

Hanoi Old Quarter with Its Historic Tube House Transition in the Vietnam Context



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1 The Environmental Changes of the Heritage

Hanoi Old Quarter has been considered as “National historical relic” since 2004 (at decision No. 14/2004/QĐ-BVTT of the Ministry of Information and Culture, dated 5 April 2004) and controlled by the recent regulation on Urban Planning and Architecture (Decision No. 6398/QĐ-UBND, dated 24 Oct 2013).

Over last 20 years ago, new and modern buildings, upgrading infrastructure projects, massive destruction and renovation have made negative changes to the Quarter. Moreover, paving 11 streets, categorized into 2 groups (first commercial streets—from Hang Ngang to Hang Dao and Hang Duong; Dong Xuan to Hang Giay; second food-fair streets—from Hang Buom to Ma May, then Luong Ngoc Quyen; Hang Giay to Dao Duy Tu), is being considered and proposed by Hanoi Old Quarter Management Board [1]. From what has been gathered, it showed that top-down approach for current preservation has raised caused more pressure on local economy, quality of life and facilities than preservation of the significance and authenticity of the heritage, physically.

The area is described by William [2] as “a living tradition”, Nguyen [3] as “a living heritage” or “cultural place” [4] reflecting vernacular lifestyle, architecture and local culture. There are 79 streets and 83 residential blocks within 10 wards’ boundary (Fig. 1), which consists of tube-houses built in various periods. There are about 553 valuable buildings, which include 205 special and 348 common values [5]. Physically, there are a number of valued shop-houses required conservation and restoration urgently. The HOQ still contains five architectural styles that are Vietnamese traditional architecture (before 1900), Chinese style (before 1930), and three European forms (period 1900–1930 and 1931–1945) as considerably as the remaining physical heritage. In 2013, about 120 historical, religious and cultural relics were officially

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