

Refashioning of Old Chinese Shrine into New Café: A Case from Indochina

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Abstract

Many religious shrine has been abandoned for many years due to several reasons. Renovation of those places to regain full function is an interesting attempt. However, refashioning into the new place with new propose of use is a challenging action. Here, the authors present and discuss on refashioning of old Chinese shrine into new café in an Indochina country. This specific place becomes an famous tourist attraction for local tourists.

Keywords: Chinese, shrine, café, refashioning, tourist.

Introduction

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Case

The case is a place name “Lhong café” in Pitsanuloke province, Thailand. The place is a new café where it is an old Chinese shrine. In the past, this place is a famous Chinese shrine name “Sanjaomaetien ho”. Due to some reasons, this place has been abandoned for several decades. A new land owner decides to refashion this place into a café and use for tourism business.

Discussion

Abandoned religious places exist worldwide. Some of those places are protected and registered as national archeological heritage whereas the others remain under risk for destruction. In some cases, old religious places might be turned into new functions or the places might be remained in the same places but the place is already used in new purposes as market, zoo or hospital [1-3].



**Figure 1. A café refashioned from an old Chinese shrine
(in red circle, the symbols of refashioning can be observed)**

In Thailand, many ruined temples get that fade. However, the authors hereby discuss on a more uncommon situation, refashioning of old Chinese shrine. Chinese shrine usually exists in Chinese community in any country. It is rarely abandoned. However, abandoned Chinese shrine can exist and re-innovation is very interesting. Present case is a good extraordinary example. It can revive the life of the old place in a new usage form.

The new café becomes a new provincial attraction and becomes popular for local tourists. This kind of renovation is interesting. While it is a good way for protection of heritage, it might bring a question whether it is an appropriate action in view of cultural and religious issues.

Conflict of interest: None

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