

# Review of: "Ancient Houses in Ben Tre City: A Multifaceted Approach to Preserve Artistic Architectural Heritage and Boost Local Tourism"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The focus of the article rests on Ben Tre city in Vietnam and the remnants of historic houses that are still visible in that city. These houses, deemed ancient, belong to the "French period," which dates back about a hundred years, around the 1920s. In this context, perhaps the word 'ancient' to describe these houses should be avoided as this is misleading given the history of Vietnam. The paper spells out the historical, cultural, technological, economic, architectural, and aesthetic educational values of these antique houses. The authors give interesting information on the ownership chains of these houses and some details (through photographs) of how these houses look. The abstract does mention certain technological aspects that distinguish these houses, but these concerns are not clearly brought out in the paper. The authors then specifically discuss two houses that were slated for demolition, allegedly to create a park in that area. The laws that legally surround construction, demolition, and reconstruction have also been discussed to frame the issue of these houses.

The content of the paper is interesting in terms of the heritage potential of these houses. Nguyen Thi Hau's suggestions regarding these houses are quite specific and very useful. This may give the reader a sense of the prevailing heritage discourse in Vietnam, which should have been further developed by the authors of this draft. What would considerably enhance the paper and make it more useful from a heritage perspective would be to add a map of the city showing the locations of these houses, as well as that of the proposed park. The floor plans and elevations of at least the two houses that are to be demolished should be included to give the reader an idea of the specific style of these houses.

There is some amount of repetition of ideas and information in the paper which should be edited out.