the research does or does not do.

Make your argument coherently from the title to abstract to introduction ending with the aim and the objectives.

- Theoretical Framework:** This paper has a good theoretical framework for the study; it examines the theoretical ideas of adaptive reuse, contextual compatibility and small-scale historic buildings in dense historic settings in that order quite well setting out their interconnectedness. However, start the theory by saying which theoretical ideas are relevant to this research: Preservation and conservation of heritage should be at the heart of it and therefore, begin the theoretical framework with an introduction to these ideas. The first paragraph of the review of literature appears to do so. Adaptive reuse is only one technique of conservation. At the end, produce a graphically illustrated theoretical model showing the complexity of the relationships of the ideas.
- Review of Literature:** This paper has a good review of literature. Generally, a review of literature should discuss the major research that has examined this issue previously to show the status of current knowledge, and where the gaps of that knowledge exist. This is done in that order quite well.
- Research Methodology:** This is done very well. It says that it employs a qualitative 'approach,' and 'case studies' as a 'methodology.' It also mentions other data gathering techniques employed. However, data gathering techniques must be listed and each must be explained. Currently they are not presented well. It is better if the field survey, open-source spatial data gathering technique and official datasets gathering technique are listed and procedure explained.

The diagrammatic representation of 'research methodology' is good.

- Introduction to Case studies:** Currently, the case studies are introduced with a lot of details. This is done well. However, the statement that "Muvakkithanes were selected because they represent a small-scale and culturally specific type of historic building" is odd. This has been already said in the introduction. It was not done during the methods. Methods are used to study them.

Surprisingly, although the study is about the Muvakkithanes, the Table 1 lists only the "urban landmarks." It is true that the Muvakkithanes are associated with these. Nevertheless, what should be presented are Muvakkithanes and not the mosques. Identify each Muvakkithane as Muvakkithane-A, Muvakkithane-B etc. in that table. Alternatively, refer to them as "Sultanahmet Mosque Muvakkithane" etc as is done in the findings. Moreover, produce visual images for each Muvakkithane. Similarly, identify them also in the Fig 2 which now identifies the mosques and not the Muvakkithanes.

- Findings:** Please reproduce a short introduction to the issue examined (remind yourself too) first and then present the data from all the data gathering techniques. This means the following.
 - Field surveys data for each case study: Muvakkithane
 - Open-source spatial data obtained: list or produce a table
 - Official datasets were obtained from Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

Current reporting of analysis without data is not acceptable.

Then produce the analysis of each data set. Currently, most of the data is missing. Not a single field survey data. There is no data from any of the other data gathering technique too. It says that "the first part of the analysis examined land-use distribution within the 400 m analytical areas around the sampled buildings." Are these data from the field survey. If so, please present them under the sub title. Field Survey data and analysis.

Follow the same for the other two techniques too.

Hence the 'Findings' are problematic. They are not presented in coordination with each other and as claimed in the research methods. Please present a list of each case study Muvakkithane and what is its adaptive reuse. What are the issues emanating from them. It says "In some areas," and "In other cases." These kinds of vague statements are not acceptable. Be specific.

It is not clear at the end of the findings the issues emanating from contextual compatibility of adaptive reuse of the case studies. This must be explicitly discussed.

Table 3: Comparative environmental profile matrix is useful but does not refer to contextual compatibility.

Fig. 6: Current physical condition is also useful. However, it also does not say adaptive reuse of these structures and the contextual compatibility issues emanating from them.

Significant findings of the analysis are thus poor. They refer to

- muvakkithanes examined do not form a homogeneous group in terms of their immediate urban surroundings. This is known. It should say what this means for contextual compatibility.
- Five contextual types are identified: very useful, but it identifies the context but does not reveal the complex issues of contextual compatibility.
- Land use, public visibility, transport pressure, parking provision and open-space relationships vary substantially across the cases. Obvious, it is naïve to expect them to be uniform in different places. However, this does not divulge any contextual compatibility issues.
- Contextual compatibility cannot be determined through a single spatial indicator. This was already known even before the research was done. Not a new significant discovery. What are the complex indicators? Which are more significant than others. Nothing said.
- Adaptive reuse decisions for small-scale historic buildings should begin with a comparative reading of the surrounding urban context before a new function is proposed. Already known. Any professional getting into designing adaptive reuse of any building will know this. Not a finding of this research. Perhaps they have not been done in these buildings. If so, then that is a conclusion, specific that building.

In fact, in case study research, findings must be case study specific. Please make findings related to each case study. Case study findings as a rule cannot be generalized. That is a rule in research methods.

7. Discussion: What is written as discussion seems to present most of the relevant findings, only while discussing them with other work. This is well done. However, these findings should have been reported before the discussion, as the "List of significant findings," instead of the one presented. Then, they should have been taken for the discussion afterwards.
8. **Conclusions:** There are good conclusions in this paper. However, case-study-specific conclusions must be presented before any generalizations. All the conclusions must be related to contextual compatibility issues of adaptive reuse of Muvakkithanes in Istanbul, Turkey and not "small-scale historic buildings," as being claimed here. This research was not launched to examine contextual compatibility of "small-scale historic buildings," per se, but Muvakkithanes in Istanbul specifically, within that broad issue. If the intention was to examine small-scale historic buildings in general, then it should have chosen a variety of small-scale historic buildings across several cities, and not a sample of Muvakkithanes in Istanbul. This is absolutely important to make this research meaningful and scientific.

Afterwards, please discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this research, and what could future research be.

9. References: References are done reasonably well in the text as well as at the end. However, some issues exist. Do not mention Vol. or pp. for journals. Sometimes volume numbers are missing. Volume No must not be italicized. In multiple authors, such as Dionizio, R. F., & López-Chao, V. there is no comma after the last dot of the initials. For publishers, place of the publisher is needed before. Example, London: Cambridge University Press. Refer to the ISVS e-journal template. Make sure that all the material cited in text are listed here.

Final Decision: Major Revisions

=

Summary of the overall observations of the paper:

This is a potentially very valuable paper that could make a significant contribution to knowledge about the issues of contextual compatibility as related to adaptive reuse of historic structures. It claimed to generate insights from a specific building type in Turkey: muvakkithanes. However, it needs major revisions to bring the argument to be cohesive, supported by clear findings.

The abstract is well done: it introduces the issue and the research methods but does not have specific conclusions.

The introduction needs to be presented articulating the general issue succinctly beginning with the general perspective arriving at the way in which the issue manifests in muvakkithanes. Present what the research examines clearly, posing the questions if any. It should end with proper focused aims and objectives in keeping with the issue.

Please improve the theoretical framework adding conservation of heritage as a key theoretical idea central to the issue. The review of literature is done well.

The research methodology needs to be organized well with the technique employed to gather data and explanations of how this was carried out: Data gathering techniques are mentioned but need clarity. List them and provide details about how each was carried out. Introduce the selection/exclusion criteria of the case studies. Provide details so that another researcher can repeat the same. That is the test of science.

Introduce the case studies only afterwards, with details of locations and criteria for selection. Do not refer only to the mosques: refer to the muvakkithanes. Show images.

Present the 'Findings' from each of the data gathering techniques mentioned before the analysis of the data. Present only the relevant and meaningful findings to reveal the 'issues of contextual compatibility.' Focus on the issues and show the manifestations of these issues. Currently, this is vague and not explicitly established, although that is what the paper claimed that it will do. In other words, the conclusions must be derived and substantiated by the data and be specific to the case studies. List the 'contextual compatibility issues that have manifested in each muvakkithane studied. Discussion is good.

Produce specific conclusions related to each case study first and then produce a summary. Please note that case study findings cannot be generalized. Revisit the aims and objectives and show how they were achieved. 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.