

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

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The article *Ancient Houses in Ben Tre City: A Multifaceted Approach to Preserve Artistic Architectural Heritage and Boost Local Tourism* describes an overview, albeit still rather general, of the state of knowledge of colonial architecture and of the historical period of the study, a basic premise for any restoration work.

The research topic is certainly of great interest; the goal of this paper, indeed, is to not only draw attention to the problems involving the protection of cultural heritage in extreme situations about conservation and restoration with a critical situation of cultural heritage in crisis; but also to encourage a commitment by national organisations to cooperate in the management and enhancement of architectural heritage (Modern architecture of the French colonial period) and to create a single, joint, cultural and historical identity.

The essay, a heartfelt appeal for the conservation of Vietnamese twentieth-century architecture, is indeed of important significance if it succeeds in attracting attention and reflection on the problems of protecting contemporary historical heritage so-called 'at risk' (Document Unesco-DOCOMOMO, *Identification and Documentation of Modern Heritage*), in that it is often subject to abandonment and demolition because its historical and architectural values are not recognized.

Despite this premise, however, there is a lack of initial, even a summary one, framing on the subject, the locations, and the historical and architectural context in which the houses are built.

The rather long text has some repetition of topics that could be summarized, but contextually also better defined, especially with regard to *Chapter 1* (see: cultural and artistic values, material and spiritual values); while I would give more space to the architectural events of the building examined, including the characteristics of the architectural elements and insights into construction techniques and materials, including European ones (for example, from the pictures it is not clear the reference to 'mosaics,' but are they actually mosaics or are they 'Venetian' floors?).

The technical topics are addressed in a very synthetic way, without any reference to the concepts of restoration, such as, for example, the 'compatibility' of materials (is the cement compatible with the original materials?) and the 'reversibility' of the interventions; in fact, there is no reference to the literature on conservation even in a global context, referring to the Restoration Charters, international Conventions and Declarations (*Burra Charter, the Quebec Declaration, Krakow Charter, etc.*).

The References are not very detailed and international, and also rather sparse on the topic of conservation, which, for greater completeness, can be updated.

For a better understanding, I would suggest to the authors that they insert in the text some images of the different houses and their architectural elements.