



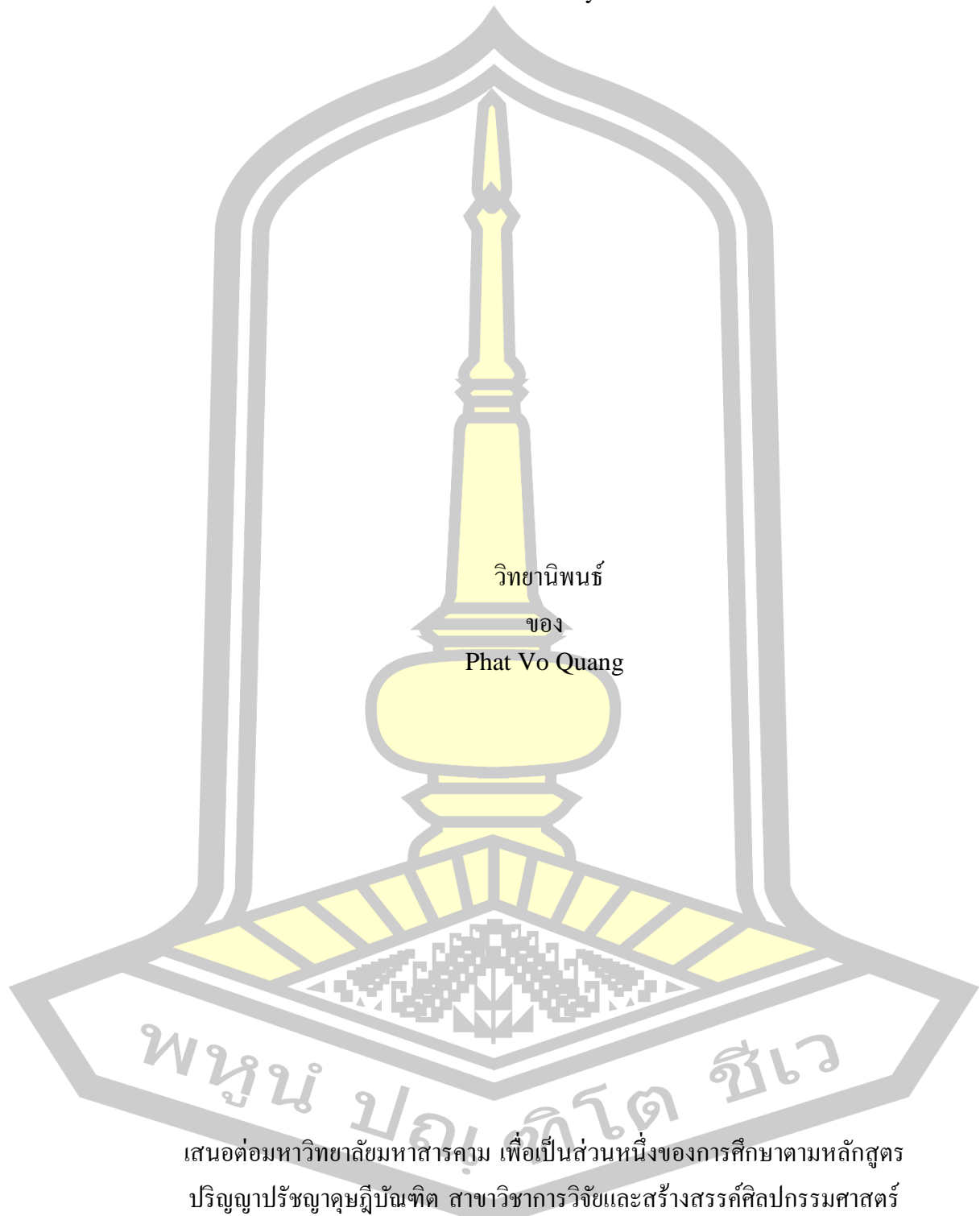
An Dinh Palace, Hybrid Arts, and Modernity in the Context of Vietnam's Last
Monarchy

Phat Voquang

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Fine and Applied Arts Research and Creation
December 2024

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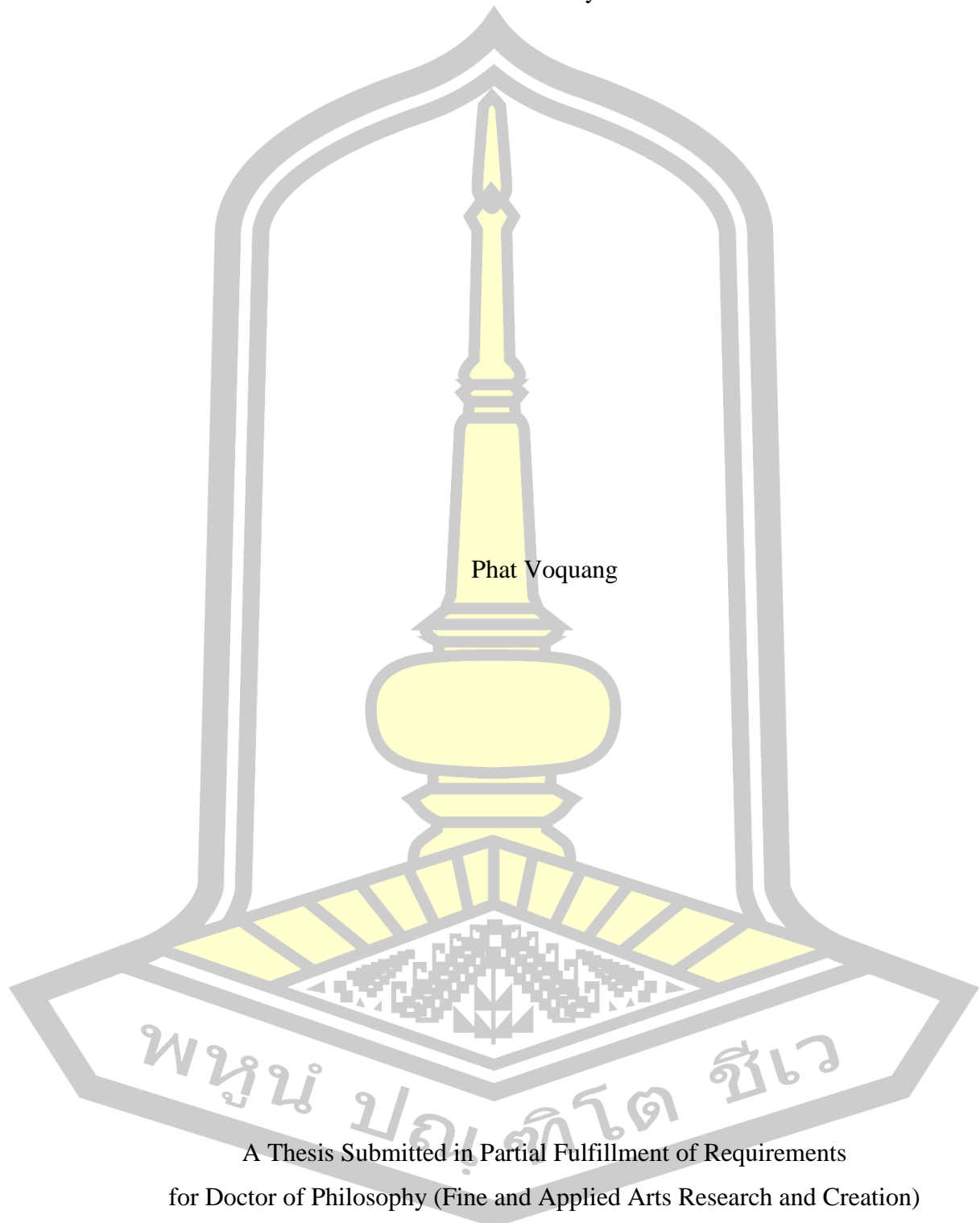
Phat Vo Quang

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Monarchy



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The examining committee has unanimously approved this Thesis, submitted by Mr. Phat Voquang , as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Fine and Applied Arts Research and Creation at Mahasarakham University

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ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT

The An Dinh Palace, part of the Hue Monuments Complex, Vietnam, was built in 1917, the early 20th century, when French culture and art deeply penetrated Vietnam's cultural and social life, especially the fine arts of the Nguyen Dynasty. During the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh (1916 - 1925), Hue royal architecture took on a new look, clearly showing the era's characteristics. The An Dinh Palace is the first work marking a significant change. The An Dinh Palace's architectural and artistic style bears the talented Emperor's mark. As a creative person in thinking and action, Khai Dinh left behind for posterity unique architectural works, including the mark of An Dinh Palace, contributing to embellishing the diverse beauty of the Nguyen Dynasty architectural complex.

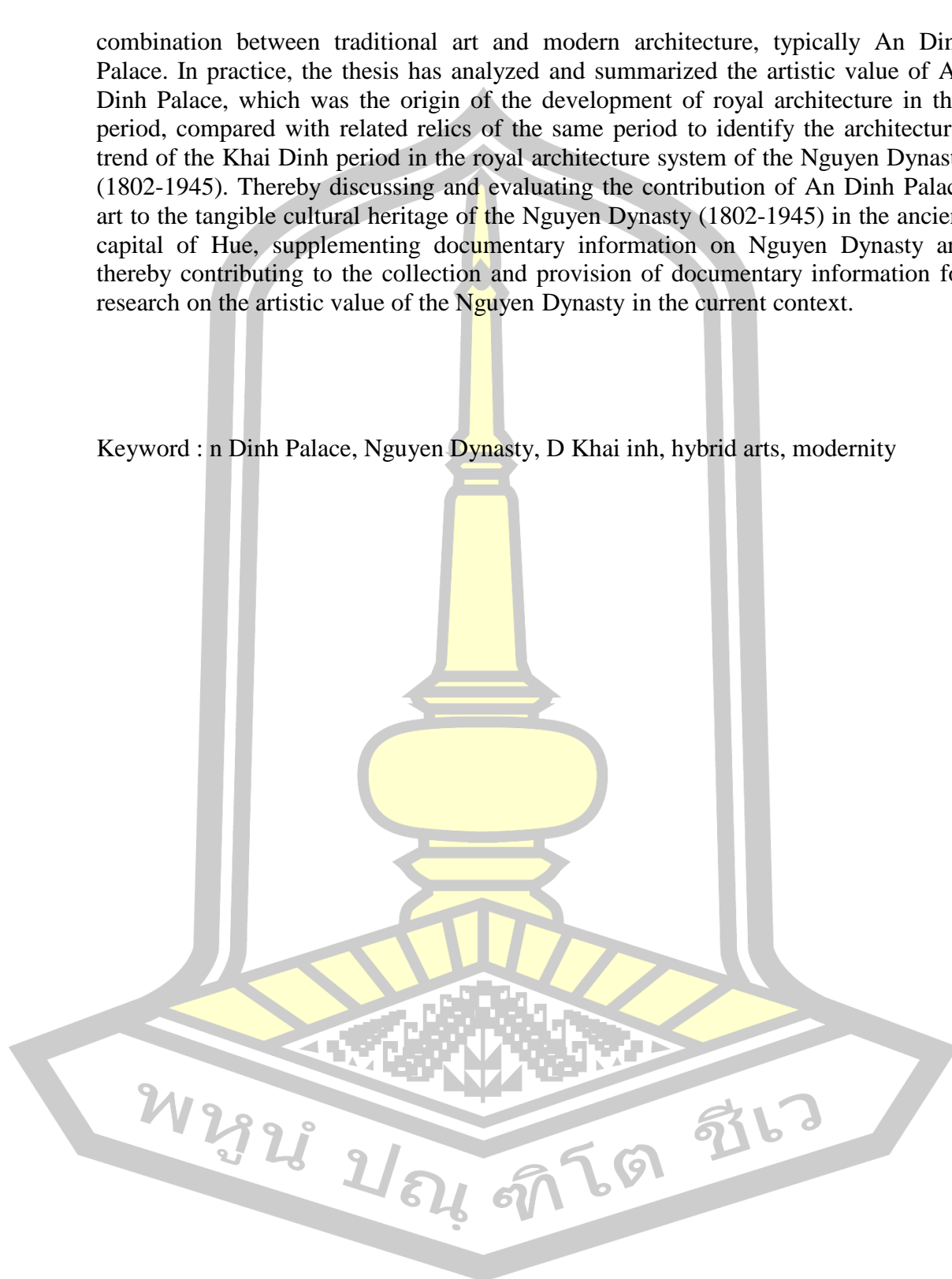
The research objectives of this thesis include the following: The first is to study the political, socio-economic, and cultural context of Vietnam before and after Khai Dinh became Emperor. The second is to study the architectural style and Art decoration of Hue royal architecture in the period before and after Khai Dinh became Emperor. The third is to study and analyze Hybrid art and Modernity at An Dinh Palace. The fourth is to study and analyze An Dinh Palace's characteristics, cultural, and artistic values in the history of Vietnamese Fine Arts. The research objectives are presented in order corresponding to chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the thesis.

This thesis is qualitative research, mainly using two main research concepts: Artistic hybridity and Modernity. It includes relevant research, surveys, statistics, and interviews. The data is primarily divided into two groups related to An Dinh Palace. During the study, data was collected through field investigations of the following groups: Monument management agency, experts in architecture, fine arts, cultural researchers, royal family, and people near An Dinh Palace.

The thesis proves and clarifies the characteristics, values, formation, and development of decorative art in the royal architecture of the Khai Dinh period (1916 - 1925), contributing to affirming the artistic effectiveness in the

combination between traditional art and modern architecture, typically An Dinh Palace. In practice, the thesis has analyzed and summarized the artistic value of An Dinh Palace, which was the origin of the development of royal architecture in this period, compared with related relics of the same period to identify the architectural trend of the Khai Dinh period in the royal architecture system of the Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1945). Thereby discussing and evaluating the contribution of An Dinh Palace art to the tangible cultural heritage of the Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1945) in the ancient capital of Hue, supplementing documentary information on Nguyen Dynasty art, thereby contributing to the collection and provision of documentary information for research on the artistic value of the Nguyen Dynasty in the current context.

Keyword : n Dinh Palace, Nguyen Dynasty, D Khai inh, hybrid arts, modernity



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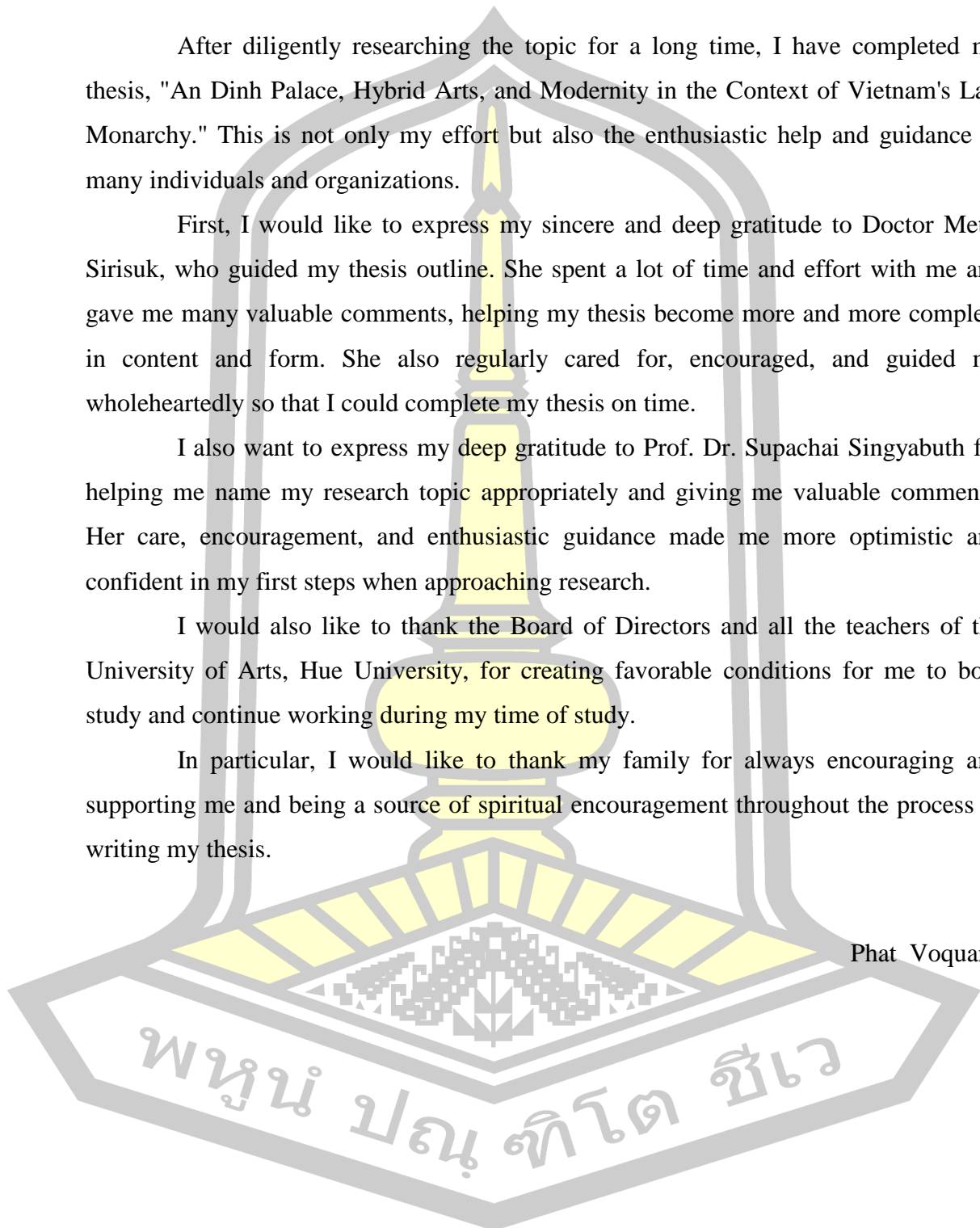


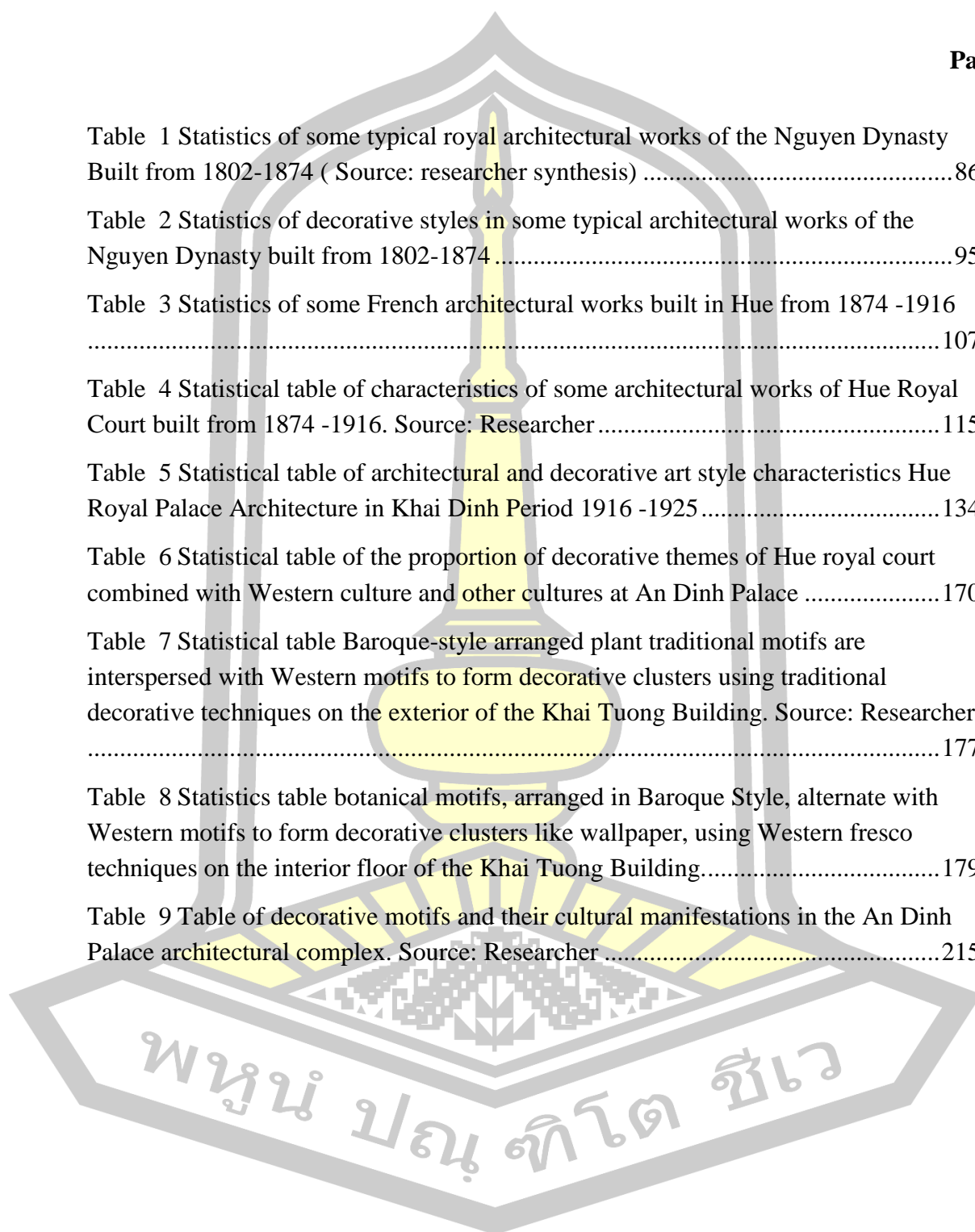
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

For nearly 400 years (1558-1945), the Vietnamese city of Hue was located in the center of Vietnamese territory, chosen by Emperor Gia Long, the first emperor of the Nguyen Dynasty, to be the capital in 1802. It used to be the center of politics and culture of Dang Trong, becoming the feudal capital of a unified country; the Hue City of Vietnam is the convergence of cultural and artistic elites from all over the country. Create a cultural region with its own identity. This place has an entire architectural complex of defensive walls, palaces, magnificent temples, and mausoleums of the Nguyen Dynasty emperors (1802-1945). In addition, there are many French colonial-style buildings here. The contrast between these architectural traditions reflects the two different worlds and political changes that took place in Vietnam in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In 1916, Emperor Khai Dinh ascended the throne in the context of the East-West cultural exchange process, which took place strongly in Vietnam. From 1916 to 1925, he restored and built many works in the Hue Monuments complex, in which Western architectural works with modern techniques appeared in modern construction. As a person who was educated in the traditional way (Dynasty N. H., Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien 7th century, translated by Cao Tu Thanh, 2013, p.612), even though he had no right to self-determination, Emperor Khai Dinh still seemed to want to hold on to the monarchy at the end of the world, with officials The point of keeping the middle way is the most expressed is the balance of East - West, metal - ancient. Translator Cao Tu Thanh commented: ...in contrast to many books and newspapers that have only considered this character mainly as a gambler, a kind of puppet, this is the person with the most depth and angles among the nine emperors of the dynasty Nguyen, after the reign of Tu Duc, is even the most suitable for the central character plan that the Nguyen dynasty proposed in its intention to maintain its existence from the reign of Dong Khanh onwards... Khai Dinh also entered the struggle to preserve the nominal existence of the Nguyen Dynasty despite knowing that this was a life-or-death game because that existence completely depended on the foreign rulers, etc. (Dynasty N. H., Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien 7th century, translated by Cao Tu Thanh, 2013, p.20- 21).

The French also commented on him: "...Emperor Khai Dinh has an open mind to all the novelties of the West..." (Dynasty N. H., Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien 7th century, translated by Cao Tu Thanh, 2013, p.613). During this period, the country also began to make modernization changes to serve the French's interests. Accordingly, "Khai Dinh's court also had to immerse itself in the

modernization process, finding new strength in contemporary social activities to survive" (Dynasty N. H., Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien 7th century, translated by Cao Tu Thanh, 2013, p.38). Emperor Khai Dinh himself once said, "I never stop thinking about the reformed policy." (Dynasty N. H., Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien 7th century, translated by Cao Tu Thanh, 2013, p.134)

Contact with the West, directly with the French, greatly influenced Emperor Khai Dinh's senses. Therefore, immediately after ascending the throne, he rebuilt An Dinh Palace following European-style architecture combined with traditional royal decoration. This is a unique artistic architectural work from the beginning of Khai Dinh's reign, which started the initiative to change aesthetic concepts in construction. Then, he renovated and built a series of royal works, even royal palaces. His mausoleum. According to authors Tran Duc Anh Son and Phan Thanh Hai, the public buildings of the Nguyen Dynasty during the Khai Dinh - Bao Dai period (1916 - 1945) "contributed to creating a new look for the architectural relic complex in the capital." (Tran Duc Anh Son, Phan Thanh Hai, 2002, p.131-141) It can be said that this is one of the manifestations of efforts to reform the country.

An Dinh Palace has many historical and artistic values but has not received full and detailed research attention because of the following reasons:

Firstly, the political prejudice against the Nguyen Dynasty is the dynasty that caused the civil war with the previous Tay Son dynasty and the view that the Tay Son Dynasty was righteous and had the merit of defeating foreign invaders while the Nguyen Dynasty was unjust. When asking for foreign aid, it caused a civil war with the Tay Son dynasty, and Vietnam's modern history in the period after 1975 until now has overshadowed the figure of the Nguyen Dynasty, which was instrumental in building and expanding the country. For a long period of time, researchers tended to criticize the Fine Arts of the Nguyen Dynasty. Typical in the work of Vietnamese Fine Arts, author Nguyen Phi Hoanh affirmed: "The art called Nguyen is truly the feudal art of Hue, etc, from the weakness of the early Emperors to the point of extreme decadence. Point in the last Emperors..."

In contrast to the above statement, Western author L. Cadière was probably not influenced by prejudices against the Nguyen Dynasty. When talking about the art of the "Dang Trong" region, he said: "The beauty is delicate, sometimes elaborate, the elegance and grace are consistent with the gentle, dreamy appearance, often revealing nobility of the people of Hue following their valuable education and tact." (Cadière, 1919, p.47)

In addition, Emperor Khai Dinh had a policy of cooperation with the French, and his love of French culture was demonstrated through the construction of many works, the most famous of which is his mausoleum. Emperor Khai Dinh's mausoleum is completely different from traditional mausoleums or An Dinh Palace and has become a matter of discussion for many people, both in general public opinion and in professional and architectural circles. Therefore, most researchers are still cautious when mentioning these works. No one wants to go against the majority opinion that

criticizes the architecture of the Khai Dinh period as a hybrid, but there are opinions that are unique and different.

Another reason, according to researcher Phan Thanh Binh, is that the art of architecture and decoration of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal court formed during this period (1916 - 1925) is still too new; typically, An Dinh Palace is only more than 100 years old. During that time, more than 50 years were devoted to the war to protect the Fatherland, so researchers need more time to objectively and accurately evaluate the artistic value of works of this period.

Third, An Dinh Palace is privately owned by the royal family and was built by Emperor Khai Dinh with personal money. After many historical changes, it is still the private property of the Royal Family, so opportunities for people to approach, observe, learn, and research are still not common. After the country was unified in 1975, it was awarded by the royal family to the new government and, for a long time, was not considered heritage but was misused and seriously degraded.

From 2016 up to now, An Dinh Palace has been returned to its actual value and has received the attention of international organizations at home and abroad. Many studies address historical, cultural, or statistical factors that describe the field.

As someone with many years of teaching in Fine Arts during my professional career, learning about traditional artistic decorative motifs, I am very interested in expressive, decorative art in works. Architectural project of An Dinh Palace, and also realized that the study of cultural interference expressed through architectural and decorative arts from the Fine Arts perspective has not yet had a complete, detailed, and precise analysis. Thereby providing objective and convincing assessments of the artistic value of An Dinh Palace. The legacy that Emperor Khai Dinh left behind for posterity is the view he once stated: "The spirit of a nation is expressed in artistic products that reflect social life, customs, politics, and mental images. Soul of that nation".

Therefore, choosing the research direction of the doctoral thesis specializing in Creative Research of Fine Arts and Applied Fine Arts with the topic: "An Dinh Palace, Hybrid Arts and modernity in the Context of Vietnam's Last Monarchy" contributes to affirming Determining the artistic value of a work located in the Hue Imperial Monument complex. Most importantly, the desire to demonstrate the spirit of Vietnamese identity is clearly expressed through the work, and this is also useful for one's awareness, contributing a part of the material for a long history of aesthetic research in Hue traditional arts.

พหุ ม ประทีป ชีวะ

Research Objectives

1. To study Vietnam's political, socio-economic, and cultural context before and after Khai Dinh became Emperor.
2. To Study Hue Royal Architecture Before and After Khai Dinh Became Emperor.
3. To study Hybrid art and modernity at An Dinh Palace
4. To study and analyze An Dinh Palace's Characteristics and cultural and artistic value in Vietnamese art history.

Research Question

- 1 When Khai Dinh became Emperor, how did Vietnam's politics, society, economy, and culture change compared to previous kings? And what impact did Emperor Bao Dai's time in power have?
2. Are there any differences in the architectural style and decorative art of the Khai Dinh period and the previous Nguyen Dynasty Emperors?
3. What are the hybrid characteristics of An Dinh Palace's architectural and decorative art? How to a modern work of the period?
4. How is An Dinh Palace's cultural and artistic value expressed? What role does it play in the history of Vietnamese Fine Arts? Does An Dinh Palace demonstrate the creative spirit and promote the national culture of Vietnamese people?

Definition of Terms

1 Wording of research text

1.1 An Dinh Palace

The An Dinh Palace is mentioned in this study is the private residence of Prince Buu Dao from the time he was a duke until he ascended the throne. Emperor Bao Dai inherited the palace. He and his family lived here until his abdication in 1945. In 1954, it was confiscated by the First Republic government and used as a dormitory for professors of Hue University. In 1975, when the country was unified, it was donated to the new government and used for many different purposes, not considered a valuable cultural relic. In 2005, this place received the attention of the German government to fund the restoration and then the French government. Since then, researchers have paid attention to the value of An Dinh Palace. In 2006, it was recognized as a national relic.

1.2 The Last Monarchy of Vietnam

The Nguyen Dynasty was the last monarchy in Vietnamese history. The Nguyen Dynasty was established after Emperor Gia Long ascended the throne in 1802 and ended when Emperor Bao Dai abdicated in 1945 after 143 years. The Nguyen Dynasty was a dynasty that marked many ups and downs in Vietnamese history, especially the invasion of French colonialists in the mid-19th century.

1.3 Hybrid Art

In the scope of this research, the concept of "Hybrid Art" refers to the subtle combination of French architecture and fine arts with traditional Vietnamese architecture and fine arts according to the unique ideas of Emperor Khai Dinh. An Dinh Palace is a testament to the creative spirit and the will to preserve and promote national cultural heritage in the context of the country being colonized by France.

1.4 Modernity

Modernity is used in this research to show that An Dinh Palace is an active acceptance and transformation of new elements of European architecture to create a building suitable for the environment, culture, and specific needs of Hue, Vietnam, through outstanding factors such as Using modern materials and techniques, Blending Eastern and Western architectural styles, Practicality, Influence of international architectural styles.

1.5 Architecture

According to Encyclopedia Britannica: **Architecture**, the art and technique of designing and building, as distinguished from the skills associated with construction. The practice of architecture is employed to fulfill both practical and expressive requirements, and thus, it serves both utilitarian and aesthetic ends. Although these two ends may be distinguished, they cannot be separated, and the relative weight given to each can vary widely. Because every society - settled or nomadic has a spatial relationship to the natural world and to other societies, the structures they produce reveal much about their environment (including climate and weather), history, ceremonies, and artistic sensibility, as well as many aspects of daily life. (Peter Collins, Alan Gowans, 2023) **This Concept is consistent with the criteria for forming the architectural complex of An Dinh Palace.**

1.6 Decoration

The dictionary of popular art terms defines decoration as the art of embellishing and enhancing the aesthetic value and functionality of objects serving the material and spiritual life of people. Thanks to the decorative element, the products are not only beautiful but also more useful. Therefore, decoration is considered an applied art... Interior Decoration aims to beautify all objects in the house, office, reception area, entertainment area, and meeting room, creating a space that is both beautiful and convenient. Exterior decoration focuses on beautifying the landscape outside the house, such as gardens, lawns, paths, fences, lakes, and lights. (Dang Thi Bich Ngan (editor-in-chief), Tran Viet Son, Nguyen The Hung, Nguyen Trong Cat, 2002).

The decoration is considered a special form of human art, an aesthetic category serving human life, the art of creating "Beauty" to satisfy the need for information and communication through symbols associated with the inevitable progress and development of human material and spiritual life.

1.7 Decoration Art

The Oxford Dictionary of Art defines decorative arts as often being used more or less synonymously with applied arts. Still, it is also acceptable to create objects for decoration only, without any practical purpose".(Chilvers, 2004) Another definition from the Encyclopedia Britannica is decorative art, which is concerned with the design and decoration of objects chiefly prized for their utility rather than purely aesthetic qualities. Ceramics, glassware, basketry, jewelry, metalware, furniture, textiles, clothing, and other goods are most commonly associated with the decorative arts. Many decorative arts, such as basketry or pottery, are also commonly considered crafts, but both terms' definitions are arbitrary. It should also be noted that the separation of decorative arts from art forms such as painting and sculpture is a modern distinction. (Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/art/decorative-art/>, 2023)

According to Western concepts, decoration only aims at Beauty. It does not reflect or express anything. It does not belong to the field of Fine Arts.

Contrary to the above Concept, the Chinese define decorative arts as a type of fine art associated with painting, sculpture, and design. It includes not only handicrafts, packaging, advertising, fashion, jewelry, and book covers but also architectural decoration, gardens, stages, squares, and urban landscape design. Decorative arts and handicrafts are similar but also different. (Jianbin, Concise Dictionary of Art Education, 1996, p.308)

Sharing the same point of view, author Le Phuc Quoc, in the Encyclopedia of Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Graphics, Decorative Arts, believes that Decorative art is a field of plastic arts with works that, together with architecture, form the material environment around people in terms of art, bringing the basis of aesthetic images into that environment. Decorative art is divided into monumental decorative art directly related to architecture (creating architectural decoration, paintings, reliefs, statues, stained glass, and mosaics to decorate facades and interiors of houses, as well as sculptures in parks), decorative-applied art (creating art mainly products used for daily life) and decorative art (artistic decoration for festivals, exhibitions, and museums, stalls, etc.). (Quoc L. P., 2010). The ideological and figurative content of decorative works of art is most fully expressed when they are perceived in the complex that uses those works. (Quoc L. P., 2010). In general, this definition has two main ideas. Decorative arts is a field of plastic arts. The ideological content of Decorative arts is fully perceived in its context.

In his work "Traditional Decorative Arts of the Vietnamese People," author Tran Lam Bien stated that the patterns on Vietnamese land do not simply mean decorating architecture or artifacts. They are the eternal quintessence of the Vietnamese people, crystallized from the depths of history and soul. Since the beginning, patterns have been closely associated with life, expressing people's spirit and aesthetic values. Those motifs contain countless stories reflecting history and society and are evidence of the unique cultural identity of the Vietnamese people (Bien, Traditional decorative arts of the Vietnamese,, 2000, p.8). In the book Basic Decoration, author Trinh Ngoc Lam also said: "Decorative art is always dominated by the aesthetic taste of each class in society. It reflects the social level of consciousness in a specific period". (Lam T. N., 1977)

Thus, the above authors agree that Decorative Art does not simply bring visual beauty. Decoration is the art of Beauty, but some meanings need to be discovered deep inside. From the perspective of semiotics, decoration is considered a visual signal containing the message being conveyed. (Hai D. H., Symbolic research, some theoretical approaches, 2014) Thus, this concept's Eastern and Western perspectives are not yet consistent. The researcher will rely on the concepts of Eastern decorative art to analyze An Dinh Palace from the perspective of a work of visual art that satisfies aesthetic factors. At the same time, discovering the hidden messages in the decorative motifs in An Dinh Palace helps the researcher explore the cultural and aesthetic values of the royal court in the historical context of the East-West art exchange and the proactive acceptance of new things by Emperor Khai Dinh. It is not only from the time of Khai Dinh but also a historical process of many years with previously exchanged cultures.

2 Wordng about academic issues

2.1 Cultural interaction is a common phenomenon in cultures from ancient times to the present, contributing positively to the enrichment and diversity of cultures. The process of cultural exchange is the interaction and the impact on each other over a long enough period of time, enough to impact and influence aspects between social groups, subcultures, ethnic groups, and different cultures. Cultural exchange in architecture is the product of the cultural exchange process, the impact on architectural works, and the combination of foreign architectural features with indigenous architecture, leading to changes compared to the original architecture. This Concept explains the hybridization between Western and traditional architecture, which has led to changes in the architectural form of An Dinh Palace.

2.2 Cultural Acculturation was formed in the 20th century; the first approach to this theory was by Professor John Wesley Powell (1834-1902) in a report in 1880. Later, many researchers in society, anthropology, philosophy, and psychology mentioned it more deeply, such as Lewis Henry Morgan (1818 - 1881), William Isaac Thomas (1923 - 1947), and Florian Witold Znaniecki (1882 - 1958). John W. Berry, by identifying the division of cultural acculturation strategies in two directions, the direction of maintaining or rejecting the native culture and the direction of accepting or rejecting the dominant group culture, proposed a cultural acculturation model with four folds: assimilation, separation, integration, and isolation. (Edited by Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organists, and Gerardo Marin, 2002) It can be seen that Vietnam during the French colonial period, specifically during the Nguyen Dynasty under Khai Dinh, applied the model of cultural integration and sought to affirm its cultural characteristics.

According to R. Redfield, R. Linton, and M. Herskovits, acculturation is a phenomenon that occurs when groups of people with different cultures come into direct and long-term contact, causing changes in the original cultural patterns of one or both groups. The researcher chose the Concept of cultural acculturation because the connotation of the Concept shows that there was cultural contact between Vietnam and France. History shows that when Vietnam came into contact with French culture, it changed all aspects of social life. Cultural

acculturation is the selective or forced absorption of culture and its transformation to suit social changes. Previously, China colonized Vietnam for 1000 years but was not assimilated. The influence of this civilization is obvious. However, Vietnamese culture not only has its unique characteristics but also has a strong vitality. The Vietnamese have absorbed the quintessence from outside while maintaining and promoting their fine traditions. Innovation and adaptation to survive are laws of development, the way for Vietnamese culture to survive. (Sy, 2023)

The researcher will apply the concept of acculturation to prove that An Dinh Palace was formed based on the view of author Ho Song: With a new way of thinking, Vietnamese people believe that "it is completely possible to learn to grasp Western European thinking, once having an awareness of French and Western European culture, literature and art, we are completely capable of creating a modern national literature and culture." (Song, 1994, p.76)

2.3 Another important wording

Symbolic decoding theory

Researcher Dinh Hong Hai, in the book "Symbolic Research: Some Theoretical Approaches," stated that Symbolic language is a cultural element created by humans as a symbolic communication and information tool. They are born, exist, and impact human cultural life. Therefore, studying symbolic language also means studying human cultural and social life through the cultural symbols they create. Therefore, symbol research is a science that uses symbolic language to decode cultural elements produced in human life. (Hai D. H., Typical symbols in Vietnamese traditional culture, 2012).

Author Nguyen Huu Thong has affirmed the critical role of decoding cultural and artistic symbols in human life. According to him, symbols are not only loved but also and an indispensable element in all activities of consciousness and unconsciousness, from thinking to behavior. Symbols can be images, sounds, scents, numbers, colors, etc. When they become symbols, they are the key to opening the door of life, revealing hidden spiritual aspects. These are religious behaviors, desires, ambitions, subconscious secrets, tendencies, and community or individual inhibitions. Revealed and then hidden; the more it exposes itself, the more it hides itself; symbols reveal and conceal and conceal and reveal. (Thong, Hue Fine Arts from the Perspective of Meaning and Symbolism, 2001). The author Nguyen Huu Thong's comments clearly affirmed the important role of decoding symbols, contributing to clarifying the meaning of decorative symbols at An Dinh Palace.

The decorative art at An Dinh Palace uses decorative patterns reflecting a historical period; it not only beautifies but also contains ideas, metaphorical meanings, and aspirations about human life with many messages about decorative language and royal aesthetic values. At An Dinh Palace, Western motifs are used in decoration mixed with Eastern motifs. The symbolic meanings of the decoration have cultural inheritance and exchange in the general picture of the sociocultural context of the colonial period. The researcher applies these issues from the symbolic decoding theory to prove and explain his argument.

Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative research method. I describe the elements of the research methodology as follows.

1 Population

1.1 The group provides reference information

This group of people is related by blood to the royal family; they will provide data related to the formation and existence of the Palace of An Dinh and information on the social impact leading to the royal family. To change the concept of royal aesthetics.

(1) The noble family lived in the period 1917 – 1945

This group can provide data on cultural and social life when the French entered Vietnam. How did the influence of French culture affect and change the perception of Vietnamese people in society at that time?

(2) People (Older people living in the period from 1917 to 1945)

This group can provide data on cultural and social life when the French entered Vietnam. How did the influence of French culture affect and change the perception of Vietnamese people in society at that time?

(3) Fine art artists, conservation experts, and artisans directly restored An Dinh Palace.

This group of subjects has paid particular attention to An Dinh Palace in the art of a degraded building but has yet to receive attention from the local government. Through that, there were financial sources for the restoration, and foreign experts were sent to Vietnam to directly restore and train Vietnamese experts in repairing and conserving this monument according to the regulations. International standard. These concerns are valuable in helping An Dinh Palace regain its original beauty after over 100 years. This activity has influenced the local government to pay attention to conserving and promoting the monument's value after many years of being "neglected" for various reasons. This is also a significant group of subjects providing data directly related to the research topic. They will provide structural data, architectural data, and the system of patterns and textures collected during the restoration process. This is an important target group for the topic.

(4) Tourists

This is a group of people who will provide objective assessments of the aesthetic value as well as the unique properties of the building. What elements of the building attract them to visit? How do they feel about the project? These data contribute to clarifying the specific cultural values of An Dinh Palace compared with other works in the complex of Hue's ancient monuments.

1.2 The group provides important information

(1) “Hue cultural” researcher

This is an essential group of subjects directly related to the topic. They will provide data and information about other research works related to An Dinh Palace. At the same time, opinions will be given to evaluate the work's historical, cultural, and artistic values as a scientific basis for affirming the multicultural value of An Dinh Palace.

(2) Local government

This organization manages and directs all activities of the An Dinh Palace project. The organization will provide policies and documents related to the appraisal, assessment, and orientation in the conservation and development of An Dinh Palace.

2 Instrumentation

Motion picture (cameras, video recording equipment), Voice recording, Field notebook.

3 Data Collection

3.1 Fieldwork and data collection

(1) Interview: Formal interview, Informal interview, Focus group interview

(2) Observation: Normal observation (or general observation), Participatory observation

3.2 Documentary data collection.

(1) Collecting information from books, articles, related research works (theses, theses), internet:

(2) Types of books: Research books on Hue culture, Hue fine arts, Nguyen Dynasty, colonial architecture, Indochina architecture, theoretical research books on cultural exchange and acculturation, and decoding symbols create the basis for the analysis to clarify the objectives of the research topic.

(3) Articles related to An Dinh Palace, Colonial Architecture, and Indochinese architecture in Vietnam are collected to serve as a basis for scientific evidence in the research process.

(4) Research works on French colonial architecture, Indochina architecture in Vietnam, and Nguyen Dynasty Fine Arts contribute to comparing and contrasting to find a new direction for the research topic.

(5) Collecting information through fieldwork at the site: I took pictures of architecture and decorative patterns at An Dinh Palace, recording interviews with groups of subjects related to the research topic.

4 Data Analysis

(1) Using qualitative research methods, this study applies the concepts of Hybrid art and modernity to analyze and highlight the artistic value of An Dinh Palace in the context of the last monarchy of Vietnam.

(2) The research data on cultural interaction and acculturation is applied to the thesis to analyze the manifestations of cultural reception and acculturation in An Dinh Palace's architectural and decorative arts as a typical form of cultural architecture and art of this period. From there, analyzing the vestiges of traditional art existing in the architectural works of Indochina in general and the Palace of An Dinh, in particular, will prove that the aesthetic identity of the Vietnamese people is still distinctly formed in the context of interference. And natural acculturation of history

(3) The research data on applying the theory of decoding symbols in a scientific way to approach the research object is the visual symbol of An Dinh Palace, which is an indispensable tool to explain the source of the problem. The creation and movement, the transformation of artistic styles, decorative and shaping techniques, and their expression clarify the hidden cultural values of the project

Scope of Research

1 Scope of Area

An Dinh Palace, Hue City, Vietnam

This study mainly takes An Dinh Palace as the research object to see its architectural and artistic value during the period of cultural interference.

This research is art-based, so An Dinh Palace is closely linked to society, politics, economics, culture, religion, architecture, feng shui, science, and other research fields.

2 Scope of Period

The period when Khai Dinh became emperor (1916 - 1925)

This period was when royal architecture and decorative arts had the most obvious changes. To clarify the research content, the thesis will expand the time range throughout the history of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture. In particular, pay attention to 1885 - 1916 (Dong Khanh - Duy Tan period), a transition period before the Khai Dinh period.

Concept and Conceptual Framework

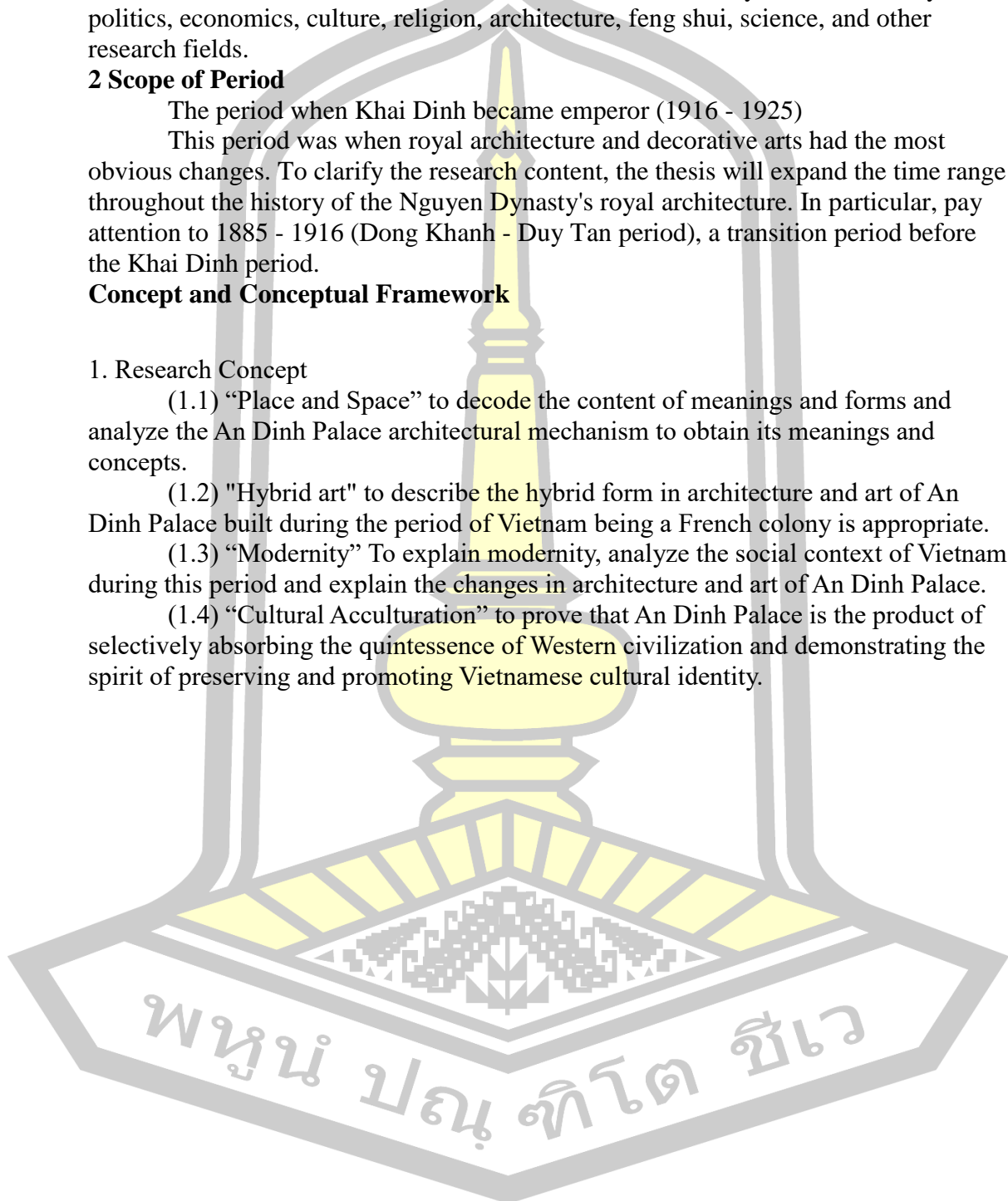
1. Research Concept

(1.1) "Place and Space" to decode the content of meanings and forms and analyze the An Dinh Palace architectural mechanism to obtain its meanings and concepts.

(1.2) "Hybrid art" to describe the hybrid form in architecture and art of An Dinh Palace built during the period of Vietnam being a French colony is appropriate.

(1.3) "Modernity" To explain modernity, analyze the social context of Vietnam during this period and explain the changes in architecture and art of An Dinh Palace.

(1.4) "Cultural Acculturation" to prove that An Dinh Palace is the product of selectively absorbing the quintessence of Western civilization and demonstrating the spirit of preserving and promoting Vietnamese cultural identity.



2. Conceptual Framework

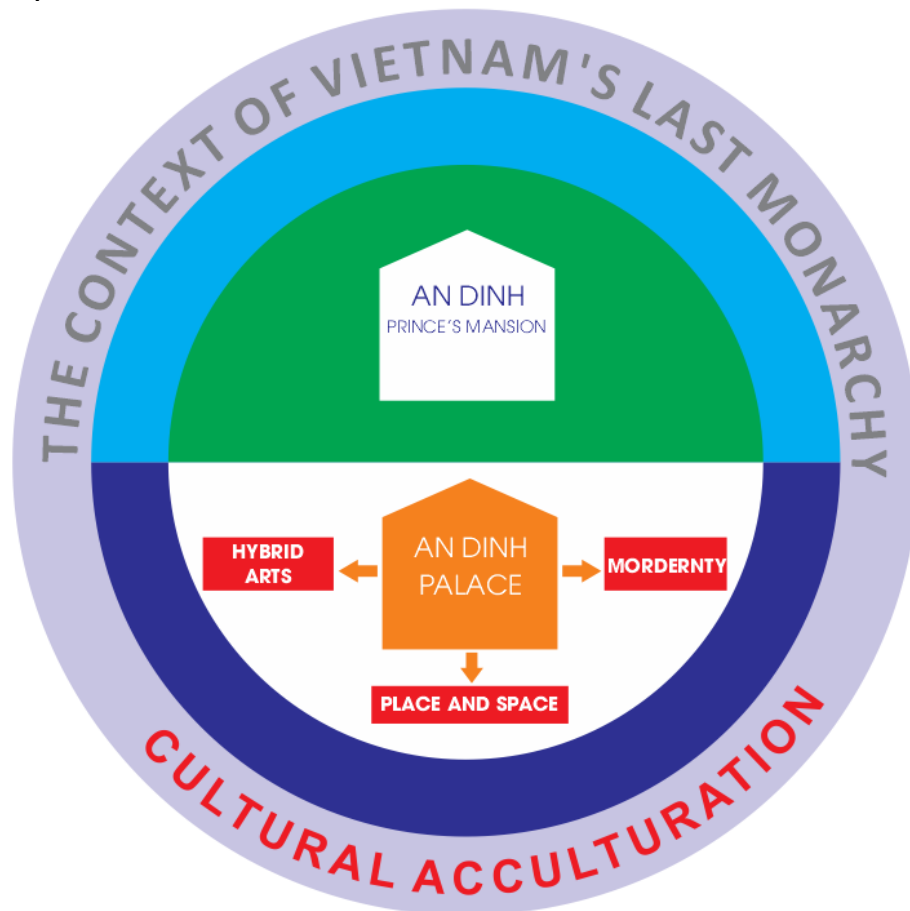


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework. Source: Researcher

Literature Review

1 Literature Review of research work related to the research topic

1.1 Knowledge of the history of the Hue capital, Vietnam, during the independent and French invasions.

The historical documents and records, as well as research on the Nguyen Dynasty in the late 19th century and early 20th century, provide information about the political and social context along with the ideas and policies of the Nguyen court. There are books compiled by the National History of the Nguyen Dynasty, such as Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien 6th Edition; Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien 6th Edition Phu Bien, Dong Khanh - Khai Dinh Chinh Yeu. These books record events that happened under the reigns of Emperors Dong Khanh (1885 - 1888), Thanh Thai (1889 - 1907), Duy Tan (1908 - 1916), and Khai Dinh (from 1916 to 1923). Information from historical documents helps graduate students have an overview of the political and social situation and the influence of the French colonialists on the Nguyen court in the periods before and after Khai Dinh, thereby building the context of the research object.

The book series *Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien* 7th Edition, compiled in 1939 by the National History Quan of the Nguyen Dynasty, provided information on the operation of the Nguyen court since emperor Khai Dinh ascended the throne. (1916) until his death (1925). According to translator Cao Tu Thanh, the value of that work is "reflecting processes and trends, these processes and trends are products of the historical process of Vietnam from 1916 onwards in which the Nguyen Dynasty both an insider and a witness." (Dynasty N. H., *Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien De Seventh Century*, Translated by Cao Tu Thanh, 2013). The book helps researcher better visualize modernization's political, social, and ideological context by maintaining the Nguyen court's traditional values under Khai Dinh. At the same time, from the records of the construction and restoration process of works in the complex Hue monuments recorded in work, the researcher can build a context to form the research object for the thesis and his judgment.

The book "Society of Vietnam under the French Colonial Period." (Le N. , 2016) by Le Nguyen is a fascinating and profound article spanning 64 years, from the date of the signing of the Treaty of Nham Tuat in 1862, turning the three provinces of Southeast Asia into a French colony. In 1926, after emperor Khai Dinh ascended to the throne, Crown Prince Vinh Thuy ascended the throne with the reign of Bao Dai and continued to study in France.

The book *Vietnam Under the French Domination* (Anh, Vietnam under French domination, 1970, p.32) by Nguyen The Anh sketches an overall picture of Vietnam since it was militarily occupied by the French, with the first shot in Da Nang in 1858. Exploiting the rich original historical sources of the French colonial government, which are scientifically filtered, analyzed, and explained by the author to help readers follow the invasion footsteps of the French colonialists when, in turn, they invaded by military force. Based in Cochinchina, pressure was exerted, and the power of the Hue court was neutralized, infiltrating Tonkin until the establishment of a colonial administration.

The book *The Beginning of the Establishment of the French Colonial System in Vietnam (1858 - 1897)* (Tho, 2021) by Dr. Nguyen Xuan Tho has included in this book diplomatic documents, mostly undisclosed. The author attempts to contribute to the identification of some historical periods early in the establishment of the French colonial system in Vietnam. This work will not focus much on the method of local administrative organization by the French in Vietnam but on the political, diplomatic, and international aspects of this infiltration.

1.2 Knowledge Knowledge of Hue relics about Nguyen Dynasty art

Research group on the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture

First, related to the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture, it is necessary to mention the historical works that have been made and published since the years of the Nguyen Dynasty's existence and prosperity, compiled by the National History Institute of the Nguyen Dynasty. It is a valuable source of original documents reflecting the history of construction, architectural structure, decorative art, and architecture of the Nguyen Dynasty.

The book *Hue Citadel* by Phan Thuan An (1999) emphasizes that from the past to the present, Hue City has undergone architectural planning many times but has never been as large and essential as the planning in the past as in the early 19th century, under the early Emperors of the Nguyen Dynasty, Emperor Gia Long and Emperor Minh Mang.

Among the Research works on the fine art of the Nguyen lords and Nguyen emperors in Hue, it is noteworthy that the studies of Nguyen Tien Canh, Tran Lam Bien, Nguyen Du Chi, Chu Quang Tru, Nguyen Huu Thong, and group collaborators Hue Fine Arts (1992), Nguyen Dynasty Fine Arts in Hue (1992), Hue Fine Arts from the perspective of meaning and decorative symbols (2001), Fine Arts of the Nguyen Lords - Data from heritage Tomb (2014). These works have provided researcher with specific and accurate perspectives on the art of the Nguyen lords and Nguyen emperors in Thua Thien Hue, as well as symbolic language and metaphor in the decorative arts.

Journal B.A.V.H¹ - is the abbreviation of the magazine in French with the title: "Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Hué" (Journal of Friends in the ancient capital of Hue). We call it a journal published and circulated in Vietnam and France from 1914 to 1944. In particular, this entire journal has dozens of research articles on Hue. In addition, there is a separate volume. "L'Art a Hue" (Art in Hue) This book has been reprinted several times with hundreds of valuable photos of ancient art in Hue, the Ancient Capital. It was the most valuable scientific journal in Indochina then, especially regarding ethnography, history, geography, culture, and Society. It is also convenient for researchers of the past and present day.

Ha Nguyen's Subregional Book of Ancient Cultures of Hue by Ha Nguyen mentions Hue Culture as a typical example of traditional Vietnamese culture. Hue culture is also almost the only one in Vietnam still preserves the royal and aristocratic character. Along with the continuous movement and development of Society, the cultural sub-region of Hue has been and will increasingly assert its unique role and position in the national culture and the culture of the times.

Book of Hue - Nguyen Dynasty: A Look (Son T. D., Hue – Nguyen Dynasty: A Look, 2008) Dr. Tran Duc Anh Son is a collection of analytical articles on the human ecology, history, and culture of Hue and the Nguyen dynasty in the country's history. Present a contemporary perspective on art, culture, and ancient relics in Hue. Researcher of Hue history - culture Vinh Cao commented: « The point worth paying attention to most is the work of Hue - Nguyen Dynasty. A look has helped us to see the "view" of contemporary people towards art, culture, and ancient monuments. Even though it is an individual's "view," we can still see the attachment, ambition, and respect for cultural heritage, a nostalgic heart, plus the concerns and thoughts of the class. Contemporary young. With that heart and passion, we vigorously promote the preservation of the culture of our ancestors.

1.3 Studies related to the decorative arts of the Nguyen Dynasty

¹ B.A.V.H (Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Hué) is a magazine published during the French colonial period, focusing mainly on research, preservation, and introduction of Hue's history, culture, and ancient architecture. This magazine is published in French and has contributions from many French and Vietnamese scholars and researchers. B.A.V.H plays an important role in recording and preserving many valuable documents about the cultural heritage of Hue, especially about the Imperial City of Hue and its surrounding areas.

The book *Kham Dinh Dai Nam Hoi Dien Su Le*² compiled by the Nguyen Dynasty's Cabinet, provides information on the institutions and activities of the Vietnamese state apparatus under the Nguyen Dynasty. Books 205 (palace), 206 (Emperor resting place), 207 (temple regulations), 210 (capital palace), and 216 (tomb) prescribe construction regulations. Related to the complex of Hue Monuments Although detailed rules on construction and architecture, the information about decorative arts on royal architecture in the canon is limited, mainly decorative style and layout in the roof area. However, this is precious information for researcher to compare and contrast to determine the inheritance of traditional rules and innovations in the overall decorative layout of the site projects in the An Dinh Palace architecture, which is in the context of contemporary modernization.

In the Journal B.A.V.H 1915, author P. Albrecht wrote an article, "The motifs of decorative arts in Hue: the dragon." (Albrecht, 2017). Although only one image in Hue decoration is studied, the value of this article lies in the analysis related to the symbol of "transformation" in Decoration through variations (transformation) of dragons such as trees. The leaves turn into dragons, the revival of dragon culture, the clouds turn into dragons., etc

The symbolism of "turning" has also been studied by Pham Minh Hai in the article "The Meaning of Symbols in Art Decoration in the Nguyen Dynasty" in 2021. to identify the characteristics, meanings, and values of Hue Fine Arts (Hai P. M., 2021, p.23-28). The research will inherit these results to build a theoretical basis and compare them to determine the combination of decorative projects in An Dinh Palace architecture in terms of themes and styles.

One of the first elaborate Research works related to Decoration in the Hue complex is Hue Fine Arts (*L'art Hue*) by L.Cadiere. This study was initially published in the BAVH book volume VI - 1919 (Cadiere, *Fine Art in Hue Ha Xuan Liem*, translated by Phan Xuan Sanh, 1998, p.8-36). It was then republished as a monograph in 1930 (Cadiere, *Hue's Art*, 2012). The two essential parts of this study include the article "Fine Art in Hue" and the anthology "The An Nam Art Motifs." The article "Art in Hue" is the author's discussion of Hue's fine arts, including the role of Decoration in architecture. According to him: "All the talents that the An Nam artist has shown from wood or bronze, what they put on the roof, on the wall, all are done for decorative purposes... and the artist himself Annam knew how to draw from those patterns to use them for the best effect." (L.Cadiere, 2019) In the collection "The An Nam Art Motifs," he systematically collected and classified the styles of the pages. Hue decoration with many styles is taken from the decorative project system in Hue CBT works. However, his Research did not address how decorative projects were combined on a structure. This is the problem that the Ph.D. student will continue to delve into and clarify in his thesis.

In 1979, the article "Hue, Nguyen's Art, It Own" by author Tran Lam Bien laid one of the first steps in identifying the values of Hue's fine arts. (Bien, Hue, Nguyen Fine Arts, personal things", *The way to access history*, 2013, p.119-139) The article's content has raised several features of Hue's fine arts, which are reflected in the roof trusses, the floor - gates, the system of mausoleums, the system of decorative markings, the Decoration of stele, etc. Among these characteristics. The author pays special attention to the "popularity of

² "Kham dinh Dai Nam hoi dien su le" is an important historical book compiled under the Nguyen Dynasty, recording in detail the dynasty's regulations, statutes, and organization. Compiled over 12 years (1843-1855), this work is a priceless treasure of Vietnamese history, containing a lot of knowledge and accurate historical data about the state apparatus of the Nguyen Dynasty.

dividing the cells to decorate" in architectural works in Hue and comments on the layout and use of the theme in the box.

In a follow-up study, the chapter "Decorative Art" in the 1992 book *Hue Fine Arts* (Nguyen Tien Canh (editor), Nguyen Du Chi, Tran Lam Bien, Chu Quang Tru, 1992), the author continued to analyze the layout of the decorative array and decorative box in the architecture—Nguyen Dynasty court. At the same time, he also systematized and explained the meanings of some typical themes and styles in Hue decoration, such as the system of mascots, symbols, and plants. This is valuable information for studying. Research and build a theoretical basis on his thesis's topic and decoration style. In addition, the author's studies on decorative layouts are an opening point for researcher to continue researching the combination of decorative projects in An Dinh Palace architecture.

The article "Hue Decorative Styles" 1999 by author Vinh Phoi gives an overview of the system of themes, styles, and materials used in traditional Hue decoration. (Phoi V. , 1999) In it, the author analyzed the symbolic meaning of each topic and the style used in the decorative arts. At the same time, he introduced and analyzed the materials used in Decoration. Although the author has not mentioned the combination of decorative architectural projects, the article's research results provide helpful information for the researcher to build a theoretical basis for their thesis.

A critical study on decorative arts is "Decoration in Traditional Vietnamese Art by author Tran Lam Bien," published in 2001 (Bien, Decoration in traditional Vietnamese art, 2001). Through the Research on the Decoration of the Vietnamese people in the prehistoric, prehistoric, and independent periods, the author has provided extensive knowledge about traditional decorative themes and the layers of meaning of the Vietnamese people—the system of icons and decorative patterns. In addition, the author has synthesized and systematized traditional Decoration according to four main themes: symbols of natural forces and philosophy, decorative mascots on monuments, plant patterns, and human figures. The author also emphasized the symbolic artistic value that the ancients put into the decorative images of the architectural works. From this combined research result, the Researcher can compare and find out the unique characteristics of the art of An Dinh Palace architecture, including the combination of decorative projects on the architecture.

Also, in 2001, the book "Hue Fine Arts from the Perspective of Meaning and Decorative Symbols" by Nguyen Huu Thong was published. (Thong, Hue Fine Arts from the perspective of meaning and decorative symbols, , 2001). In the main part of the Research, the author has systematized and classified the thematic systems and styles used in Hue decoration. At the same time, he provided analyses and comments on the meaning and value of this system of themes and decorative styles and introduced the materials that express them. This is an essential work in the study of Hue fine arts; from this work, the Researcher can inherit concepts and names related to symbols, themes, and decorative styles along with the meanings they transmit. However, because this is a comprehensive study, the research subjects are not only taken from the architectural works but also the objects and objects in daily life and, therefore, the combination of Decorative projects on architecture has not been discussed and analyzed in depth by the author. The Researcher will further solve this problem in my thesis.

In the doctoral thesis, *Decorative Sculpture on Hue Imperial Citadel Architecture* in 2018 (Nam T. T., Decorative sculpture on Hue Imperial Citadel architecture, Doctor of Arts thesis, 2018), author Tran Thanh Nam identified the expressive form, characteristics, and value of decorative sculpture in Hue Imperial Citadel architecture. The thesis also researched and analyzed the basic elements of decorative sculpture in architecture, including the thematic system, layout, and transmission content of decorative projects. The

author emphasized: "The layout of decorative sculptures on the Hue Imperial Citadel architecture is governed by architecture, which is the distribution of architectural space in which they exist." (Nam T. T., *Decorative sculpture on Hue Imperial Citadel architecture*, Doctor of Arts thesis, 2018, p.143). At the same time, he also commented on the decorative box layout as a "unique architectural decoration form, bearing a unique impression of Nguyen's art." However, the author has not gone into analyzing and evaluating the combination of decorative projects to form an overall decorative art for a royal architectural work. Therefore, the researcher will continue to supplement and clarify this issue based on absorbing and inheriting the author's research results.

In 2019, Nguyen Huu Thong's book *Fine Arts Nguyen* was published. (Thong, *Nguyen Fine Arts*, 2019). In this work, the author synthesizes the characteristics of Nguyen's fine art in the following aspects: architecture, painting - graphics, sculpture, and decorative arts, and comments on the position of fine art. Nguyen is part of the heritage of Vietnamese visual arts. The author has determined that Nguyen's decorative arts are influenced by three cultural layers: the first layer, the Indigenous layer with the depth of the wet rice farming culture; the second layer, the layer that exchanges influences, as well as is imposed by northern culture; the third layer, the layer of influence from the West. In particular, the second cultural layer forms a system of themes used in decorative arts in An Dinh Palace architecture. The author's research results help Reasearcher understand the layers of meaning conveyed by decorative projects to build a theoretical basis for the thesis.

Book of Hue Royal Patterns (Tieu U. , 2008) by Author Ung Tieu, edited and translated into Vietnamese works published in 2011 to Researcher referring to Hue decorative patterns.

1.4 Studies related to the Complex of Hue Monuments under the Khai Dinh Dynasty (1916-1925)

In 1944, in the article "Outline of the main stages of the history of An Nam art." (L.Bezacier, *Outline of the main periods of the history of Annam art* , 2019), L.Bezacier divided the history of traditional art in our country into four main periods. In particular, he classified the art of the Nguyen Dynasty as the last stage, from the 19th century to the early 20th century. Next, he further divided this period into two periods, with the first period being the entire nineteenth century, influenced by Chinese art, and the second period starting when emperor Khai Dinh ascended the throne. Chinese influences are partially replaced by Western neoclassical art. This observation continued to be mentioned by the author in the book *L'art Vietnamien*, published in 1954, when he assessed the second period of Nguyen art as the Neoclassical period (le neo - Classique) (L.Bezacier, *L'art Vietnamien*, Editions de l'Union francaise, Paris, 1954). The delineation of the period of L. Bezacier is the suggestion for the Researcher to learn the specific characteristics of Nguyen's fine art under Khai Dinh through an art object at this stage: Emperor Khai Dinh built the An Dinh Palace.

In 1970, the book *A Brief History of Vietnamese Fine Arts* by Nguyen Phi Hoanh was published. (Hoanh, *A Brief History of Vietnamese Fine Arts.*, 1970). This is a systematic study of the entire history of Vietnamese art, helping readers to fully visualize the appearance of our country's fine arts from primitive times, bronze times, Northern colonial times, past feudal dynasties, and the French colonial period until the time of independence. The book has devoted a chapter to evaluating the fine arts of the Nguyen Dynasty in terms of architecture, visual arts, and Hue porcelain. According to the author, Nguyen's feudal art "went from the weakness of the first emperors to the point of decadence to the climax in the last emperors.". For 1916 - 1925, the author assessed the works of the emperor. Khai Dinh was built as "the ostentatious place of a slave art, which ridiculously harmonizes East-West. "According to some researchers, the above assessments of Nguyen Phi Hoanh about Nguyen's

art are based on a political perspective with the notion that "a political reactionary dynasty can only produce an inferior art and counter-progress." (Nguyen Tien Canh (editor), Nguyen Du Chi, Tran Lam Bien, Chu Quang Tru, 1992, p.10). The participation of Western elements in the decoration of Nguyen court art in the Khai Dinh period is also an issue that the Researcher is interested in in his research direction. Therefore, by studying decorative art in An Dinh Palace architecture in the context of East-West cultural exchange, the Researcher wishes to objectively evaluate the value of Nguyen's fine arts in 1916 - 1925 from the perspective of fine arts.

In 1992, in the "Introduction" of the study of Hue Fine Arts, author Nguyen Tien Canh gave an overview of the role and value of Hue art in the history of traditional Vietnamese art. (Nguyen Tien Canh (editor), Nguyen Du Chi, Tran Lam Bien, Chu Quang Tru, 1992). The author has determined that the complex of Hue monuments "when talking about them as art products, people are used to taking the place name Hue Fine Arts, or the corresponding royal name called Fine Arts Nguyen." At the same time, the author also affirmed that Hue's fine art is "the last stage of the history of ancient Vietnamese art." (Nguyen Tien Canh (editor), Nguyen Du Chi, Tran Lam Bien, Chu Quang Tru, 1992). The Researcher will inherit these results to build a theoretical basis for the thesis. In addition, the author also agrees with L.Bezacier in dividing Nguyen's fine art into two periods, 1916 - 1925, under Khai Dinh, belonging to the second period - the period influenced by the Western method. (Nguyen Tien Canh (editor), Nguyen Du Chi, Tran Lam Bien, Chu Quang Tru, 1992). This is the basis for helping Researcher continue to strengthen the research direction of the thesis and determine the factors that make up the characteristics and values of Nguyen's fine art at this stage.

Similar to studies on the history of Hue art, the reign of emperor Khai Dinh is also considered a milestone in the division of periods in studies on the history of the formation and development of the relic complex—the ancient capital of Hue. In the article "The Values of Hue Architectural Heritage" in 1999 (Kinh H. D., The Values of Hue Architectural Heritage, "Hue - World Cultural Heritage, 1999, p. 28-31), author Hoang Dao Kinh, besides identifying outstanding values of Hue's architectural heritage, divided the development process of the heritage. Hue architecture consists of two periods: in the first period, from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century, Hue's architecture is bold national architecture. In the second period, from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, Hue architecture received new achievements from European architecture. He assessed that Khai Dinh Tomb "should be recognized as a success in the quest to combine East-West architectural traditions, the miraculous success of embossed workers, especially porcelain and glass tiles."

Then, in the article "The Complex of Hue Monuments - Two Centuries of Reflection" in 2002 (Tran Duc Anh Son, Phan Thanh Hai, 2002, p.131-141), authors Tran Duc Anh Son and Phan Thanh Hai divided the history of the Hue Imperial Citadel into three periods. Period: period of formation and development (1802 - 1945); period of crisis and recession (1946 - 1981); recovery period (1982 to present). In particular, for the period of formation and development, the authors continue to divide it into two phases: the period of 1802 - 1917 is the period of applying traditional architecture combined with the Chinese pattern; The period 1917 - 1945 was a period of additional development of European-style architectural works, and it was assessed that architectural works in this period "contributed to creating a new face for the complex of architectural monuments Architecture." in the capital" and "is a way of reflecting the changes of historical and social reality into the history of construction and urbanization of Hue capital."

In 2004, author Phan Thuan An completed the book Complex of Hue Monuments. (An P. T., Hue Monuments Complex, 2004). The book's content consists of two main parts: part 1 presents the historical and geo-cultural context of the Hue region; Part 2 presents

the appearance and value of the Hue relic complex. According to the author, the history of construction in the area of the Imperial Citadel and the Forbidden City of the Imperial Citadel of Hue passed through five periods: Gia Long (1802 - 1819), Minh Mang (1820 - 1840), Thieu Tri (1841 - 1847).), Tu Duc - Duy Tan (1848 - 1916), Khai Dinh - Bao Dai (1916 - 1945). In particular, the final stage, Khai Dinh - Bao Dai, is the period of formation "in the context of Western culture massively flooding into Vietnam."

Thus, studies on the history of the formation and development of the Imperial Citadel of Hue by Hoang Dao Kinh, Tran Duc Anh Son, Phan Thanh Hai, and Phan Thuan An all determine that the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh within a period. It is a distinct period and influenced by Western culture. In addition, several separate studies on a work built in Khai Dinh's time, such as "Kien Trung Pavilion in the Hue Royal Palace" by Phan Thuan An (An P. T., Kien Trung Tower in Hue Royal Palace, 2003, p.149-161) also confirmed this point. This is an open direction for the Researcher to delve into the analysis of Western influences on the royal fine arts of the Nguyen Dynasty under Khai Dinh, based on studying the decoration system of the typical architecture of An Dinh Palace.

Directly related to the creative subject of the research object, Emperor Khai Dinh, is the book Emperor Khai Dinh, images and Events by author Vo Huong An, published in 2016 (An V. H., 2016). In the book's content, the author summarizes the life of emperor Khai Dinh and his main activities during the reign of the Nguyen Dynasty from the time he ascended the throne until his death (1916 - 1925). This helps the researcher get an overview of the Emperor, the influence of the West on him, and the works he built, contributing to determining the background of the research object.

1.5 Documents and Research directly related to An Dinh Place.

The article "An Dinh Palace" in the journal Hue Studies No. 6 by author Phan Thuan An is valuable about science, introducing the detailed history of An Dinh's formation and development. Specific place research articles provide information such as when was An Dinh place built. What is it built for? Who initiated the design of a building plan? How wide and long is it? Project value? The fate of the building through political regimes. At the same time, briefly introduce the artistic value of this palace.

The article "Between two Worlds: Emperor Khai Dinh's Architectural Legacy." (Paula Swart, Bary Till, 2015, p.117 - 133) by two German authors, Paula Swart and Bary Till, is a precious research paper by foreign researchers with opinions and evaluations on the project. This is from an objective point of view and has new perspectives compared to domestic researchers. The study discusses the impact of changes in the social image of the Nguyen Dynasty, leading to the change in the appearance of An Dinh Place's works, and analyzes some artistic details on An Dinh Place and Khai Dinh tombs. To highlight the artistic value of these two works and is a notable change compared to the previous architectural works.

In the research paper "An Dinh Palace - An Architectural Work of Art." (An P. T., An Dinh Palace - an architectural artwork, 2005, p.20) by Phan Thuan An once again affirms the different artistic value compared to other palaces that appeared before in the imperial capital of the Nguyen Dynasty.

In the research paper "Three Prose Decorated on architectural works under the Reign of Emperor Khai Dinh," (An P. T., Three prose decorated on architectural works under the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh, 2016, p.3-11) Phan Thuan An mentioned the writings of Emperors Khai Dinh, two of which are available at An Dinh Palace, in addition to analyzing the ideas of Emperor Khai Dinh. The author also

mentions that the embossed art used to create the essay has contributed an additional cultural and artistic value to the ancient capital of Hue.

The article "The An Dinh Place Architectural Monument." (Thanh, 2002, p.178-182) Tran Huy Thanh introduced the background of An Dinh Palace and described in detail the system of small works in it with the contents of statistics. Architecture and analysis of East-West elements appeared in the work, and it was concluded that this work marked the beginning of the period when Hue's art history was exposed to and influenced by the West but still preserved and promoted the nation's traditional art. However, the article only gives a general opinion about architectural form without specific evidence about the aesthetic elements in decorative art.

The article "Visual and Invisible Aesthetic Values in the Murals of An Dinh Palace, Vietnam." (Hue, 2021) Nguyen Thi Minh Hue has deeply researched the meaning and art form of six mural paintings at An Dinh Palace from there. Argues that these works have human values and affirms that Emperor Khai Dinh influenced Western culture among the emperors of the Nguyen dynasty. The Research shows that the author only studies a specific art object, focusing on analyzing the visual layout of fresco paintings. However, these are rare documents referring to the artistic value of An Dinh Palace for researcher reference.

The article "Architectural Value and Planning Solutions of An Dinh Palace." (Nguyen Tien Nam, Le Bich Ngoc, 2003) by two architects, Nguyen Tien Nam and Le Bich Ngoc, provides an overview of the value of An Dinh Palace architecture. It presents appropriate planning solutions to enhance the value of the An Dinh Palace relic complex.

The article " Impressions of Hue Royal Painting on Nguyen Dynasty Architecture through some Decorative Fresco Works during the Reign of Emperor Khai Dinh (1916-1925)" by author Nguyen Thi Minh Hue introduced fresco art at An Dinh Palace but only stopped at describing statistics about The visual aspect has not yet considered it as an art object to analyze the elements of visual language, layout, lines, colors, etc from an artistic perspective, this is a problem for Researcher.

The Book of Ceramic Mosaic Art (Binh, Ceramic Mosaic Art, 2022) Associate Professor Dr. Phan Thanh Binh mentioned An Dinh Palace as a typical work of the Ceramic Mosaic Art of the Khai Dinh Dynasty. The author has researched the mainstream art of porcelain mosaic on the main gate architecture of the work and assessed that porcelain mosaic art in An Dinh reached the culmination of the art of the Khai Dinh dynasty.

The Geography Book of Thua Thien Hue (Province, 2022), chaired and compiled by the People's Committee of Thua Thien Hue Province, introduced the An Dinh Palace project but only stopped at the introduction in terms of the construction's history, not mentioning the Elements of Art.

Many articles related to An Dinh Palace appeared on the internet, such as:
Discover An Dinh Hue Palace: An impressive 100-year-old ancient palace in Hoa Minzy's MV

The An Dinh Palace: Discover the whereabouts of the Emperors once
The An Dinh Palace Hue - Unique architecture mixed between "Western & Ta" has been more than 100 years "Reviving" a unique set of murals in An Dinh Palace.
The An Dinh Palace: East-West architectural interference
Hue An Dinh Palace - A famous check-in point more than 100 years old in Hue

Unique Architecture An Dinh Palace - Hue

The An Dinh Palace Hue - Discover the history of the golden age of the Nguyen Dynasty.

The An Dinh Palace - A splendid jewel in the dreamland of Hue

The An Dinh Palace: A European pearl in the heart of Hue

The An Dinh Palace - The magnificent castle on the An Cuu River

Discover the lavish, ancient Hue An Dinh Palace - super HOT "virtual living" coordinates

All of the above articles have similar content. They introduce the construction history and architectural statistics and make some basic judgments about the art of the work. However, there is a lack of scientific evidence.

Very few official research works on An Dinh Palace's architecture have been published. Especially in-depth research works on artistic value. The value of An Dinh Palace is still hidden. After the researcher surveyed and investigated the groups of subjects related to the research subject, he summarized some of the following reasons:

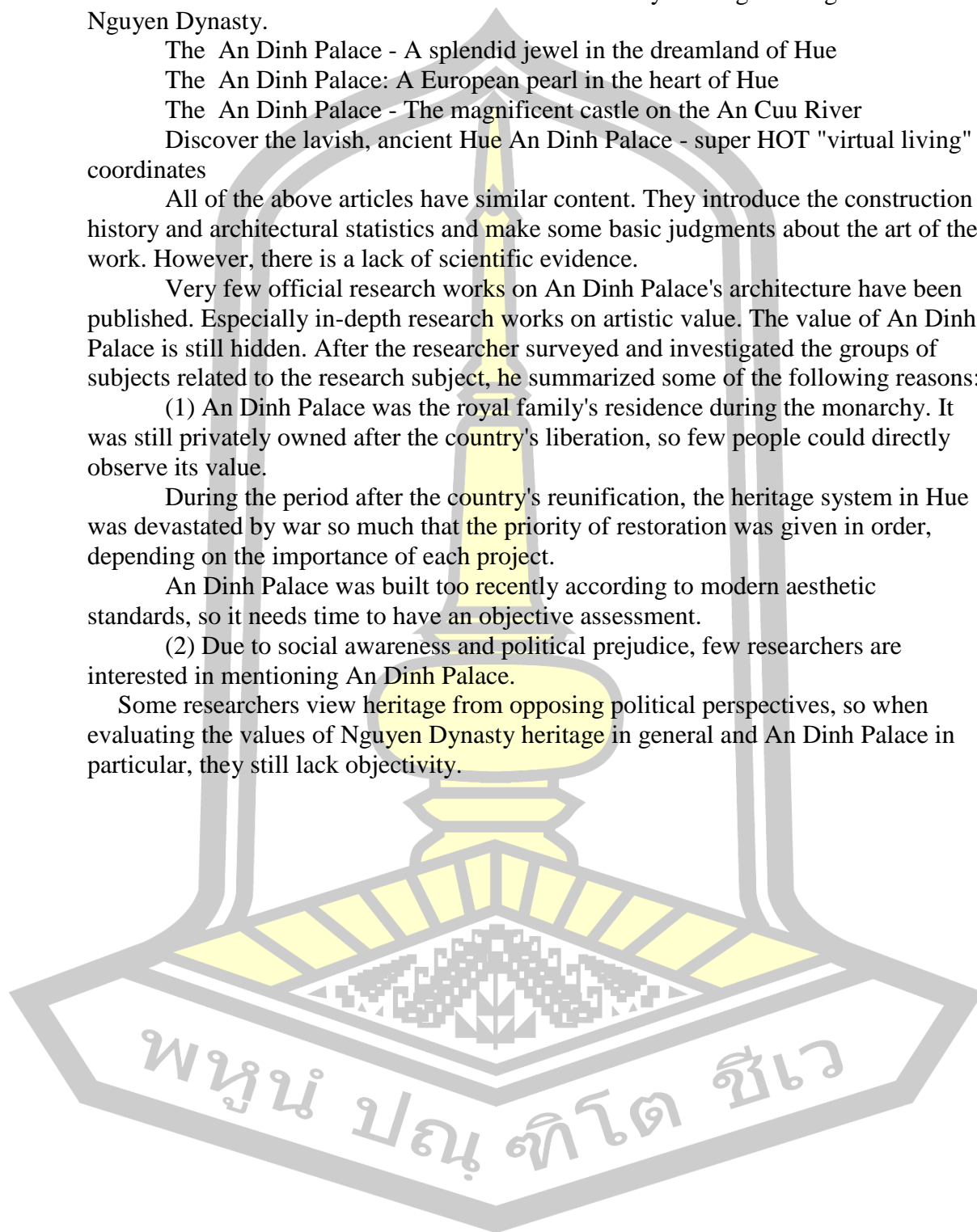
(1) An Dinh Palace was the royal family's residence during the monarchy. It was still privately owned after the country's liberation, so few people could directly observe its value.

During the period after the country's reunification, the heritage system in Hue was devastated by war so much that the priority of restoration was given in order, depending on the importance of each project.

An Dinh Palace was built too recently according to modern aesthetic standards, so it needs time to have an objective assessment.

(2) Due to social awareness and political prejudice, few researchers are interested in mentioning An Dinh Palace.

Some researchers view heritage from opposing political perspectives, so when evaluating the values of Nguyen Dynasty heritage in general and An Dinh Palace in particular, they still lack objectivity.



1.6 Studies related to the analytical aspects of the topic

Studies on French colonial architecture in Vietnam are quite rich in number but mainly focus on works built by the French to serve colonial exploitation. Indochinese-style palace buildings only stop at thematic studies, especially An Dinh Palace Architecture, which lacks comprehensive research.

On the other hand, studies on French colonial architecture often focus on describing the general cultural and natural manifestations in the works and proposing solutions for heritage conservation. There has not been a study on a specific work, typically An Dinh Palace, thereby highlighting the unique value of artistic hybridization with many cultural values.

The Indochinese architectural style creates a unique product that combines the quintessence of Western architecture and local cultural identity, which is the subject of many studies. Traditional decorative motifs, clearly expressed in this architectural style, play a solid foundation for approaching and analyzing Indochinese architecture. This is the basis for Researcher to approach the research direction.

The thesis *The Phenomenon of Cultural Symbiosis between Tradition and Modernity in Vietnamese Architecture*. (Son L. T., 2018) by architect Le Thanh Son, including comments on the characteristics of Indochinese style architecture: The thesis studies the phenomenon of cultural symbiosis between tradition and modernity in Vietnamese architecture. Indochinese style is defined as a combination of Western and Eastern architecture with the decoration of traditional Indochinese architecture. He appreciated the progress of the Indochinese style, although there are still different opinions on combining modern and traditional elements in this movement.

The book *"Indochinese Architecture"* (Son L. T., 2018) by Le Minh Son has provided authentic evidence of the "adjustment" view of architecture in Vietnam in the period 1923 - 1942 of Hébrard - the pioneer of the Indochinese architectural movement. Hébrard affirmed: "... new architecture needs to be in harmony with local culture, not in opposition to old buildings, as well as respect the beliefs and traditions of the people." At the same time, he proposed the optimal method to meet these requirements: to adapt to local architecture, which naturally brings more effective technical solutions suitable for the local context.

Architect Le Minh Son explains Ernest Hébrard's progressive art, emphasizing the use of local artisans to decorate new buildings. Hébrard did not advocate copying Vietnamese artistic traditions but proposed stylizing traditional motifs to suit the architecture. In Hanoi, local motifs were rarely used, while in Hue, they were deployed abundantly, especially in royal works.

Master's Thesis *Architecture The Problem of East-West Harmony in Indochina Architecture in Vietnam* (Quynh, 2012) Architect Truong Nhat Quynh mentioned, more specifically, Vietnamese decorative forms in Indochina Style Architecture (while still claiming that they were initially of Chinese origin).

The thesis *"European influence on architecture and planning of Vietnam in the colonial period - for example in Hue"* (Nam H. H., 2007) of Ho Hai Nam has some new observations on the influence of Western architecture on the architectural planning of Hue city. However, the study only provides an overview of Hue's typical architectural works during the French colonial period without clearly indicating which works were influenced by European architecture. The study lacks specific data and analysis, leading

to subjective conclusions. The research objects are mainly works built by Vietnamese people, so it is impossible to see European architecture's reverse influence on the local environment and culture.

Thesis "Trends of Vietnamese architecture from the late 19th century to the late 20th century" (Dai, 1998) by Ton Dai. This is the first thesis to comprehensively evaluate Vietnamese architectural styles in the modern and contemporary periods. The thesis collects rich data on the development stages to identify, classify, and assess the architectural styles of each development period of Vietnamese architecture. However, the author only stops at the aspect of analysis of form.

The thesis "Cultural Influences on Architecture " (Kenney, 1994) by Stephen F. Kenney provides a research direction in the way of a detailed survey of some typical works to substantiate the statements. The object of the thesis is to different Catholic churches in various countries, such as the United States, Italy, and Nicaragua.

The Book "Culture – meaning – architecture." (Moor, 2000) By KD Moore. The book is a collection of small articles by authors in architecture, planning, anthropology, ecology, psychology, and architectural studies from cultural and relational perspectives, with construction form.

In the article "Architecture and Cultural Attributes" (Cuong, 2011) by Nguyen The Cuong, the author mentions three attributes of culture in traditional Vietnamese architecture: symbiosis, signs, and symbolism.

The studies have much value in explaining architectural identity in different locations. However, culture is a vast, complex, and polysemous field, with many interpretations depending on the approach. In addition, culture moves and develops over time; endogenous factors can combine with external factors. It was born to create new cultural concepts. Therefore, if only studying the relationship between architecture and artistic attributes, the results are difficult to apply to the design or aesthetic evaluation of contemporary works suitable for the context, such as the case of An Dinh Palace. However, these studies also help researchers have an overview of the relationship between culture and architecture. The studies mentioned above show the consensus among researchers on the origin, motifs, themes, and symbolic meanings of fine art decoration in ancient Vietnamese architecture. The consensus among researchers in the above fields has a special meaning and importance for the realization of the research objectives of the thesis.

Inherited thesis results and issues that need to be resolved

(1) Research results of the heritage thesis

Through the study of published scientific works related to the thesis topic, it can be seen that A few domestic and foreign scientists have studied An Dinh Palace.

Research works such as books, magazines, newspapers, scientific research topics, etc., have provided researchers with many valuable documents related to the thesis topic. However, the published research related to the thesis is not rich and in-depth. Those research results are significant. They have provided valuable sources of documents for the thesis. On the other hand, they also suggest theoretical and practical issues and research approaches for the thesis. These are reference and verification documents in researching An Dinh Palace's hybrid and modern art.

(2) The issues raised in the thesis need to be resolved:

First, the thesis focuses on studying the political, economic, social, and cultural context of the Nguyen Dynasty from 1858 to 1945, affecting the formation of An Dinh Palace.

Second, survey and analyze the appearance, characteristics, roles, and values of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture system through the independent and French colonial periods.

Third, point out the hybridity in art, architecture, and the meaning of the decoration of An Dinh Palace to highlight the aesthetic value of An Dinh Palace.

Fourth, find out the cultural and artistic values of An Dinh Palace, and at the same time, prove that the work has deeply expressed the national spirit.

2 Literature Review of research concept

2.1 Book Architecture: Space and Place -The Perspective of Experience

"Space" can be identified by its limitation elements and character, followed by the condition and the order established among these elements. These elements include floor, ceiling, wall, material and surface, and openings (Grutter, 2007). Giedion agreed that architecture can be perceived in two main ways: organizing space and building form. (Norberg-Schulz, 2007)

The original word "Place" has two meanings: First, social status; second, location in space. The first meaning belongs to sociology, while the second belongs to geography. However, in the research process, he found that a place goes beyond social status or location in space; it is itself, with its uniqueness and rules. The main issues of place include the spirit of place, sense of place, individuality, stability, and the relationship between place and, space and time. (Tuan, 2001).

The above concepts show us that "Place" is a space that carries meaning and identity. It is shaped by the architecture's physical characteristics and the emotional or cultural associations people attach to it. A place is a space that becomes meaningful through its connection to human experience. Space becomes a place only when it has personal or cultural meaning. A place can express memories, history, and social relationships, giving it an identity beyond its physical structure. Both concepts aim to create structures that serve a functional purpose and create emotional and cultural values.

The concepts of Space and Place will be applied to explain An Dinh Palace Architecture, which not only achieves aesthetic value but also contains many cultural values associated with a historical period and expresses the thoughts, feelings, and inner thoughts of Emperor Khai Dinh.

2.2 Hybrid Concept in Research Works

The Oxford English Dictionary is a noun used to describe "a thing made by combining two different elements; a mixture." Hybrid can also be used as an adjective to describe something of "mixed character." The word hybrid originated in the early seventeenth century. It was first used regularly in the nineteenth century to describe the offspring of two plants or animals of different species (in Latin, the word meant the "offspring of a tame sow and wild boar"). The term was taken up in the mid-1800s by the Victorian extreme right to describe the offspring of humans of different races-races assumed to be of different species.

Wendy Doniger's definition: "Hybridity defies binary oppositions and understands reality as a fluid rather than a series of solid, separate boxes" (Doniger, Wendy, 2009, p.43). The cases presented here represent different phenomena and diverse approaches to the complexities of intercultural encounters.

Sherry Simon said Hybridite is related not only to syncretism but also to creolity and miscegenation. However, an essential element separates them. The last two terms have in common designate both generic situations of mixture and specific

identities. They suggest that new, lasting identities will be born from the dynamics of the cultural encounter.

Hybridization is not a new synthesis. It is not a perfection. The cessation of hybridity is an illusion. Hybridity is a temporary state, a moment, that will give rise to new forms of expression that we do not yet know.

Hybridism fully belongs to the movement of postmodern thought to the extent that it no longer imagines the world progressing towards a single ideal of universal truth but recognizes a multiplicity of knowledge taking diverse and varied configurations. In the last years of the 20th century, absolute novelty is difficult to find. Changes end up taking the form of variations and mixtures. Postcolonial theorists later deployed hybridity to describe cultural forms that emerged from colonial encounters.

Postcolonial scholars have extended the Concept of hybridity to analyze forms of resistance to colonialism. The term (Hybridity) refers to the integration or mingling of cultural signs and practices from the colonized cultures. Furthermore, Hybrids are a mix of original cultures and adopted ones.

However, they undergo a state of double vision of the social, political, and cultural changes caused by colonialism. Also, they live with no distinct identity as they are between two cultures (Bhabha, 1994, p.112). Bhabha's work celebrates hybridity as subversive and as a "positive moment of challenge and resistance against a dominant cultural force" (Young, 1995). By focusing on the production of meaning, postcolonial scholarship such as Bhabha's emphasizes representation and meaning and thus focuses on discourse analysis. However, Bhabha also argues that transgressions can occur in "third spaces" that include forms of cultural interaction and difference that challenge dominant and totalizing norms.

Regarding the field of art, this interference is used by Historians of Renaissance art, who employed such terms as "mixing" or "hybridity" in the 1920s or even earlier. (Burke, Cultural Hybridity 1st edition, 2009). In terms of form, that's the thing "Old and new met and interpenetrated," producing what Tietze called a "mixed style" (Mischstil). In terms of meaning, Hybrid is understood as a metaphor; for example, a hybrid child is born from a combination of parents of two different races. Many researchers agree with the concepts of hybrid culture: "accommodation" and "conciliation." (Burke, Cultural Hybridity 1st edition, 2009). Hybrid architecture is a product of cultural interference, combining foreign architectural features with indigenous architecture to create a new architecture imbued with identity, superior functionality, and aesthetic. Hybrid architecture is a product of cultural interference, combining foreign architectural features with indigenous architecture to create a new architecture imbued with identity, superior functionality, and aesthetics. Similar to art in general and decorative arts in particular, Hybrid art is "accepting both modernity and antiquity as valid artistic methods, the formal languages chosen depending on the circumstances" local." (Christy Anderson, 2013).

2.3 Book Hybrid Renaissance Culture, Language, Architecture (Burke, Hybrid renaissance Culture, Language, Architecture, 2016)

The book explains the concept of cultural hybridity and other related concepts, such as hybridity in different fields: architecture, painting and sculpture, language,

literature, music, law, and finally, religion. This is the basis for the researcher to apply these concepts to address An Dinh Palace's architectural form and decorative arts transformation.

2.4 Modernity Concept in Research Works

The Concept of modernity originated in the medieval era when it was used to distinguish modern churches from paganism. Modernism, as it relates to architecture, is a 19th-century phenomenon. Similar to avant-garde movements in art and music (Heynen 1999; Lu 2011). This study uses the term "modern" for cultural and social concepts. The definition of modernity is closely related to Adrian Wicker's interpretation of Balinese modernity. The Concept of "modern" is associated with the expansion of capitalism and the Enlightenment in Europe, while modernism creates innovative and novel styles. Modernity is, therefore, the desire to change and create something new, including the work of separating oneself from what has been and drawing inspiration from the past or drawing on history and heritage. (Vickers, 1996).

In addition, from the Vietnamese point of view, modernity means the acceptance of Western values under French occupation and close association with the colonial regime. (Huynh, 2005). VietNam's engagement with modernity was shaped by exploitation under colonial rule. Resistance to colonization and earlier engagements with modernity in the late 1920s and 30s by scholars, activists, and the middle classes have been obscured by political ideology. Conflicting and contradictory radical views have been largely unexplored, as have the origins and diversity of Vietnamese modern art and the era it represents. The establishment of vocational schools by the French is explained to show how Vietnamese traditional aesthetics interacted with Western employment opportunities rather than colonial exploitation.

Likewise, French architecture urbanized the Vietnamese environment and was followed by a local response to the influences of colonial architecture and planning, such as An Dinh Palace, emperors Khai Dinh's Mausoleum, Kien Trung Palace, and many other architectural works. Finally, the foundation of Dong Duong College of Fine Arts in 1925 is considered a marriage between Vietnamese artistic endeavor and the French academy, giving rise to the birth of Vietnamese modernism.

The contexts in which the quest for national independence, accompanied by the emergence of modernity, influenced ideas and gave rise to the origins of Vietnamese art are examined. Attention is given to the preference of an emerging Vietnamese middle class to prioritize education and adopt Romanised Vietnamese, which paved the way for new ideas.

Rather than passively 'suffering' modernity, Viet-Nam is repositioned as moving toward and negotiating with Western influences. In this respect, it is argued that tradition is constructed rather than natural or universal. From this viewpoint, the birth of modernism in Vietnamese art might be seen as creating a new tradition.

The explanations of modernity by previous scholars are completely suitable for analyzing the Vietnamese social context during this period and explaining the birth of An Dinh Palace.

2.5 Book Colonial frames, nationalist histories, Imperial Legacies, Architecture, and Modernity (Edited by Mrinalini Rajagopalan and Madhuri Desai, 2012)

Scholars have pointed out that the origins of the concept of modernity (at least within its European constructs) stretch back to the Middle Ages when

it was used to distinguish the modern church from paganism; modernism, as related to architecture, is a nineteenth-century phenomenon that parallels similar avant-garde movements in art and music (Heynen 1999; Lu 2011).

This volume also extends assertions by scholars of modernity that the processes of colonialism and nationalism formed new connections with the imagined past (Gaonkar 2001; Mitchell 1988; Chatterjee 1993). In particular, colonialism created a frame for modern articulations of identity as they emerged both in the colonies and imperial centers (Said 1979). These identity structures continue to shape emergent social and spatial configurations in many postcolonial and postimperial sites. Yet, while modernism emerged and was mediated through multiple modes and means, they pay particular attention to architectural and urban practices in this volume. They suggest that colonial knowledge and imperial histories are key to understanding modernism's spatial and formal contours in many postcolonial milieus and former centers of empire.

The authors seek to change the popular conception of architectural modernism, which is seen as a purely formal or aesthetic phenomenon characteristic of the early twentieth century. Instead, they propose a view of modernism as a dialectical process shaped and developed by the encounters between colonial cultures, nationalist imaginations, and post-colonial self-formation. In particular, the post-colonial self-formation continues to strongly impact contemporary architecture in many formerly colonized countries and post-imperial regions.

Research-based on modern concepts shows that the transformation of An Dinh Palace's architecture results from the influence of French colonialism in Vietnam. At the same time, the effort to connect traditional quintessence with modern elements has created a distinct identity, showing the mark of the Vietnamese royal court in the architecture of An Dinh Palace.

2.6 Research Works on Cultural and artistic acculturation

The book "Acculturation—Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applicable Research" edited by Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, brings together leading studies related to acculturation. The document provides diverse knowledge about acculturation, distinguishing acculturation from assimilation and pluralism. The study affirms that development in the direction of adaptation to change is an essential factor in the acculturation process. The researcher applies the concept of acculturation to explain that the formation of An Dinh Palace is an inevitable part of the development of history. In addition, it profoundly analyzes the policies issued by Emperor Khai Dinh during his reign, demonstrating progress in his perception and actions him.

The work of researcher Phan Ngoc, with the work on Cultural contact between Vietnam and France (Ngoc, Cultural contact between Vietnam and France, Culture and Information , 2006). The author has sketched a contact process with French culture in the modern period (1858 - 1945). The work emphasized the ideological developments of the

Vietnamese people under the influence of Western ideology and the changes in thinking in literature, visual arts, and music. The impact of Western ideology in the process of cultural exchange between Vietnam and France has created momentum to form a new ideology in the traditional culture of the Vietnamese. The work provided valuable material on cultural exchange and acculturation during contact with Western culture in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Therefore, through the work, the Researcher has the necessary information about the timelines, the ideological developments of the Vietnamese people, etc. From there, it is the basis for determining the milestones and factors affecting the Vietnamese people. The acculturation in the art and culture of the Vietnamese people

The work *Receiving culture in Vietnam Europe - America in Vietnam period 1858 - 1975* (Ke, 2013) By Luong Van Ke. The content of the work covers quite extensively the issues of exchanging and receiving Western culture in Vietnam. The author believes that Western culture has had a continuous and comprehensive influence on Vietnam's social and cultural life, from economic, political, legal, ideological, and religious to culture, art, and fine arts. These achievements have spread in space and have long-lasting vitality in time. The author's assessment is a source of material, theoretical basis, and commentary on the impacts of Western cultural exchange and acculturation on the acculturation in Vietnamese architecture and art.

The research project of the group of authors Nguyen Thi Kim Loan (editor), Nguyen Thi Kim Chi, and Nghiem Xuan Mung introduced the work on - *French cultural exchange in modern times through data on Culture, Art, and Culture*. (Nguyen Thi Kim Loan (editor), Nguyen Thi Kim Chi and Nghiem Xuan Mung , 2014). The content of the work provides the development law of culture when Society has great changes in politics, social organization, and economy. The content of the work especially emphasizes the changes in thinking of some types of culture and art, such as literature, painting, architecture, and music, when there is exchange and contact with Western culture—West in the late 19th century and early 20th century of Vietnam. According to the authors, this is an essential stage in creating a new development of Vietnamese culture in the direction of modernization, turning the regional Vietnamese culture and art into a new culture and art, as well as international art. The research materials and the theoretical basis of the work are valuable documents for the research content of the researcher's thesis.

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Benefits of Research

1 Benefits for Academia

The typical case study of the hybrid art of An Dinh Palace is the basis for the Researcher to explore history and cultural and artistic values. The thesis has added helpful knowledge to the art history of the Nguyen Dynasty, especially the period of cultural interference with France, marking a new turning point in the flow of Vietnamese fine arts.

2 Benefits for the society and community where the study is located

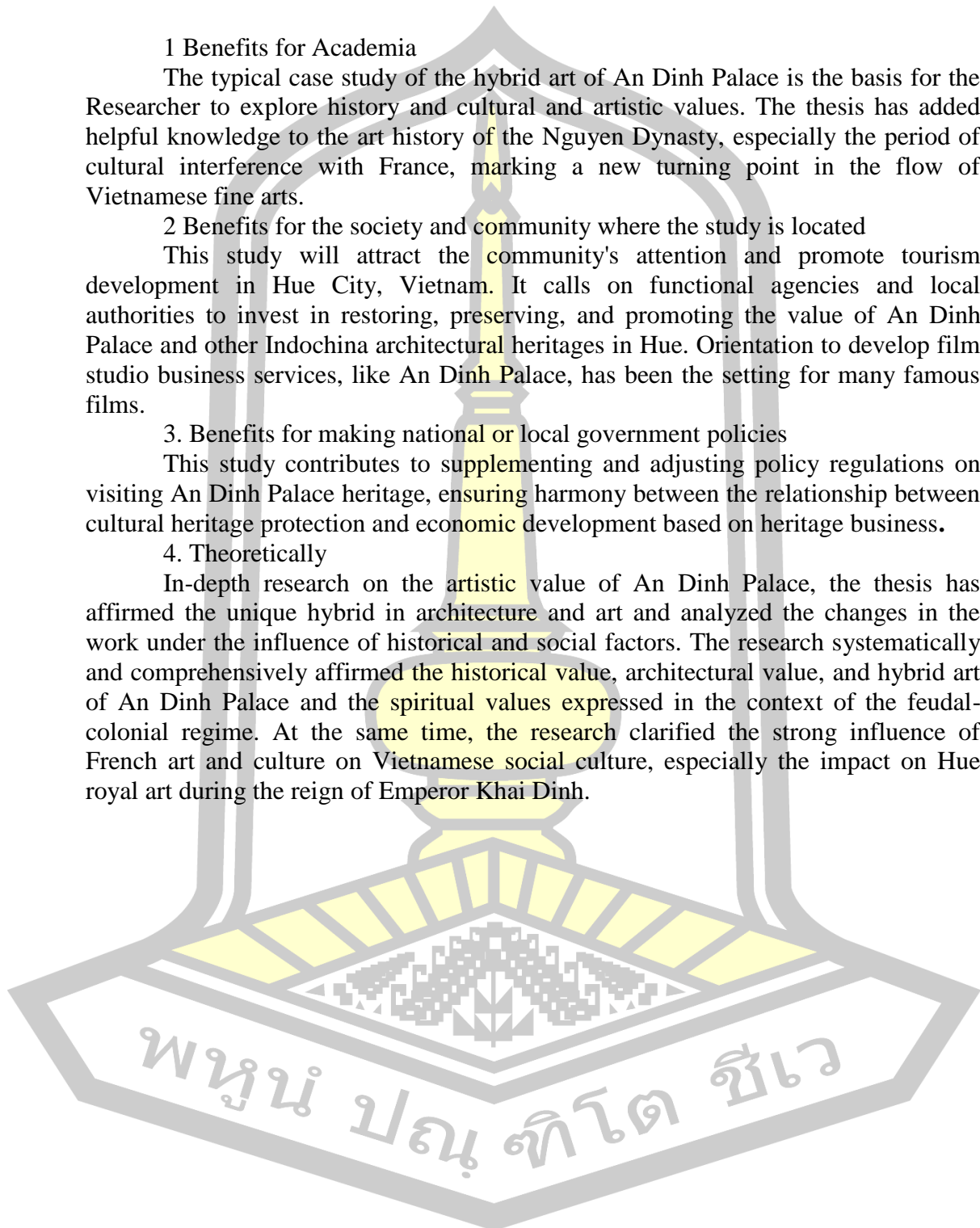
This study will attract the community's attention and promote tourism development in Hue City, Vietnam. It calls on functional agencies and local authorities to invest in restoring, preserving, and promoting the value of An Dinh Palace and other Indochina architectural heritages in Hue. Orientation to develop film studio business services, like An Dinh Palace, has been the setting for many famous films.

3. Benefits for making national or local government policies

This study contributes to supplementing and adjusting policy regulations on visiting An Dinh Palace heritage, ensuring harmony between the relationship between cultural heritage protection and economic development based on heritage business.

4. Theoretically

In-depth research on the artistic value of An Dinh Palace, the thesis has affirmed the unique hybrid in architecture and art and analyzed the changes in the work under the influence of historical and social factors. The research systematically and comprehensively affirmed the historical value, architectural value, and hybrid art of An Dinh Palace and the spiritual values expressed in the context of the feudal-colonial regime. At the same time, the research clarified the strong influence of French art and culture on Vietnamese social culture, especially the impact on Hue royal art during the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh.



CHAPTER II

VIETNAM'S POLITICAL, SOCIO-ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL CONTEXT BEFORE AND AFTER KHAI DINH BECAME EMPEROR

The content of Chapter 2 aims to clarify the first research objective, which is to understand the political, socio-economic, and cultural context of Vietnam before and after Khai Dinh ascended the throne as Emperor. Chapter 2 focuses on presenting basic knowledge about the context of the formation of An Dinh Palace architecture, including 1) The influence of the Nguyen Dynasty's sociocultural History, especially the transition between the independent period (1802 - 1858) and the period of French invasion (1858 - 1945), which affected the perception and changes of the Nguyen Dynasty court, especially under Emperor Khai Dinh (1916 - 1925). 2) The process of formation and transformation of the appearance of An Dinh Palace through the periods. This work is the first substantial transformation in royal architecture, marking a new period in the History of Vietnamese architecture.

Part 1 Context (History, culture) forms the An Dinh Palace.

1.1 Vietnam's political, social, and economic context from the last half of the 19th century to the first half of the 20th century

1.1.1 The political, social, and economic context of Vietnam before the invasion of the French colonialists.

From 1802 to 1858, the Nguyen Dynasty had more than 50 years of construction and consolidation. It was an independent, unified country with full sovereignty, an economy and social organization, a relatively strong force, and not inferior to any country in the Southeast Asian region. According to historian Phan Khoang, From the time of Minh Mang through Thieu Tri to the first few years of the Tu Duc Dynasty was the most peaceful and prosperous period, etc. with traditional self-sufficient agriculture, relatively good governance, Vietnamese society maintained a balance in life" (Khoang, 1959, p.18). From 1861 to 1874, the Tu Duc court implemented many reform policies but based on the Confucian spirit such as "loyalty to the king is patriotism," "Confucianism is honest," conservatism did not bring benefits to the people and the country. As an intelligent and learned emperor in Literature who respected Confucianism, his strengths could not be promoted in the context of Westernization. He understood the external situation through the reports of Nguyen Truong To. Still, he did not dare to innovate, perhaps fearing that at some point, the people's intellectual level would increase and the wealthy private class would make a revolution to overthrow the dynasty following the example of the bourgeois revolutions in Europe at that time.

(1) Economic – Social

By the middle of Tu Duc's reign, all aspects of the country were in decline. In the 1850s, a group of Vietnamese intellectuals, typically Nguyen Truong To, realized the country's stagnation and demanded to learn from the West to develop industry and commerce and reform the military and foreign affairs. (Training, 2001)

Many peasant uprisings broke out to resolve social conflicts. Tran Trong Kim had to lament, "There was no king whose reign had as many rebels rising everywhere as under King Tu Duc." (Kim, Brief History of Vietnam, 2018, p.522). The people revolted because they were too miserable and too dissatisfied.

The policy of isolation limited contact between Vietnam and the West; the court banned Western missionaries and merchants from coming to Vietnam. Therefore, diplomatic relations with Western countries in the first half of the 19th century decreased significantly compared to the previous 17th and 18th centuries. Relations with the West were further damaged in 1847 when two French warships commanded by Colonel Lapierre and Lieutenant Colonel Rigault de Genouilly arrived in Da Nang, demanding that the Vietnamese government accept Catholicism in Vietnam and release imprisoned French missionaries. An unfortunate misunderstanding occurred, causing the French ships to fire and sink Vietnamese warships in Da Nang harbor. (Taboulet, 1957, p.208 - 226). The demonstration of power by French warships in Da Nang clearly showed the danger threatening Vietnam.

The Nguyen Dynasty did not encourage urban economy and urbanization. Although the court did not pay attention to Thang Long - Hanoi urban areas, such as Ben Nghe and Saigon, they developed and grew freely. Meanwhile, some other metropolitan areas that used to be trading places for countries and port centers have now become rural again and have quickly declined, as was the case with the urban areas of Pho Hien and Hoi An. (Hy, 2000, p. 5-34)

The feudal regime of Vietnam was in a severe crisis at this time. However, most of the Nguyen Dynasty officials did not realize the need to reform and open the country, so Tu Duc was not determined to implement these proposals. Dai Nam gradually became stagnant, backward, and at risk of being invaded by European colonialists. From this period on, Dai Nam's History turned a new page.

Summarizing the socio-economic situation of this period, researcher Tran Van Giau wrote: Foreign trade was stagnant, so the country's industry and commerce were also stagnant. Domestic and foreign trade was stagnant, so finance was tight. Finance was tight, so the military force declined. The military force declined, so foreign countries were increasingly looking. In short, by Tu Duc's time, before the French invaded Da Nang, Vietnam's agriculture, industry, and commerce were all in decline, and the national finance was exhausted before facing war (Giau, 2017, p.49).

(2) Culture - Education

Despite being deeply influenced by Chinese culture for centuries, the Vietnamese still maintain their independence and are oriented towards their values. The absorption of Chinese culture was clearly expressed through the education system, laws, and even the lifestyle of the Vietnamese people in the pre-colonial period. Nguyen tried every way to revive Confucianism, limit the development of Buddhism, and ban Christianity. Meanwhile, Western missionaries continued to infiltrate and find

every way to spread religion despite the Nguyen Dynasty's strict anti-religious policies. In the context of people's poverty, combined with dissatisfaction with the harshness of Confucian rituals and the Nguyen Dynasty's ruling policies, the number of people following Christianity increased rapidly. Some missionaries took advantage of the situation to actively prepare for the colonial invasion. With such a chaotic society, the belief in fate and gods became deeper. Therefore, the people still preserved and developed Buddhism and traditional beliefs. Pagodas and temples were built everywhere.

Inheriting a fairly complete cultural, institutional system from the Gia Long and Minh Mang dynasties, during this period, the policy of training Confucian intellectuals to be the pillars of the state apparatus and creating a disciplined social image was the top priority that Emperor Tu Duc paid attention to.

(3) Literature

Many outstanding poets and writers appeared, such as Ngo Thoi Sy, Le Quy Don, Trinh Sam, Bui Huy Bich, Nguyen Cu Trinh, Nguyen Du... of the 18th century, and Cao Ba Quat, Nguyen Van Sieu, Tung Thien Vuong, Tuy Ly Vuong, Minh Mang, etc... of the 19th century. During this period, the most prominent work was Nguyen Du's Tale of Kieu, written in Nom³ script, while the rest of the literary works of other authors were written in Chinese characters.

(4) Architecture

The architecture of the Nguyen Dynasty from the early period to the mid-19th century was deeply influenced by the country's History and culture. Although it was influenced by the architectural styles of China, Champa..., traditional Vietnamese architecture still maintained its unique features, reflecting the Vietnamese people's culture, lifestyle, and art. The inheritance and development of architectural knowledge from the Tran, Le, and Mac dynasties laid a solid foundation for architectural development. The use of traditional styles and construction techniques has been improved and developed. In addition to the citadel built during the Gia Long to Minh Mang period, it combines oriental architectural art and Western methods of building ramparts and fortresses in the Vauban style, suitable for the local conditions of Hue. The architectural features include royal architecture with many superb, large-scale works built during the previous reigns of Gia Long, Minh Mang, and Thieu Tri. The highlight of this period is the mausoleum complex of Emperor Tu Duc (1848-1883), one of the largest imperial mausoleum complexes of the Nguyen Dynasty. It was built

³ Nom is a system of phonological characters used to write Vietnamese, created based on Chinese characters. It includes Sino-Vietnamese words and a system of other vocabulary created based on applying phonetic, ideographic, and associative Chinese characters to create new characters to supplement writing. It also expresses pure Vietnamese words not in the original Chinese characters. The word "Nom" originates from the pronunciation in Chinese of the word "Nam" (南). Thus, the meaning of the name Nom is the type of characters used to record the speech of the Southern people, that is, the Vietnamese people.

from 1864 to 1867 and reached the peak of royal tomb architecture in the traditional architectural style of this period. The mausoleum has the appearance of a royal garden, typical of the garden art of the Nguyen Dynasty. The 12-hectare complex with about 50 structures was built to serve the Emperor during his lifetime and his resting and burial place after his death. The area is divided into two parts: the first part includes the Palace, gates, theater, artificial lake, island, bridge, and gazebo on the lake shore. The second part is the burial place of the Emperor and the empress, which holds ceremonies and has an artificial lake. He was a poet, so his mausoleum also reflects the romantic character of the Emperor. The construction site was carefully chosen to reflect the requirements of art and science in the East Asian style. The complex is like a giant park with hilly space and a system of ponds and lakes accompanied by several architectural works. The asymmetry in the architecture brings a complex charm and harmony with the surrounding environment. This mausoleum has become a symbol of landscape architecture during this period, expressing a profound philosophy about feng shui and nature and affirming a calm attitude towards the impermanence of all things.

(5) Fine Arts

During this period, folk art, associated with simple paintings and statues, became a vibrant expression of the Vietnamese artisan's soul. "Craft villages" - "Craft villages" - where talented artisans created unique products that contributed to preserving and promoting Vietnamese identity. Vietnamese art scholars Nguyen Quan and Phan Cam Thuong called Indigenous art before the French occupation 'village art' (Nguyen Quan, Phan Cam Thuong, 1991)

1.1.2 Political and economic context and colonial period

1.1.2.1 The French invasion of Vietnam (1858-1884)

The birth of the Nguyen Dynasty took place in the context of a turbulent country and world. The victory of capitalism in Western Europe opened the era of colonialism and vibrant international trade. Faced with the expansionist power of colonialism, many Asian countries, including Vietnam, had to endure the yoke of domination. Since the 19th century, with the development of science and technology in Western countries, rich and powerful capitalist countries have been formed. They competed to search for, compete for markets, and invade land to exploit resources and cheap labor.

Meanwhile, many East Asian countries still had conservative and backward feudal regimes. Asia had the advantage of a large land area and population, making it an ideal market in the eyes of European capitalists. Since the 18th century, Vietnam has been a trading destination for many Portuguese capitalist countries, arriving at Hoi An (1914), and the Netherlands established a trading office in Pho Hien (1637). By the second half of the 17th century, many French merchants frequently traveled back and forth to Vietnam, intending to annex Vietnam as a strategic economic and political position in the Asian region.

Using the excuse that the Nguyen Dynasty banned religion and brutally treated Catholic missionaries, after many provocations, the French Navy landed and attacked Da Nang port on August 31, 1858. (Figure 2)

Faced with fierce resistance from the royal army and people, France had to change its strategy, withdrawing from Da Nang port, leaving only a few troops to occupy, and then marching into the South to capture Gia Dinh Citadel - Saigon. (Figure 3)



Figure 2 Warships of the French-Spanish coalition in Da Nang in 1858
 Source: Illustration in Le Monde / Nguyen Quang Trung Tien (Hue University) collected



Figure 3 French Army Attacks Gia Dinh Citadel in Saigon
 Soucre: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/x-cafevn/3699217488/in/photostream/>

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As predicted by France, the court did not rely on the people to fight against the French. In June 1862, two plenipotentiaries representing the Hue court, Phan Thanh Gian and Lam Duy Hiep, signed the Nham Tuat treaty, ceding three provinces in the Southeast to France. The Tu Duc court condemned the two men and considered it an act of betrayal of the nation's interests. Emperor Tu Duc was very heartbroken, thinking they had made a mistake in giving too much concession to the French colonialists, so he said they were not only criminals of the court but also criminals of all time. (National History Institute of Nguyen Dynasty t. b., 2007, p.771). Tu Duc issued a notice calling on people to fight against the French in areas occupied by the French and promised to reward them with titles if they recruited militiamen. This resistance was quickly organized with many effective anti-French uprisings by the people using guerrilla warfare. Within three and a half years, French losses had crept up to 2,000 men, and the situation of the expeditionary army was unstable and costly. (Anh, Vietnam during French colonial period, 2008). After many diplomatic and military efforts to regain the three provinces of the Southeast (Figure 4). All failed. France continued to invade the three provinces of the Southwest.

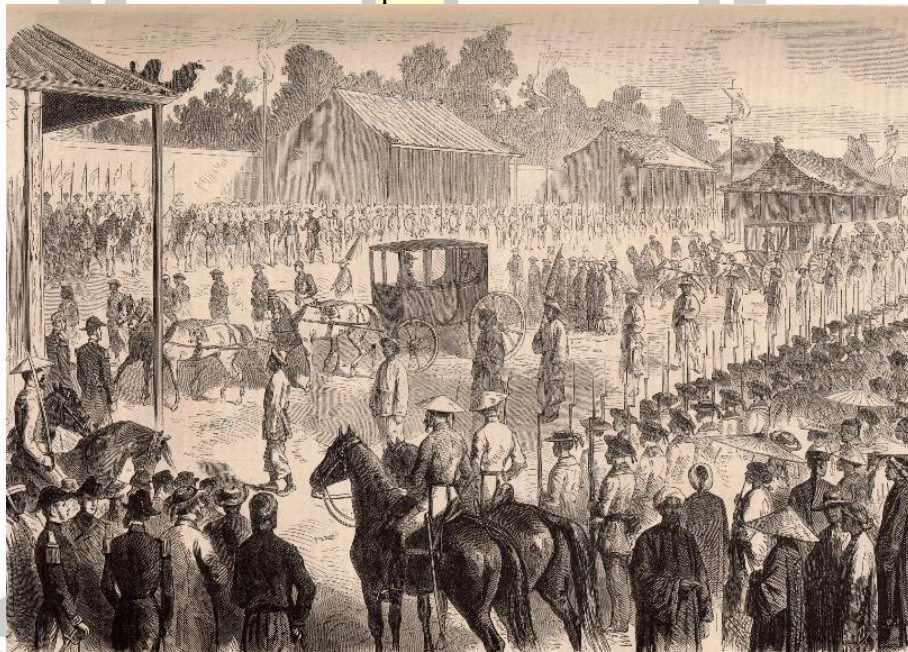


Figure 4 Scene of the signing ceremony of the peace treaty between France, Spain and the Annam court in 1862 in Saigon Ceded the territory of 3 Cochinchina provinces, including Bien Hoa, Gia Dinh and Dinh Tuong
Soucre: illustration by M. Lugeol in Le Monde magazine

Taking advantage of the chaos in the North due to the protests of the mandarins against the treaty signed by the Nguyen Dynasty with France, in November 1873, France attacked Hanoi. It expanded its attack to the provinces of Hung Yen, Hai Hung, Phu Ly, Ninh Binh, and Nam Dinh. On March 15, 1874, the court once again rebelled against the resistance movement and finally had to sign the Giap Tuat Treaty (1874), recognizing the ceding of 6 provinces of the South to France on the condition that France would return the provinces it had just occupied in the North and the French would be free to trade in the North. Immediately after the treaty was signed, the South fell entirely into the hands of the French. They established a robust colonial government in the South. In the early 1880s, the situation in the North became more complicated when France advocated invasion and sought to provoke. The court could not resist. In 1882, Hanoi fell, (Figure 5) and the French occupied the whole of the North.



Figure 5 troops attacked the Southeast gate of the Hanoi citadel on November 20, 1873. Soucre: Illustration by André Masson in “Hanoi pendant la période héroïque (1873-1888)”, Paris, 1929.

In July 1883, Tu Duc died, and a month later, France attacked the capital Hue (Figure 6). In August 1883, Emperor Hiep Hoa had to sign the Quy Mui (Harmand) Treaty, consisting of 27 articles, the main content of which was to agree to France's long-term protectorate over all of Vietnam. Next was the Giap Than (Patenotre) Treaty on June 8, 1884, recognizing the French colonial rule over the entire Dai Nam country (Figure 7). This invasion caused Vietnam to suffer many changes in the political, economic, cultural, and social fields.

(1) Politics

Vietnam was the target of French colonialism as a springboard to invade Indochina. On October 17, 1887, the French President issued a decree establishing the "Federation of Indochina" under France. The entire Federation of Indochina was a French colony, an overseas territory of France (National Archives Center, 2013). The purpose of this division was to make it easier for France to rule and to make the name Vietnam no longer used. However, the French could not let the three regions in Vietnam become three separate entities. Still, they could not gather the three areas into a federation because that would inadvertently re-establish a unified Vietnam, which the French did not want. The French truly believed that if they did not mention Vietnam, they could stifle all nationalist sentiments. (Quoc D. K., 1999)

At the center was the Governor-General of Indochina (located initially in Saigon, in 1902 in Hanoi). The head of the Governor-General was the Governor-General of Indochina, who had the highest authority to govern the French colonial government over the entire regions of Tonkin, Annam, Cochinchina, and Cambodia. The heads of the three areas were the Governor of Cochinchina, the Resident-Resident of Annam, and the Governor of Tonkin; all three were placed under the direct management and command of the Governor-General of French Indochina, in charge of the Colonial sector. By 1893, the Governor-General of French Indochina's authority was expanded to include Laos.

The power of the court after Tu Duc was only nominal; in a short time 3, emperors were changed consecutively, Duc Duc, Hiep Hoa, and Kien Phuc, creating chaos and psychological instability in the Nguyen court and the people. Everything seemed stable when Ham Nghi ascended the throne in 1884. However, he and his close mandarins planned and called on the people to rise against the French, but everything ended in vain, and he was exiled to Algeria. This event is considered the last resistance of the Nguyen court against French domination. According to Eastern tradition, the country cannot be without an emperor for a day. Immediately under the proposal of the regent mandarins, the French colonialists put Dong Khanh on the throne. Emperor Dong Khanh was moderate with the French, traveling everywhere to call on the people to support the spirit of "France - Vietnam" under one roof. He absorbed French civilization, used Western goods, and innovated and applied policies to localize domestic administration. Historian Tran Trong Kim wrote: "Dong Khanh had a gentle personality, liked to decorate, and also wanted to modernize, so he was very popular with the French." (Kim, Brief History of Vietnam, 2018, p.522). He reigned for four years and then died. The French appointed the father and son who succeeded the Nguyen dynasty as Thanh Thai and Duy Tan.

Contrary to the French expectations, they were emperors with the spirit of fighting against the French and modernizing the country, supported by patriotic scholars. However, Emperor Duy Tan's plans to overthrow the French were exposed, and he was forced to abdicate. In 1916, Thanh Thai was exiled to Reunion Island with his son, Emperor Duy Tan (Quoc D. K., 1999). During this period, Dai Nam also stabilized. The court's policy during this period was to "choose the policy of taking one's existence as the ultimate goal of the operation." (Dynasty N. H., Dai Nam thuc luc chinh bien volume 7 translated by Cao Thanh Tu, 2013). During this period, Dai

Nam also stabilized. The court's policy during this period was to "choose the policy of taking one's existence as the ultimate goal of operation." According to Gwendolyn Wright in the book "The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism," the King and the people of Dai Nam had an anti-French solid attitude. Hence, the integration of France into Vietnam in general and Vietnam in particular had different characteristics from those of other colonial countries. In Morocco or Madagascar, the establishment of urban areas took place very quickly with a solid French classical architectural style due to the friendly cooperation of the government with the colonialists, while in Vietnam, the urbanization process took place more slowly, and there were more ways to integrate indigenous characteristics. (Wright, 1991)

Learning from the violence and non-cooperation of the two previous emperors with the "protectorate" government, they had to put Buu Dao on the throne during the reign of Khai Dinh in 1916. Opening a period of stability and peace as the Emperor's reign name meant, "Khai" means opening, and "Dinh" means peace and stability. (www.sunghiephoc.com, 2024). The people resented him for being a puppet emperor. He was the most innovative Emperor among the previous Nguyen Dynasty emperors. Still, according to many people, he only cared about himself and forgot about the country being enslaved by French colonialism. He was the right-hand man of the "protectorate" government in suppressing the people's anti-French movements. Khai Dinh often received negative assessments, symbolizing cooperation with the French colonial regime. However, from an objective perspective, ignoring political prejudices. Many scholars also had other perspectives on the policies of governing the country during his nine-year reign. The French commented that Emperor Khai Dinh was open-minded to all the new things of the West. (Dynasty N. H., Dai Nam thuc luc chinh bien volume 7 translated by Cao Thanh Tu, 2013)

His cooperation with French colonialism aimed to stabilize and develop the country. The idea that "It is better to be a brother with Western Europe than a friend with East Asia" (Dynasty N. H., Dai Nam thuc luc chinh bien, vol. 6 supplement, 2012) is waiting for the right time to reform the government apparatus and the country. Khai Dinh's political views are built on three factors: respecting the monarchy, enlightening the people, and making the people rich. Regarding the issue of respecting the monarchy, author Phong Dang believes that Emperor Khai Dinh's desire to reform the Southern Dynasty's political system is facing many difficulties. Centralized control is promoted but faces many disadvantages. The constitutional spirit of the West is accepted, with the view that this will help the Emperor have more free time and only need a high-ranking minister of state to support it enough. The conflict of interests within Khai Dinh is taking place. He must reform according to the West to develop, but he does not want to lose the Emperor's control and the royal family's dignity. He is confused by the choice and helpless before the circumstances and times. Therefore, he decided to send the idea of changing the political apparatus to his son - Vinh Thuy. The Emperor sent Prince Vinh Thuy to study in the West. (Dang, 2024). This intention was written by the National History Institute of the Nguyen Dynasty, specifically in the woodblock of the book Khai Dinh's Main Essentials, volume 2, engraved page 46b, Emperor Khai Dinh called Vinh Thuy to give instructions: "The reason why my father ordered you to study abroad is to broaden your knowledge, enhance your intelligence, and at the same time gain an

understanding of interpersonal work so that after you become successful, you will have a perfect personality.

Moreover, being a person who stands above others is not an easy responsibility. With such a heavy and great responsibility, you must have a superior personality to take on the responsibility. Suppose you are lucky enough to study and become successful. In that case, when your father is a hundred years old and passes away, and the imperial court appoints you as successor to the throne, your personality will be enough to shoulder that responsibility. But if by any chance, due to an unexpected reason, you cannot study and become successful, then if the imperial court invites you back to take over the throne, you must refuse to accept it. Accepting the throne and then not being able to take on the responsibility is not only harmful to yourself. The harm to yourself is small, but leaving behind worries for the ancestral temple and the country is truly great. Please listen to your father's words." (National History Institute of Nguyen Dynasty, Translated by Nguyen Van Nguyen, 2010).

However, it is said that under the influence of Pham Quynh⁴, Khai Dinh tried to ask the French to give more freedom to Vietnam but to no avail (Chapuis, 2000)

In the context of the country, it can be seen that Emperor Khai Dinh saw the weakness of Dai Nam's position and power compared to France, so he chose to make peace instead of actively waging war. Despite this, he encountered opposition from the opposition, and his prestige with the people was reduced. He expected his only son to be able to receive a Western education to return, modernize the country, and revive the royal family's career. Oscar Chapuis commented: Emperor Khai Dinh appeared peaceful on the surface, but during his 9-year reign, Vietnamese nationalism gradually crystallized. (Chapuis, 2000)

(2) Economy - Society

The French colonial exploitation in Vietnam promoted the modernization process in many aspects. With modern technology, the French built many raw material processing factories, shipbuilding enterprises, and road and bridge construction. Commercial business activities developed to serve colonial exploitation. The economy of cities in Vietnam developed rapidly, accompanied by changes in the structure of urban residents. Vietnamese society formed new classes of residents, including local merchants and workers. The bourgeois element in the colonial industrial development dominated the cities, creating an unbalanced development between large cities of the upper class and poor suburban towns of the working class. The above social inequality has developed a sharp contradiction, requiring urban planning and city management to change in a way that is appropriate to reality. The development of modern cities during this period was only to serve the interests and

⁴ Pham Quynh was an influential scholar and writer, known for his ideas on reforming and modernizing Vietnamese culture. Pham Quynh advocated modernization and the adoption of Western cultural values, while preserving and promoting traditional Vietnamese values. This idea influenced King Khai Dinh's policies in accepting reforms in education, art, and culture.

colonial policies of the French. Hue was not outside the country's changes. "The Khai Dinh Dynasty also had to integrate itself into the modernization process, had to find new strength in contemporary social life to survive." (Dynasty N. H., *Dai Nam thuc luc chinh bien* volume 7 translated by Cao Thanh Tu, 2013). Vietnam's economic and social life changed significantly, especially in terms of industry and commerce. After field trips to the North, Emperor Khai Dinh's perception of the country's economic situation changed, and he assessed that the development of goods to serve the domestic market needed to be encouraged. From there, he had policies to encourage local capitalists to contribute to developing the country's economy. Specifically, in 1918, the court issued a regulation: "Vietnamese people who work usefully in the fields of agriculture, industry, and commerce will be specially rewarded with military ranks." (National History Institute of Nguyen Dynasty, 2012). After some time, the quality and quantity of industrial and commercial capitalists in the country increased.

(3) Culture - Education

During the colonial period, French culture profoundly influenced Vietnamese society, including education, language, and culture. Education was modeled after the French model, with the establishment of many secondary schools and universities, training models, and programs similar to the French education system. This contributed to the development of modern education in Vietnam, but at the same time, it also set out rudimentary formulas for the ownership of traditional cultural identity. The historical process shows that Western culture and civilization had entered Vietnam long ago, in the 17th and 18th centuries, before the French colonial invasion broke out; however, due to the precautions of the early Nguyen emperors about the danger of losing the country if Western countries were allowed to spread Christianity to Vietnam freely. Therefore, the influence of French culture on social life was not evident. Only when France colonized Vietnam did Western culture and civilization elements have the opportunity to have a more profound impact on Vietnamese society. After occupying Cochinchina, the French immediately replaced the Confucian education system with an education system serving the ruling apparatus. New social institutions gradually formed and spread following the French invasion throughout Vietnam. Newspapers were published. From 1878, French and the national language were used in the administrative system. This change took place more slowly in the North and Central regions due to the perception of the Nguyen Dynasty. The French purpose was gradually replacing China's past influence with French culture. The French built many schools.

In the South, the Collège d'Adran (1861) taught the national language and French, and Latin was also taught as a second language. The Collège des Interprètes was established in the South (1864) and the North (1905) to train administrative staff to serve the colonial government apparatus. The Apprenti Mandarin School was established in the North (1903) and the Central region (1911) to train people to become mandarins. French education has had a significant impact on the ideology and psychology of a segment of Vietnamese people. Gustave Dumoutier⁵ commented:

⁵ Gustave Dumoutier was a first-generation French Vietnamologist, a man who was closely attached to and loved Vietnamese cultural history, an enthusiastic Orientalist

"Schools are the most effective, the most solid, and the most conquering instrument," their intention is clear: "Once you have conquered people, conquering land is not difficult.". It is also part of the "French-Vietnamese Cooperation" policy the Albert Sarraut government implemented. (Thuy, 2017)

However, the changes in French educational policies also positively impacted Vietnamese culture. They created opportunities for the hybridization of French and Vietnamese cultures, thereby allowing Vietnamese culture to affirm its identity. "Thanks to educational reforms, the number of people who could read increased, creating opportunities for journalism development. Education created momentum for developing literature and journalism, which became the core of culture." (Tam, 2013)

(4) Literature

In Hue, in 1913, the Association of Ancient Citadels (B.A.V.H) was established with the participation of French and Vietnamese scholars. The famous journal *Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Hué* was founded under Father Léopold Cadière's direction to research the History and preserve the cultural heritage in Hue. With its high academic spirit and passion for scholars' research, this journal became a prestigious source of information on Hue's History, culture, and art at that time.

(5) Architecture

Three architectural styles coexisted during the French colonial period in Vietnam: Vietnamese, French, and colonial. (Herbelin, 2010).

After Cochinchina became a French colony, Saigon was captured in 1859, and it became the capital of Cochinchina in 1865. This was where European and Chinese cultures met, once the center of colonial power. It soon developed with magnificent architectural works built by the French to serve the needs of the government and merchants with distinct French architectural influences, such as the Governor's Palace (1873), the Court (1885), the Customs House (1887), the Post Office (1891), the Opera House (1897) and the City Hall (1908), reflecting the grandeur and sophistication of French culture and architecture. Although these works have unique artistic values, they are not suitable for the climate of Vietnam. This change took place firmly when the French occupied Hanoi in 1873. The diverse European architecture contributed to the unique appearance of large-scale works and, at the same time, inspired the style and construction techniques of other cities. New works such as museums and factories were also built, enriching the civilization in the country. With the introduction of French society, in addition to architectural changes, urban planning issues were also a concern, such as the expansion of the metropolitan area, and the street network was designed in a chessboard style. In Hue, the French planned a separate living area separate from the Hue citadel area located on the south bank of the Perfume River. They skillfully blended the beauty of the Perfume River into the urban architecture, bringing a European neighborhood in harmony with Hue's poetic natural landscape and ancient architectural heritage.

The architectural art of this period wore a new coat, blending classical and modern beauty. Using new construction technologies instead affected Vietnamese

who advocated cooperation with Vietnamese Confucian scholars, respecting and preserving traditional Vietnamese culture, maintaining Chinese characters and encouraging the national language.

architectural relics, which were lost or damaged due to the reconstruction process. In addition, the new civilization brought innovation in using construction materials and structural calculation methods for Vietnamese architecture. Cement and steel were preferred, while roofing sheets and other materials like glass or tiles were widely used in the construction industry. Despite the spread of European architecturalism, traditional Vietnamese architecture continued to exist and be preserved and hybridized with French architectural forms. Typical of this period was the forming a new architectural school - the Indochina architectural style, which blended aesthetics and functionality. This hybrid combines many previous cultural features in Vietnam with the sophistication and beauty of classical French architecture to form many rich architectural forms. According to author Bui Thi Thanh Hoa, Indochina architecture in Saigon is heavily influenced by Chinese art (Figure 7) . Indochina architecture in Hanoi has an ancient beauty in the style of European scholasticism (Figure 8), while Indochina architecture in Hue has many characteristics of royal art. (Hoa, 2020) (Figure 9).

In short, since becoming a French colony, Vietnam has changed in all aspects of social life compared to the previous period of independence.



Figure 7 The National Museum of Vietnam, now the History Museum, was built in 1927 with Indochinese architecture designed by architect E.Hébrard.

Soucre: <https://www.tapchikientruc.com.vn/dien-dan/tu-dong-chay-phong-cach-kien-truc-dong-duong-suy-nghi-ve-mot-vietnam-style.html>



Figure 8 The main building of Indochina University was built in 1924 with Indochinese style architecture designed by architect E.Hébrard.

Source: <https://www.elledecoration.vn/cultural-special/heritage/kien-truc-dong-duong>



Figure 9 Emperor Khai Dinh's Tomb with Asian-European Hybrid Architecture.
Source: Flickr

1.2 Hue Architecture and Fine Arts in the context of French cultural exchange

Vietnam has gone through many historical ups and downs, with a history of nearly 1000 years of Chinese domination and cultural exchanges with many other cultures, such as India and Champa. Cultural exchanges are an endless flow, creating unique and profound features for the fine arts culture of each region. Therefore, the national soul is clearly expressed in the traditional culture of Vietnam, especially in art.

In Hue, acculturation was mentioned very early. In 1914, Cadiere initiated the magazine B.A.V.H (Bulletin des amis du Vieux Hue), marking the first step in studying Hue culture. The concept of acculturation, from the 60s and 70s of the 20th century, was widely mentioned in many documents, research articles, and reference books, especially in English and French documents of the 80s and 90s of the 20th century.

Author Tran Ngoc Them commented: "During several centuries of contact, Western culture has had a profound influence on many areas of Vietnamese culture" and "Vietnamese people can accept or oppose, but in the end, there is always a flexible assimilation, accepting what is useful and transforming it to suit." (Them, 1999). According to Phan Ngoc, "Although the time directly influenced by French culture was only sixty years, it can be said that Vietnamese culture has changed more clearly than the long period of contact with Chinese culture over twenty years." (Ngoc, The contact of Vietnamese culture with France, 2018). During this period, Neoclassical architecture was popular, blending with Western art movements such as Baroque, Rococo, Art Décor, and Art Nouveau. The buildings were decorated with delicate details: column heads, vine wreaths, and moldings, creating a beauty that was both luxurious and elegant. The materials used to decorate the buildings became more diverse, with glass, colored glass, ceramic tiles, white cement, tiles, and oil paints contributing to the creation of unique works of art.

According to Professor Hoang Dao Kinh: "The presence of the colonial urban landscape architecture fund in Vietnam in general and in Hue city in particular up to now shows the symbiosis between architecture and culture. If, in the early stage, the imposition of French culture through imported architectural planning style, then in the later stage, the difference between the two Eastern and Western cultures created favorable conditions and foundations for the transformation process of French architectural planning in Hue with its characteristics, in which, the characteristics of culture, society, and the local natural environment play an essential role. (Kinh H. D., Inheriting and creating urban architectural identity in the development of Hue city, 2002, p.23-25)

Hue is Vietnam's capital and center, so it is a place where talented artisans from all over the country gather. With the wisdom of doctors and the gifted hands of artisans creating majestic royal architectural works, the Nguyen Dynasty absorbed and developed many cultural elements in architecture. This absorption is clearly shown through the architectural works built during the French colonial period; a typical example is the Truong Tien Bridge, built in the style of French steel bridges. Many Hue houses, villas, and palaces bear the mark of French architecture with a

combination of European style and indigenous elements. The Vietnamese have known how to combine and transform foreign architecture to suit natural conditions and indigenous culture. A typical example is the tomb of Emperor Khai Dinh, which demonstrates this creativity when combining traditional Vietnamese architecture, Chinese elements, and Western influences.

In the field of Fine Arts, Hue Fine Arts underwent significant changes and developments during this period. In the palaces and mausoleums, the wall and interior decoration art retained traditional Vietnamese features, lacquer paintings, elaborately carved murals, and oriental motifs (Figure 10). However, the French influence was reflected in using new decorative techniques, more modern colors, and materials, creating an interior decoration style that harmoniously combined East and West. The tombs of the Nguyen Emperors, such as Khai Dinh Tomb, were particularly notable for their combination of traditional Vietnamese architectural styles and Western decorative arts, using porcelain tiles and stained glass to create unique patterns and reliefs. Some public and private works in Hue also bore the mark of French architecture and sculpture, with columns, domes, and exquisite decorative motifs.

The establishment of the Indochina College of Fine Arts significantly influenced Hue Fine Arts. Many Hue artists and artisans were trained and exposed to modern art education influenced by Western painting styles, and they knew how to combine them with traditional Vietnamese art. It must be said that under the influence of cultural communication, especially Western art trends, Vietnamese painting and sculpture positively changed during the Nguyen Dynasty. (Tuu, 2015)

During this period, many paintings and fine artworks by Hue artists reflected the blend of traditional and modern art with skillful descriptive techniques expressed through local arrangements, colors, brushwork, and perspective. A typical example is the talented painter Le Van Mien, one of the first Vietnamese painters to be formally trained in the Western style (Figure 11, 12). In addition, many other painters have also contributed to writing new pages on the History of Hue's fine arts, particularly Vietnamese art. Typically, the six murals at An Dinh Palace depict the tombs of 6 Nguyen Dynasty emperors with a European perspective style that is somewhat combined with a lively Eastern perspective. (Canh, 1992, p.110). According to author Phan Thuan An, these paintings "mark the period of East-West art exchange in the first decades of the 20th century in the history of our country's painting." (An P. T., An Dinh Palace, 2008, p.119-142). Thus, Hue's fine arts during the French colonial period underwent a process of artistic absorption and hybridization, creating a unique and diverse artistic style, reflecting the richness and endless creativity of the Hue people. Author Nguyen Tien Canh also stated that Hue fine arts always contained the national spirit with Confucianism as the means of transmission, regardless of whether China or the West influenced it. "Therefore, even when French capitalism strongly penetrated Vietnamese society... Hue fine arts did not change much in content or form, but only absorbed certain techniques in manufacture and expression." (Canh, 1992, p.110). The Vietnamese can be proud of this cultural exchange. At the same time, it is not only a combination

of two cultures but also a transmission between generations and a source of inspiration for the creativity of the indigenous people.



Figure 10 The mural painting "Nine Dragons Hidden in Clouds" was painted by artist Phan Van Thanh with his feet on the ceiling of Thien Dinh Palace, Khai Dinh Tomb.

Source: Flickr



Figure 11 Two paintings of Mr. and Mrs. Nguyen Khoa Luan by artist Le Huy Mien were painted between 1913 and 1924.

Soucre: Artist Le Huy Tiep



Figure 12 Oil painting "Binh Van" by artist Le Huy Mien

Soucre: <https://lehouseart.com/tin-tuc/hoa-si-le-van-mien-nguoi-dau-tien-cua-hoi-hoa-hien-dai-viet-nam-55.html>

Part 2: Historical background and the birth of An Dinh Palace

2.1 History of Phung Hoa Cong mansion of Prince Buu Dao

In December 1889, Emperor Dong Khanh passed away due to illness after more than three years of reign without having time to appoint a successor. When Emperor Dong Khanh died, Prince Buu Dao was supposed to succeed him, but this did not happen. At that time, Prince Buu Dao was the only son, only four years old, and too young, mainly because of the court's dark and troubled historical circumstances caused by the French colonialists during that period. The Protectorate government decided the succession to the throne at that time. Therefore, although Emperor Dong Khanh and Prince Buu Dao were father and son, the traditional succession from father to son had to be interrupted by two emperors of another lineage in the royal family, Emperor Thanh Thai (1889-1907) and Emperor Duy Tan (1907-1916).

In 1902, under Emperor Thanh Thai, when Prince Buu Dao turned 17 years old, according to court rules, he had to leave the Palace and was granted land by the court to build his own house called An Dinh Royal House. Because Prince Buu Dao was the eldest son of Emperor Dong Khanh, at that time, people called him the eldest Prince, and his private residence was also called the "Royal house of the eldest prince." Then, in 1906, also under Thanh Thai reign, Prince Buu Dao was appointed Duke, nicknamed Phung Hoa, so this property was also known by another name, "Phung Hoa mansion".

Initially, this building was built in the traditional Hue Ruong house architecture style, with the primary material being wood. The house had three main rooms, two wings, and a few auxiliary works similar to the villas of other princes and princesses under the Nguyen Dynasty. This became the official residence of Prince Nguyen Phuc Buu Dao until he became Emperor in 1916.



Figure 13 Portrait of Emperor Khai Dinh. Source: manhhai

2.2 History of the Formation of An Dinh Palace

2.2.1 The two Emperors, Thanh Thai and Duy Tan, ascended the throne when they were young. When they grew up, they both expressed dissatisfaction with the French protectorate policy, so in July 1907, Emperor Thanh Thai was forced to abdicate to Emperor Duy Tan. In April 1916, Emperor Duy Tan was deposed. After Emperor Duy Tan was exiled to Reunion Island, France, the French colonial court and government enthroned Prince Buu Dao, taking the reign name Khai Dinh (Figure 13). Thus, it took 27 years for the throne to return to him.

After being crowned and starting to live in the royal Palace in 1916, Emperor Khai Dinh thought of renovating An Dinh Palace, expanding the grounds, and building some more architectural works there. The purpose was to create a larger property to commemorate where the Emperor lived and grew up and bestow it on Prince Vinh Thuy as his own to pass on to future generations.

The main book Khai Dinh - Dong Khanh of the Nguyen Dynasty National History Institute writes as follows:

"In the 4th year of Khai Dinh (1919), in the 8th month, I approved the granting of Khai Tuong Dien to the Crown Prince. The Emperor commented: "During the golden age, I was the Crown Prince, living in the Palace. It was not until the year of Nham Dan, according to the court's regulations, that I was granted this property. In the summer of the Dragon year, I ascended the throne. In the year of the Snake, I received my salary and hired construction workers. In the winter of the horse year, I saw this place was good⁶, so I named it Khai Tuong Pavillon. I bought the decorations without using state money to prove this place was not state property. To show my favor, I present this Pavillon to Prince Vinh Thuy as his permanent personal property. You should respectfully follow my teachings and think hard. Later, thanks to the grace of heaven, you will achieve success and talent, inherit the blessings of your ancestors, and become the Emperor's successor. You will need to respect and follow my will even

⁶ Good place, according to feng shui (geography), helps the homeowner to progress and become rich.

more and not make any mistakes. I will order the Cabinet to copy and hand over to Le Van Bach in the office to engrave this message on the wall of the Pavillon." (Figure 14)



Figure 14 A Chinese inscription written by Emperor Khai Dinh is embossed on the facade of Khai Tuong Pavillon, telling the time of construction and completion of the Palace.

Source: Researcher

In addition, Emperor Khai Dinh also left a cement stele in Chinese characters (Figure 16) written by himself on the 3rd floor of the Khai Tuong building (talking about the meaning of the name Khai Tuong according to Emperor Khai Dinh, meaning the place where good luck begins). This is considered the most apparent evidence of the Origin of An Dinh Palace and as a testament of Emperor Khai Dinh passed down to future generations:

The main book Khai Dinh - Dong Khanh of the Nguyen Dynasty National History Institute writes as follows:

In the 5th year of Khai Dinh (1920), in the summer, in the 4th month, the Emperor wrote an introduction to An Dinh Palace: "An Dinh Mansion where I lived before I ascended the throne. When I was still a duke, I named it An Dinh Mansion. It was here that in the fall of the year of Buffalo, the Emperor's eldest son was born. In the summer of the year of the Dragon, because he thought it was a good place, he used his salary to rebuild the Pavilion. In the spring of the year of the Horse, it was completed and changed to Palace, still using the old name, An Dinh Palace. [45b]. The Pavilion is called Khai Tuong. All the gold, silver, jewels, and furniture in the Pavilion were bought or manufactured with my own money. It is the same in other places because I have prepared for the Crown Prince to give to him as his property when he grows up, or if he has already ascended the throne, he can pass it on to his brothers or descendants as his property. Therefore, I dare not waste state money and people's efforts. Some people also say that once you become the Emperor, all the wealth in the treasury is your property, so why do you need to accumulate personal wealth? Loc Dai⁷ Shang Dynasty Quynh Lam⁸ Tang Dynasty then brought the

⁷ Loc Dai, also known as Nam D, is a superior architectural structure in Henan Province, China, said to have been built by King Zhou of the Shang Dynasty.

⁸ Quynh Lam is the name of one of two treasuries built by King Duong Duc in Phung Thien to store his private assets.

ridicule and scorn of later generations. But thinking back, today is a civilized era; the country's spending has a budget, the Emperor has a salary, the officials have a salary, and everyone has their separate funds, unlike in the past when they had to be served by hundreds of millions of people. Compared to the castles of the kings of European countries, which used to spend much more of their own money to build, [46a] my private expenses are not excessive.

Moreover, I am now old, and the Prince is still young. Heaven's affairs are unpredictable, so I must also be prepared because I think about the future; if the Prince is not as successful as I am now, I have to be ready like this. So I ordered someone to engrave it on a wooden board and place it in An Dinh Palace, and at the same time, I ordered someone to compile a list of all the objects in the Pavilion and bind it into a book to keep as a record.



Figure 15 Emperor Khai Dinh and his son - Crown Prince Vinh Thuy (later Emperor Bao Dai). Source: manhhai



Figure 16 The stele records the Origin of An Dinh Palace. Source: Researcher

Regarding the construction time of An Dinh Palace, according to the above article, the overall construction of this architectural complex began in 1916 after Emperor Khai Dinh ascended the throne and was completed in the spring of the year of the Horse. The spring of the year of the Horse is from November 2, 1918, to May 9, 1919. However, according to the content of another Chinese text of nearly 130 characters long, also written by Emperor Khai Dinh himself and embossed on three sides of the balcony of Khai Tuong pavilion, An Dinh Palace began construction in the fall of the year Dinh Ty (from August 18, 1917 to November 14, 1917) and was completed in the winter of the year Mau Ngo (from November 4, 1918 to January 31, 1919). The original text of a paragraph here reads as follows: In the fall of the year of the Snake, Use the Emperor's salary to hire workers to renovate the Palace. It was completed in the winter of the year of the Horse). Thus, the two completion times in the two articles are nine months apart. Perhaps this is only the start and completion time of the Khai Tuong Pavilion alone because it is the main project among the clothing projects at An Dinh Palace.

The overall scale of the Palace includes ten architectural works: the boat dock, the palace gate, the Trung Lap pavilion, the front yard and flower beds, the Khai Tuong tower, Cuu Tu dai, the horizontal house, the animal cage, the lake, and the palace garden, backdoor. Up to now, only three original architectural works are left: the main gate, Trung Lap Pavilion, and Khai Tuong Tower (Figure 18, 19). Notably, Khai Tuong Tower, a typical work with independent European architecture, was designed by a talented combination of French architects, gifted artisans, and painters of Vietnam at that time, including "the best artist" Nguyen Van Kha and painter Luong Quang Duyet. (Son T. D., An Dinh Palace murals, big unanswered questions, 2024).

The An Dinh Palace has crucial historical value. In this place, solemn receptions took place during some happy occasions of the court with the participation of the royal family, court officials, and families of French officials (Figure 17, 18). This place is associated with the lives of two Emperors of the Nguyen Dynasty (Khai Dinh and Bao Dai) (Figure 19) and some members of the royal family, such as Duc Ba Tu Cung (Doan Huy Hoang Thai Hau), Queen Nam Phuong and her children, most notably Bao Dai, the last Emperor of the Vietnamese feudal court, and also the Emperor most influenced by Western lifestyle and culture. (Figure 20)



Figure 17 An Dinh place is decorated to celebrate the Queen Mother's birthday. The architecture of the Khai Tuong building has only two floors. *Source: manhhai*



Figure 18 European guests attend the reception at the Cuu Tu Dai Theater. *Source: <https://www.maguytran-pinterville.com/vietnam/renaissance-de-hue>*



Figure 19 Emperor Khai Dinh in the main hall of the Khai Tuong building, photographed in 1918. *Source: (Martin Kemlein, 2010)*



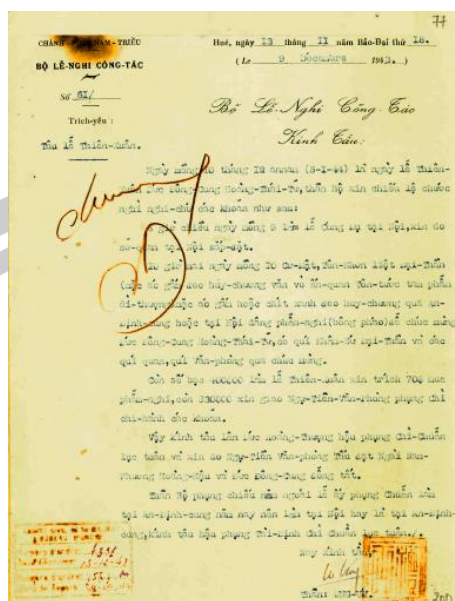


Figure 20 The Ministry of Rites' report dated November 13, 1943, on the organization of the 1st birthday celebration for Crown Prince Bao Long at An Dinh Palace
Source: National Archives Center I - State Records and Archives Department

In 1945, after the abdication ceremony at Ngo Mon (August 30, 1945), former Emperor Bao Dai, his mother, Tu Cung, and his wife, Nam Phuong, as well as their children and some servants, left the Royal Palace and moved to An Dinh for a short time. Tu Cung (Bao Dai's mother) stayed here until 1949. When former Emperor Bao Dai returned from France to become Head of State, Tu Cung returned to live in Dien Tho Palace in the Royal Palace as a posthumous title as before. In 1955, when Ngo Dinh Diem deposed Head of State Bao Dai, Tu Cung had to leave the Royal Palace and move to An Dinh Palace. In 1957, Tu Cung left An Dinh Palace and bought another nearby villa until she died in 1980.



Figure 21 The An Dinh Palace around 1920. Source: manhhai



Figure 22 Trung Lap Pavilion and Khai Tuong Building in 1945
Soucre: <http://tvtn.free.fr/bio/an.html>

From 1957 onwards, An Dinh Palace's architectural complex and grounds were misused. The current government used this place as a residence for Hue officials, including six families of Hue University professors (Figure 23, 24). After the Ngo Dinh Diem regime collapsed, this building was requisitioned as the headquarters of the Phu Vang police department and then abandoned until 1975. After 1975, being taken over by the revolutionary government, An Dinh Palace was used for many different functions. For a long time (1975 - 2001), this place was used as a club, then upgraded to the city's Labor Cultural House, where cultural, physical education, sports activities, guest houses, classrooms, and royal cuisine restaurants were organized (Figure 25). This place has seriously degraded after many years of no renovation or maintenance. Today, the Palace only has three relatively intact structures: the main gate, the Trung Lap pavilion, and the Khai Tuong building. Many decorative motifs are damaged, many pieces of porcelain and glass are broken, and the walls are repainted with whitewash to cover the decorative motifs.



Figure 23 Wedding of a family living at An Dinh Palace in 1961. Soucre: <http://tvtn.free.fr/bio/an.html>



Figure 24 Civil servant family living at An Dinh Palace in 1964

Soucre: <http://tvtn.free.fr/bio/an.html>



Figure 25 The An Dinh Palace was used as An Dinh Royal Restaurant around 1990.

Source: Huu Bao

From 2002 - 2003 and 2005 - 2009, six murals in the main hall on the ground floor and most of the decorative wall panels in the interior of the Khai Tuong pavillon were preserved and restored with financial and technical support from the German Foreign Ministry (Figure 26, 27, 28) Experts from the Leibniz Cultural Exchange Association - Federal Republic of Germany, (later the German Conservation, Restoration and Training Project Group - G.C.R.E.P.) directly participated in this preservation and restoration process. Thereby combining training in restoration techniques for Vietnamese students. With the architectural and artistic values of the An Dinh Palace architectural complex, the Thua Thien Hue provincial government

recognized it as a provincial cultural heritage and assigned it to the Hue Monuments Conservation Center for management (Figure 29).. Since then, An Dinh Palace has continued to be partially restored and managed by its function as a national historical and cultural relic recognized in 2006 (Figure 30). This place has become an attractive cultural and tourist destination.



Figure 26 The An Dinh Palace was restored by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2010.

Soucre: <https://www.maguytran-pinterville.com/vietnam/renaissance-de-hue/>





Figure 27 Project for conservation and restoration of wall and ceiling paintings at An Dinh Palace funded by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2010
 Soucre: (Martin Kemlein, 2010)

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Figure 28 An Dinh Palace after restoration in 2012

Source: <https://dulichvnau.blogspot.com/2013/08/cung-inh-hue.html>

[illegible]

Figure 29 The An Dinh Palace was recognized as a national monument (artistic architecture) according to Decision No. 100/2006/QĐ-BVHTT dated December 13, 2006, of the Ministry of Culture and Information. Source: <https://thuvienphapluat.vn>

Regarding the time of construction of Cuu Tu Dai Theater, the second largest and most important architectural and artistic work within the An Dinh Palace, although there are no clear documents, according to researcher Phan Thuan An, It was built later than the Khai Tuong building, for three reasons:

(1) In the two articles by Emperor Khai Dinh mentioned above (one written around the end of 1918 and one written around October 1920), he did not mention Cuu Tu Dai but only talked about the Khai Tuong building. This 3-story building has an area of 745m², while the 2-story theater behind it occupies about 1,500m².

(2) If all the architectural works in the An Dinh Palace area that we know today were planned and built at the same time from 1917, then the Khai Tuong building would not be so close to the An Cuu River bank because the space behind the area is still very large and empty, meaning there is an imbalance and unreasonable layout of the overall architectural plan. Moreover, there are sources of documents stating that after building the Khai Tuong building at the old An Dinh villa location, Emperor Khai Dinh bought more residential land from other families behind that building to expand the An Dinh Palace area, as mentioned above.

(3) One of the results of the archaeological survey at the Cuu Tu Dai ruins by a group of experts from the Vietnam Museum of History from April to July 2003 showed that part of the theater's foundation was still relatively intact (Figure 33). The foundation was 2.70m high. Its exterior is decorated with raised and recessed lines in the middle to form hexagonal shapes. According to the archaeologists, these traces prove that the Khai Tuong building and Cuu Tu Dai were built at two different times, early or late, under Khai Dinh's reign.



Figure 30 The Cuu Tu Dai Theatre was destroyed in 1946.
Source: AAVHjc (Association des Amis du Vieux Hue)



Figure 31 The Cuu Tu Dai Theatre was destroyed in 1946.
Source: AAVHjc (Association des Amis du Vieux Hue)

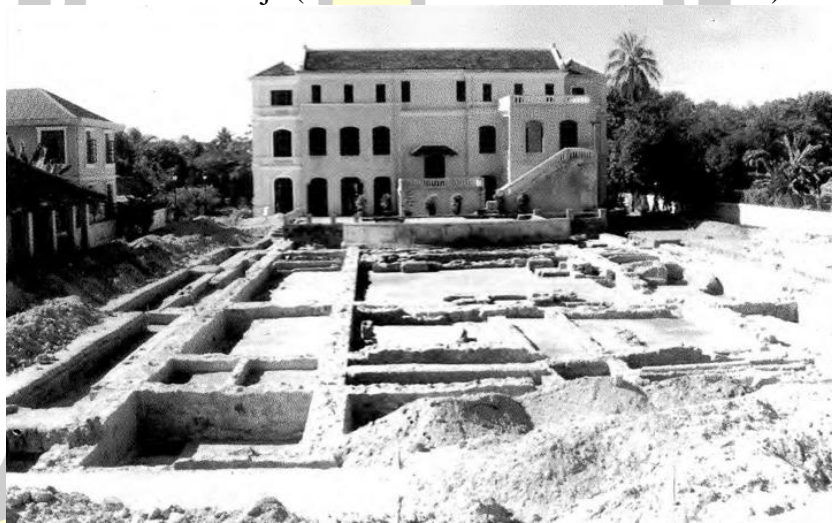


Figure 32 Archaeological excavation of the foundation of the Cuu Tu Dai theater ruins in August 2003. Source: Phan Thuan An

2.2.2 Origin of land for construction of An Dinh Palace

According to researcher Phan Thuan An, In 1902, An Dinh Royal House was built in a courtyard located to the left of the courtyard of the Emperor's paternal family temple called Han Vinh Temple, which was completed in March 1888 under the reign of Emperor Dong Khanh. The An Dinh Royal House and Han Vinh Temple have a close relationship regarding Origin and construction location. Han Vinh Temple is a place to worship King Kien Thai (1845-1876), the 26th son of Emperor Thieu Tri, the younger brother of Emperor Tu Duc, and the father of Emperor Dong Khanh, the grandfather of Prince Buu Dao. Han Vinh Temple is located on the northern coast of An Cuu River, now at 179 Phan Dinh Phung Street, Hue City. King Kien Thai, Emperor Dong Khanh, Kien Phuc, Ham Nghi, Khai Dinh, and Bao Dai are worshiped here. This was a big

Temple, spacious and artful worship deity in the past. The three-door gate of this temple grounds alone is an artistic product of high architectural and decorative value, so it was painted in watercolor by artist Ton That Sa and printed in the book - L'art à Hué by Léopold Cadière. (An P. T., An Dinh Palace, 2008, p.119-142) (Figure 34, 35).



Figure 33 The Tam Quan Gate of Han Vinh Temple (right of An Dinh Palace) was painted in watercolor by artist Ton That Sa. Source: L'art à Hué



Figure 34 The Tam Quan Gate of the current Han Vinh Temple
Source: Researcher

In addition, next to the left side of the An Dinh Palace today, there is also the area of another ancient temple. That is the place to worship Emperor Khai Dinh's

maternal grandparents, Phu Quoc Cong (Figure 36, 37). He built this temple in 1924. Until now, the wooden house alone still retains unique value in terms of art. The temple is located at 181 Phan Dinh Phung Street, Hue City. Thus, since 1924, An Dinh Palace has been between these two temples.

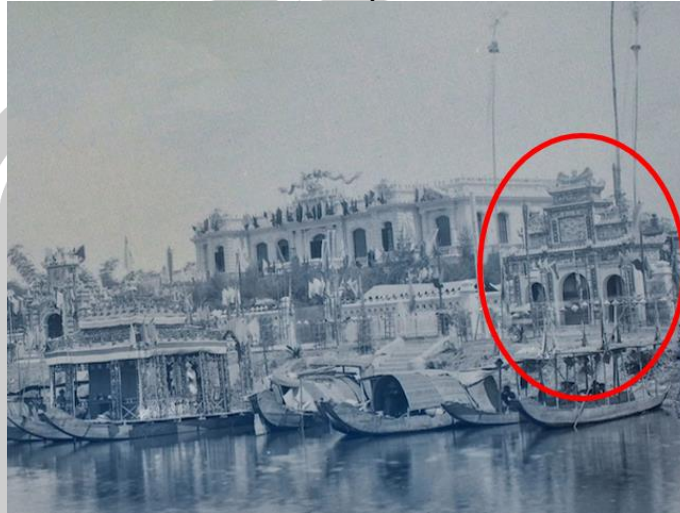


Figure 35 Phu Quoc Cong Temple, located next to the left side of An Dinh Palace, taken in 1920. Source: manhhai

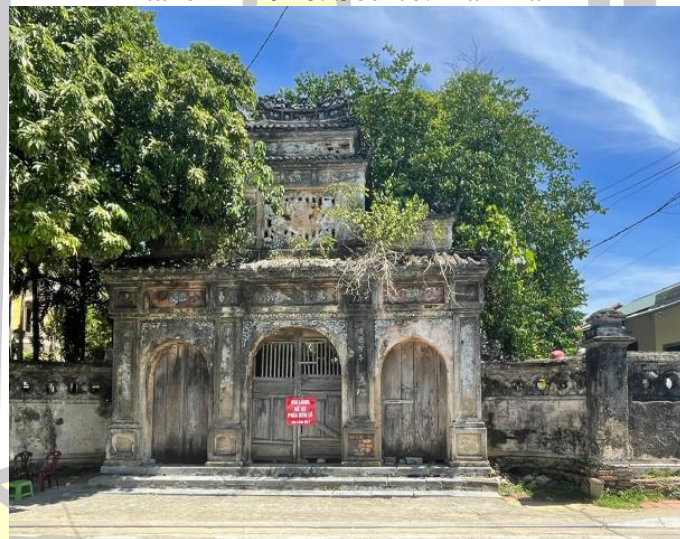


Figure 36 Tam Quan Gate of Phu Quoc Cong Temple. Source: Researcher

To have a relatively large and airy space behind Khai Tuong tower, the descendants living in Han Vinh and Phu Quoc Cong temples said that the land and houses of An Dinh royal house when it was first built in 1902 were not as large as An Dinh palace later. The land area of the An Dinh mansion at first was only equivalent to the location of the Han Vinh temple, and the architecture of the building at that time was only a wooden building with three rooms, two wings, and a few outbuildings (horizontal houses) like in many other mansions of princes and princesses. The main architectural works of An Dinh Palace today are concentrated near the banks of the An Cuu River because the Palace's land was initially limited to that area. After ascending the throne (1916), the Khai Tuong building was built on the grounds of An Dinh mansion, and Emperor Khai Dinh bought more land from many families behind

the building. It gradually expanded the grounds to the North to build the Cuu Tu Dai theater, animal cages, two lakes, and other ancillary works.

One of the families who sold land here to build houses elsewhere was the case of Mrs. Ton Nu Thi Ninh (1859 - 1940). Mrs. Ninh's descendants, who still live near An Dinh Palace, said that before 1921, Mrs. Ninh's family lived on a plot of land near the back of An Dinh Palace. However, in 1917, when Emperor Khai Dinh renovated An Dinh Palace and expanded the area of the grounds to build a palace, Mrs. Ninh had to sell her land to the Emperor.

Therefore, the An Dinh mansion area was expanded to 23,465 m² today. The Emperor demolished the primary and secondary houses in the old area and successively built new architectural works with modern solid materials (reinforced concrete) in Western style. From 1916 to 1918, Emperor Khai Dinh built the ground floor and first floors of the Khai Tuong building, and the second floor of this building and the new Cuu Tu Dai theater was built in 1920. Since then, An Dinh mansion has been renamed An Dinh Palace.

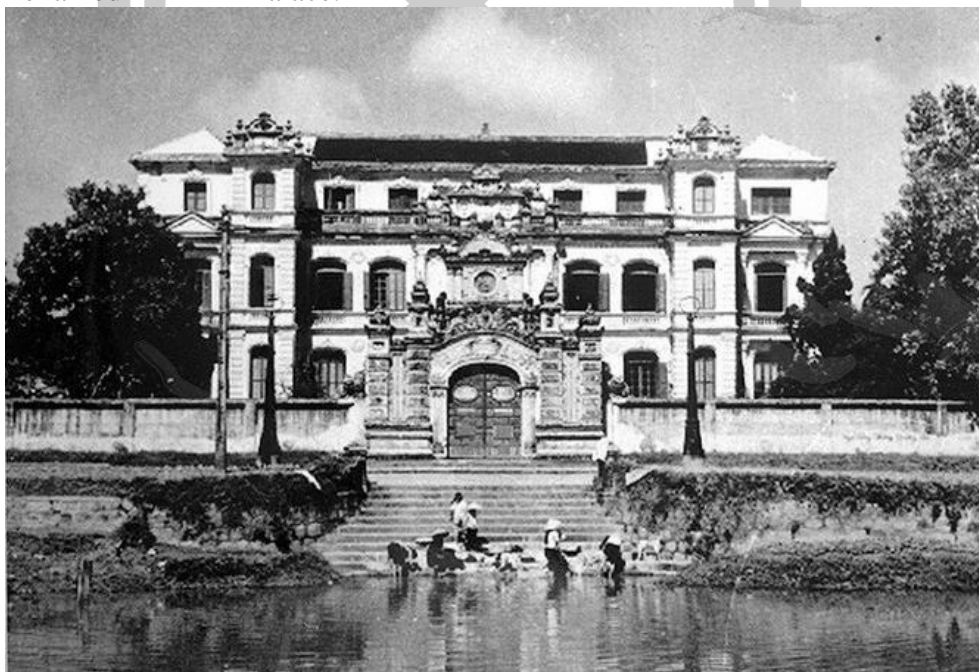


Figure 37 An Dinh Palace Around 1920 - 1929, the Khai Tuong Building had a second floor added. Soucre: <https://www.maguytran-pinterville.com/vietnam/renaissance-de-hue/>

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Figure 38 The An Dinh Palace around the beginning of the 20th century
Source: <http://tvtn.free.fr/bio/an.html>

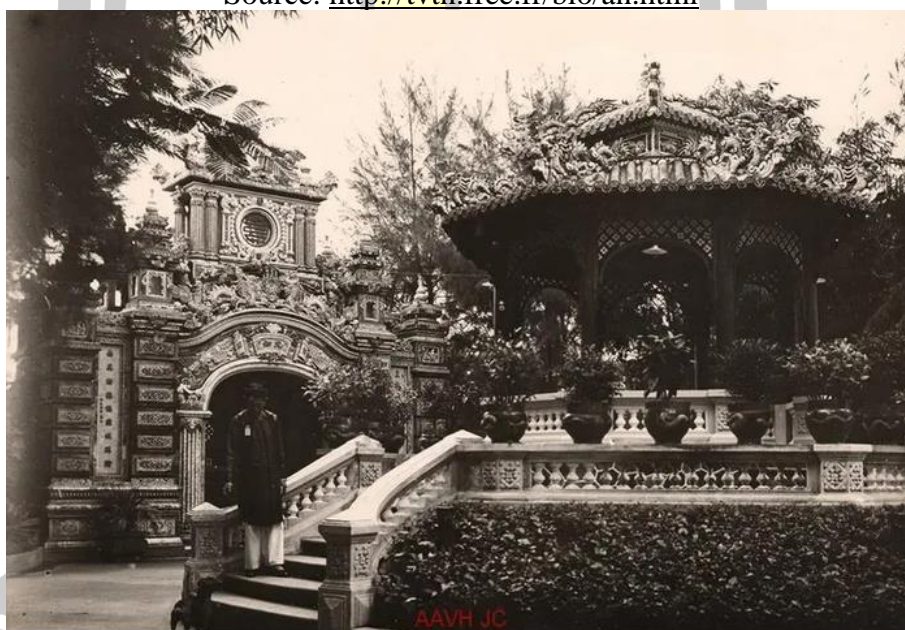


Figure 39 The An Dinh Palace around 1935. Source: AAVH.JC

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Figure 40 The photo was taken at the front of the Khai Tuong building in 1959, with the statue of eight fairies. Soucre: <http://tvtn.free.fr/bio/an.html>

Figure 1

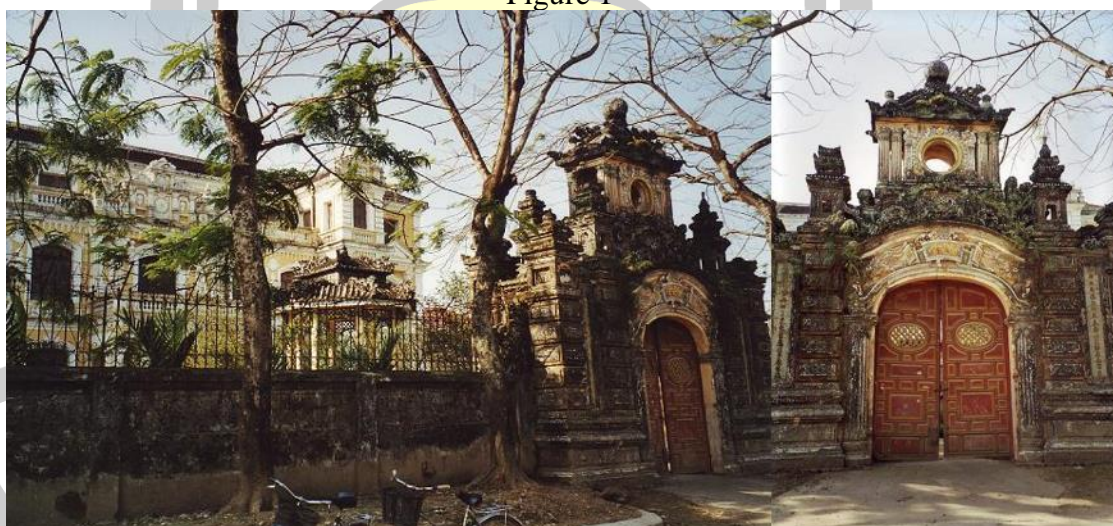
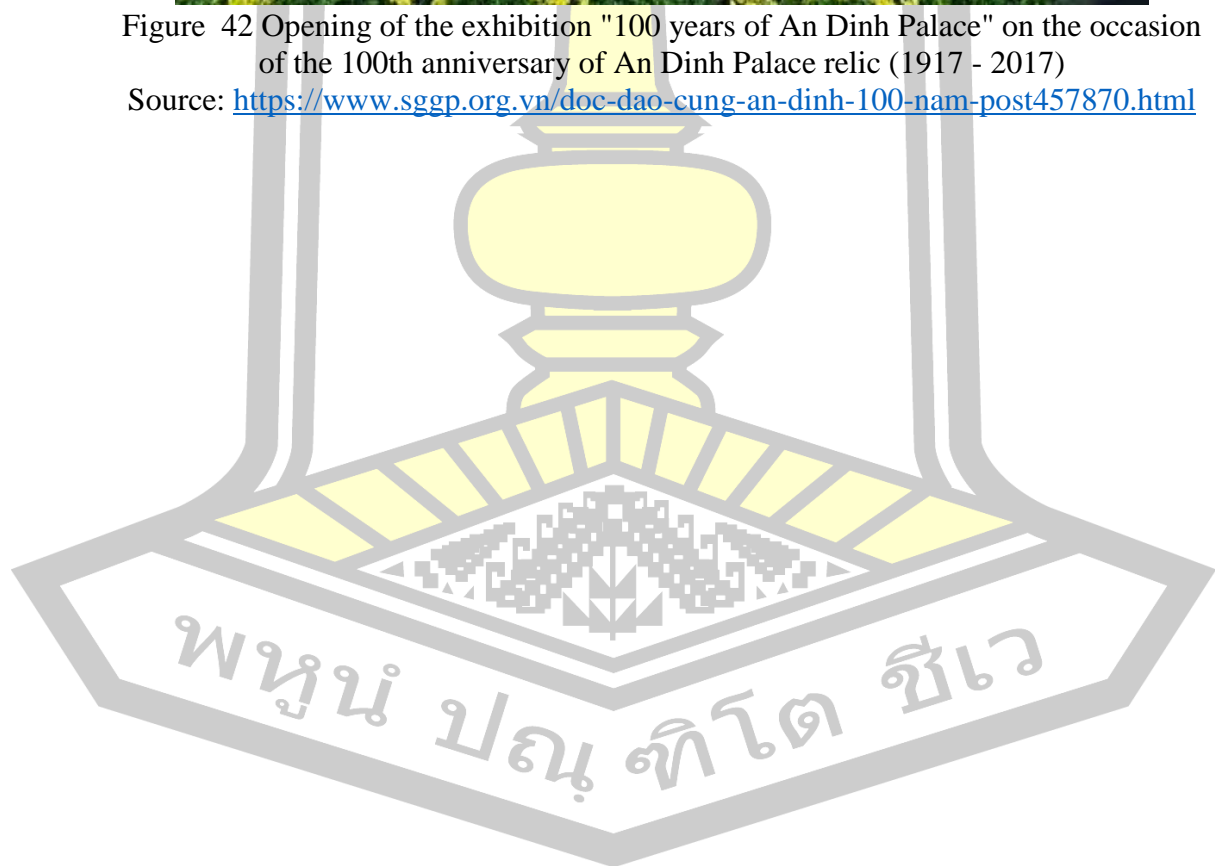


Figure 41 The An Dinh Palace around 2001. Soucre: <http://tvtn.free.fr/bio/an.html>



Figure 42 Opening of the exhibition "100 years of An Dinh Palace" on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of An Dinh Palace relic (1917 - 2017)

Source: <https://www.sggp.org.vn/doc-dao-cung-an-dinh-100-nam-post457870.html>



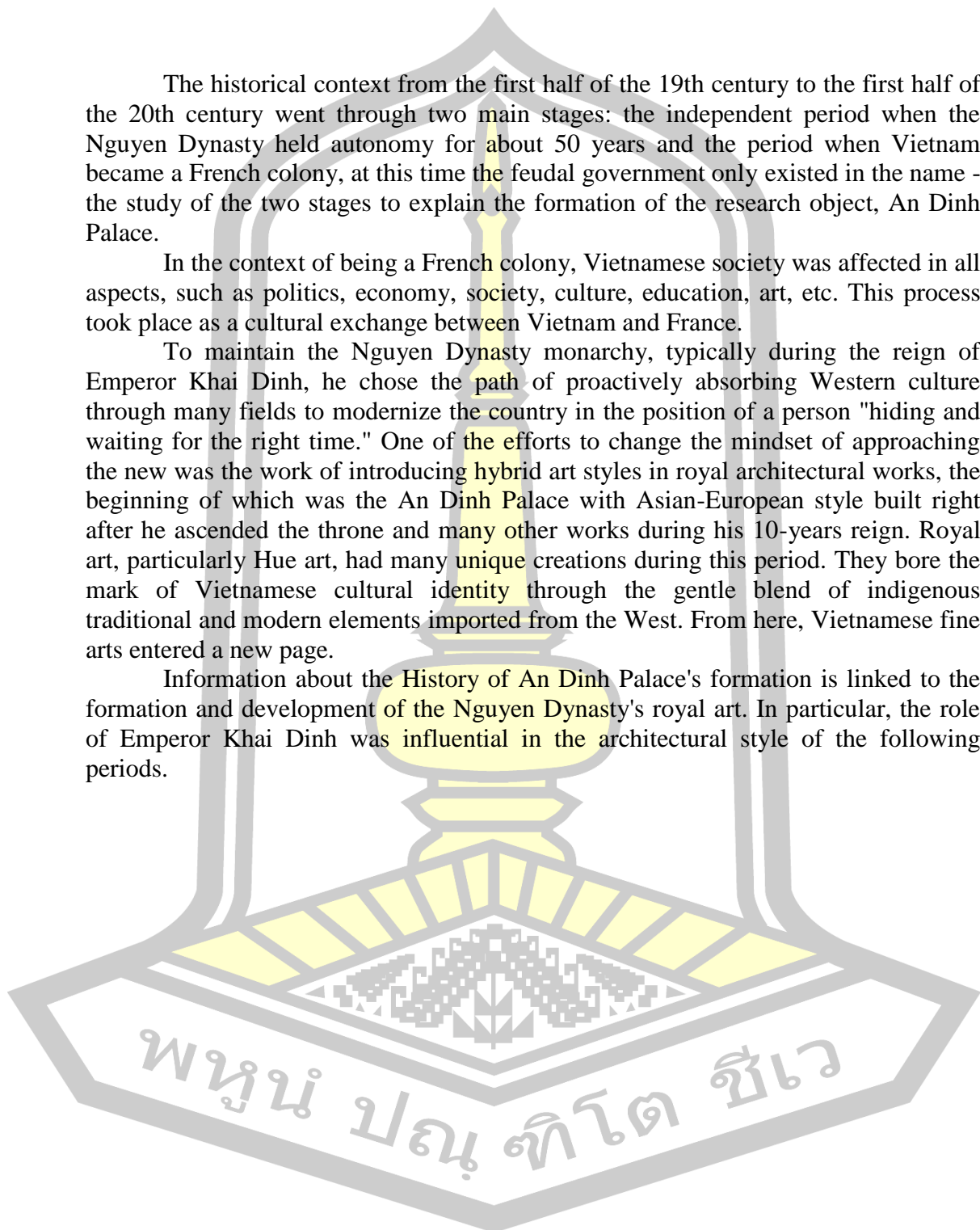
Conclusion

The historical context from the first half of the 19th century to the first half of the 20th century went through two main stages: the independent period when the Nguyen Dynasty held autonomy for about 50 years and the period when Vietnam became a French colony, at this time the feudal government only existed in the name - the study of the two stages to explain the formation of the research object, An Dinh Palace.

In the context of being a French colony, Vietnamese society was affected in all aspects, such as politics, economy, society, culture, education, art, etc. This process took place as a cultural exchange between Vietnam and France.

To maintain the Nguyen Dynasty monarchy, typically during the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh, he chose the path of proactively absorbing Western culture through many fields to modernize the country in the position of a person "hiding and waiting for the right time." One of the efforts to change the mindset of approaching the new was the work of introducing hybrid art styles in royal architectural works, the beginning of which was the An Dinh Palace with Asian-European style built right after he ascended the throne and many other works during his 10-years reign. Royal art, particularly Hue art, had many unique creations during this period. They bore the mark of Vietnamese cultural identity through the gentle blend of indigenous traditional and modern elements imported from the West. From here, Vietnamese fine arts entered a new page.

Information about the History of An Dinh Palace's formation is linked to the formation and development of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal art. In particular, the role of Emperor Khai Dinh was influential in the architectural style of the following periods.



CHAPTER III

HUE ROYAL ARCHITECTURE BEFORE AND AFTER KHAI DINH BECAME EMPEROR

Chapter 3 aims to clarify the second research objective: to identify Hue royal architecture before and after Khai Dinh ascended the throne. Chapter 2 showed the changes in social context that affected all Nguyen Dynasty activities, including the perception of Emperor Khai Dinh. In Chapter 3, the research content will provide primary knowledge about analyzing and comparing architectural characteristics and decorative arts through two historical periods: the independent Nguyen Dynasty and the French colonial period. During the French colonial period, the research focuses on the Khai Dinh period, aiming to identify royal architectural changes through the periods. The research results show that cultural exchange with the West created a new look for Hue royal architecture. However, at the same time, it was still imbued with traditional cultural and artistic values.

Part 1: Hue royal architecture before Khai Dinh ascended the throne

1.1 Period 1802-1874

1.1.1 Royal Architecture period 1802-1874

After defeating the Tay Son Dynasty in 1802, Nguyen Anh ascended the reign name Gia Long, established the Nguyen Dynasty with the country's name being Viet Nam, and chose Phu Xuan (Hue) as its capital. It was not by chance that he decided Hue was the political center of Vietnam. According to researchers, there are two reasons. Firstly, this is the historical land of Thuan Hoa-Phu Xuan, which has existed since the Nguyen Lords' time for 200 years. Secondly, Hue's geographical location is the center of unified Vietnam. Due to its location far from the border with foreign China, it helped build a defense system and more convenient communication between the two ends of the country. Ngang Pass in the North and Hai Van Pass in the South became two strategic military positions to defend the capital. Thirdly, according to feng shui, this is a lucky land. In particular, the unique landscape has brought favorable energy to the city. (Hao, 1984). In early April 1802, two months after his coronation, Emperor Gia Long planned to build the capital with the advice of the French. According to Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien, the construction of the Hue Citadel began on May 18, 1805. Construction was primarily completed under the reign of Minh Mang (1820–1841) and was completed in 1832. Under the reigns of Emperors Thieu Tri (1841–1847) and Tu Duc (1848–1884), the critical area of the capital was the Imperial Citadel, where the most important agencies of the Nguyen Dynasty were located. Inside the Imperial Citadel was the Forbidden Purple City, where the Emperor, the Royal Family, and the Nguyen Dynasty Cabinet lived and worked. In 1805, Emperor Gia Long designed and built the capital in the style of the

Imperial Citadel Vauban⁹ (An P. T., Hue Imperial City - Learning about the construction process of the Nguyen Dynasty Capital - World Heritage of Vietnam, 2012,p.55-57). The expansion of the area was very large, 520 hectares, with a perimeter of 10 km, where the administrative and military agencies of the Nguyen Dynasty were located and where mandarins and militia lived. This construction lasted until 1832, and the Hue Citadel became a system of solid ramparts used to protect the activities of the Nguyen Dynasty court and the royal family (Figure 44, 45)

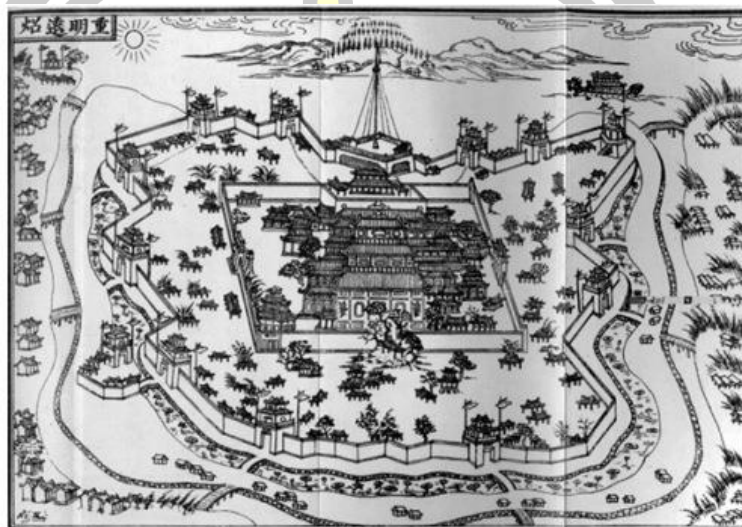


Figure 43 Woodblock sketch of Hue Citadel seen from front
Source: Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Hué, 1933

⁹ According to researcher Phan Thuan An, Hue Citadel was built in the Vauban architectural style. As a French military engineer (1633-1707), Vauban introduced the building of solid ramparts, which was applied in some Western countries and colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries. Vauban citadel style includes ramparts, fortresses, walls, defenses, moats... with defensive capabilities. From the end of the 18th century, through Nguyen Anh's connection to request French military aid to fight against the Tay Son dynasty, the Vauban type of citadel was introduced to Vietnam. The first citadel was Gia Dinh, built in 1790, and the second, more enormous citadel was Hue Citadel.



Figure 44 Woodblock sketch of Hue Citadel seen from behind
Source: Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Hué, 1933

In the early 19th century, the main complex was built under Emperor Gia Long (1802-1819) and was expanded, supplemented, and completed under Emperor Minh Mang. Hundreds of palaces and palace complexes were built during this period, where the upper class and social authorities' political and cultural ceremonies and activities took place. According to statistics, there are about 100 palaces, temples, and pavilions in the Royal Palace. (An P. T., Kien Trung Tower in Hue Royal Palace, 2003, p.149-161). (Figure 46)



Figure 45 A corner of Hue royal palace with palaces following traditional architecture while still intact. Source: Dai Viet Co Phong

The architecture of these buildings was built in the traditional style from the beginning, when they only used two primary materials, wood and terracotta, like other Vietnamese architectures. Still, due to the way they were processed, they became valuable. Under the influence of Chinese architecture from the Qing Dynasty, the Nguyen Dynasty built palaces in a relatively close style but still retained the identity of Vietnamese architecture. Usually, the Nguyen Dynasty palace complexes were concentrated on the second wall of the capital (this area is called Dai Noi). These complexes could be for members of the royal family, government agencies, or ancestral worship. Therefore, they include many buildings such as primary and secondary palaces, temples, entrance gates, reception areas, working areas, etc., and other buildings such as theaters or libraries suitable for entertainment and living functions. They have differences in floor plan shape, cross-section structure, roof form, height, decoration, and materials used. The structures in the Hue Imperial Citadel are mainly built in rectangular or square and octagonal shapes. The types of royal civil architecture are designed and built in the typical court style. Essential structures for the Emperor often have 1 to 2 floors on the same foundation. Other structures have simple rectangular or square plans. Surrounding the Palace are ponds, trees, rockeries, and miniature landscapes to serve the royal family's relaxation and enjoyment of nature needs. The load-bearing structure system of the structure in the early period of the Nguyen Dynasty (Gia Long period to the first half of the Tu Duc period) was mainly a load-bearing wooden frame made up of a system of columns and extremely complex column joints. The connection method is based on a system of mortise and tenon joints to create a solid wooden frame to support the structure against storms and long-term rains of Hue weather (Figure 47)



Figure 46 A corner of Hue royal palace with palaces following traditional architecture while still intact. Source: [manhhai](#)

Typical Hue palace complexes built during this period include the following types of works:

(1) Works where court ceremonies take place: Thai Hoa Palace, Can Chanh Palace, Ngo Mon Gate

(2) Royal Palace (Can Thanh Palace, Khon Thai Palace, Dien Tho Palace, Truong Sanh Palace)

(3) Government agencies (Internal Affairs Office, Thai Y Vien, the residence of the Privy Council, Office of the Thai Y Institute, etc.)

Some typical architectural works built during this period are:

(1) Can Chanh Palace¹⁰

Can Chanh Palace was built in the third year of Gia Long (1804). This is the most enormous and beautiful wooden Palace in the Forbidden City. The Palace was renovated in 1827, 1850, and 1899. Emperor Khai Dinh had it repainted and gilded in the early 20th century.



Figure 48 The front of the Can Chanh Palace, dated from 1928 to 1936. Source: manhhai

¹⁰ Can Chanh Palace in the Forbidden City play an important role in the activities of the royal court and the royal family. This was where the king held court, often received foreign envoys, and held banquets for the royal family and the Nguyen Dynasty. Currently, this palace has become a ruin due to being burned down during the Viet Minh's scorched earth campaign in February 1947. Currently, only the foundation remains.

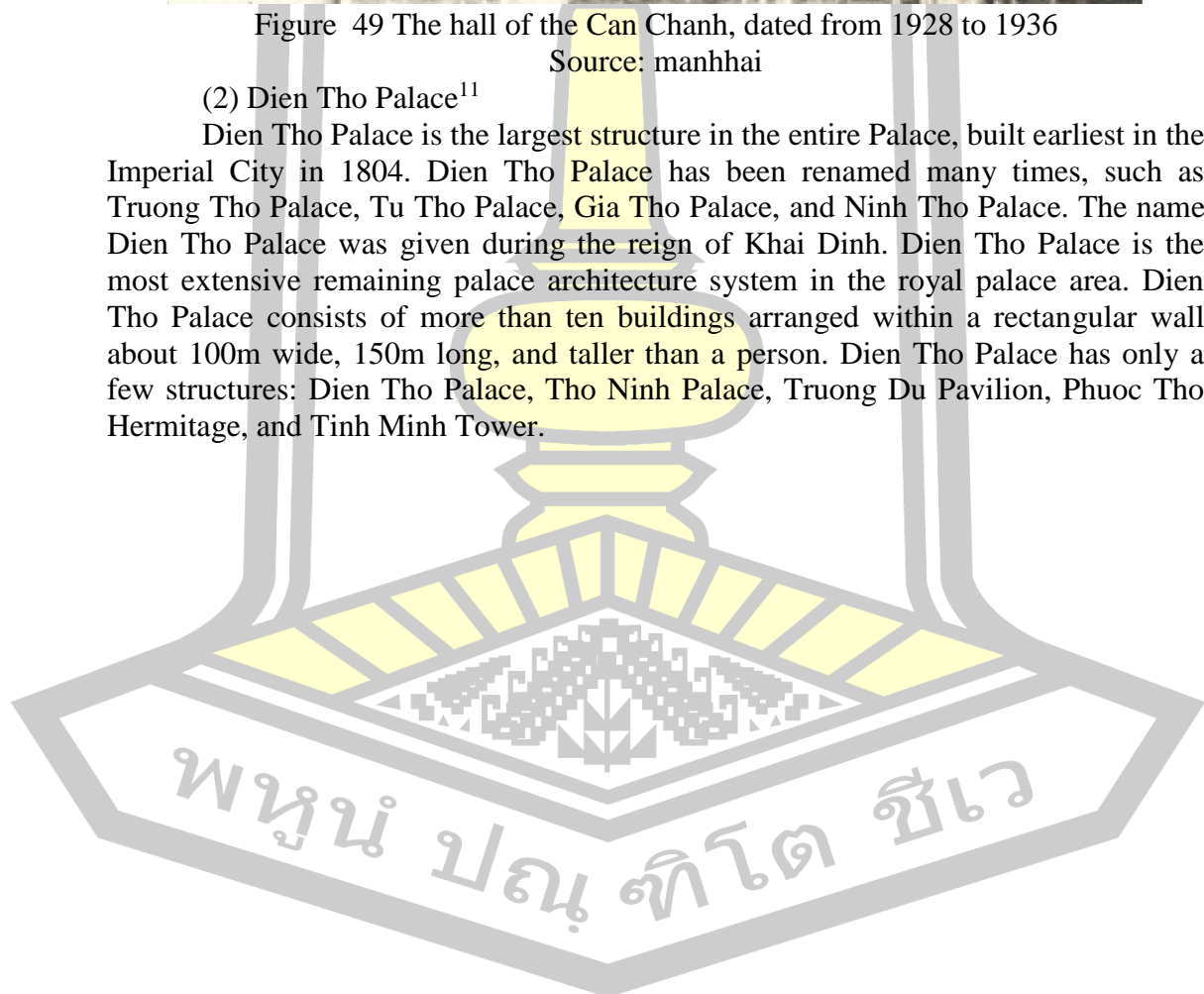


Figure 49 The hall of the Can Chanh, dated from 1928 to 1936

Source: manhhai

(2) Dien Tho Palace¹¹

Dien Tho Palace is the largest structure in the entire Palace, built earliest in the Imperial City in 1804. Dien Tho Palace has been renamed many times, such as Truong Tho Palace, Tu Tho Palace, Gia Tho Palace, and Ninh Tho Palace. The name Dien Tho Palace was given during the reign of Khai Dinh. Dien Tho Palace is the most extensive remaining palace architecture system in the royal palace area. Dien Tho Palace consists of more than ten buildings arranged within a rectangular wall about 100m wide, 150m long, and taller than a person. Dien Tho Palace has only a few structures: Dien Tho Palace, Tho Ninh Palace, Truong Du Pavilion, Phuoc Tho Hermitage, and Tinh Minh Tower.



¹¹ Dien Tho Palace is the residence of the Queen Mothers or Grand Queen Mothers of the Nguyen Dynasty.

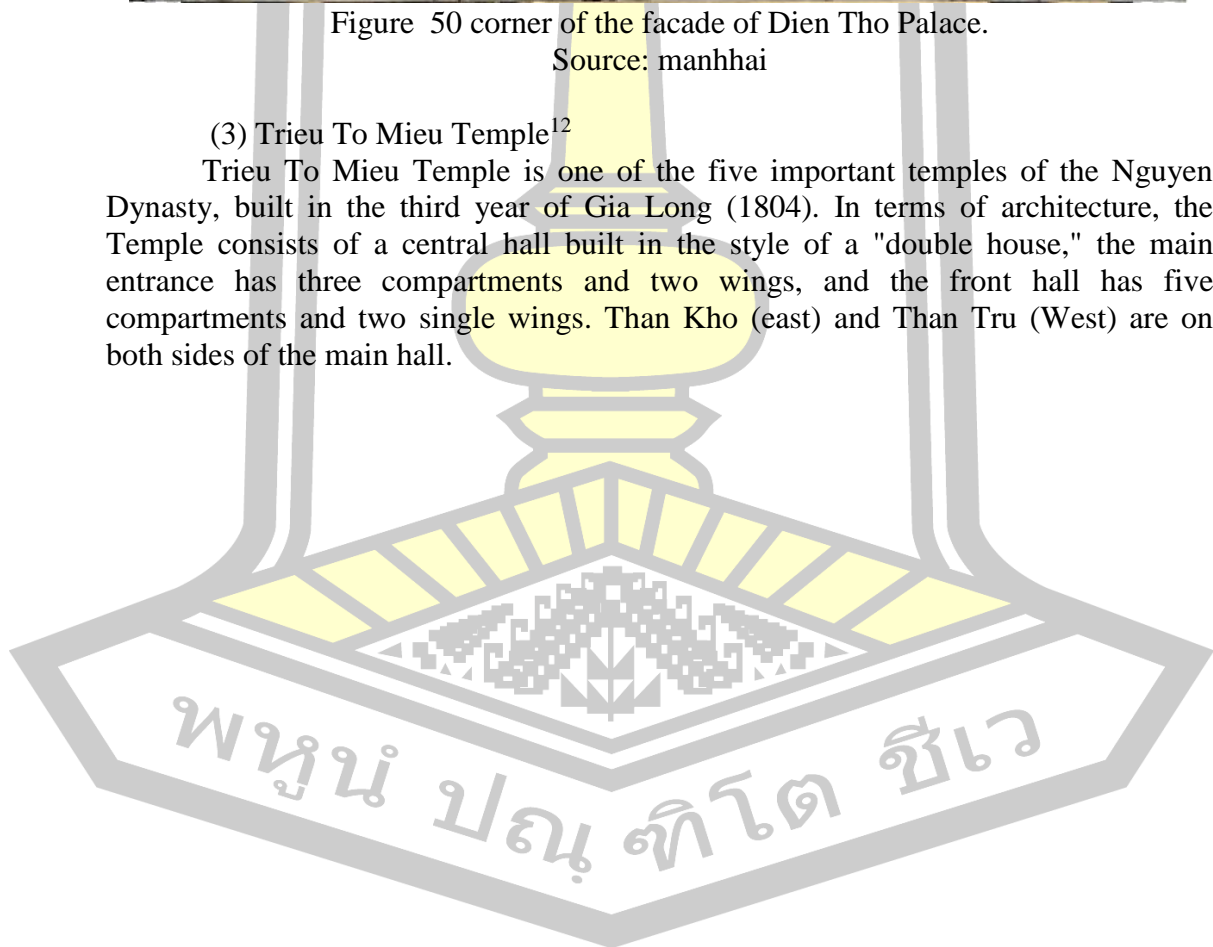


Figure 50 corner of the facade of Dien Tho Palace.

Source: manhhai

(3) Trieu To Mieu Temple¹²

Trieu To Mieu Temple is one of the five important temples of the Nguyen Dynasty, built in the third year of Gia Long (1804). In terms of architecture, the Temple consists of a central hall built in the style of a "double house," the main entrance has three compartments and two wings, and the front hall has five compartments and two single wings. Than Kho (east) and Than Tru (West) are on both sides of the main hall.



¹² Worshipping place of Emperor Nguyen Kim - Ancestor of 9 generations of Nguyen Lords and later Nguyen Dynasty Emperors



Figure 51 Front space of Trieu To Mieu temple, dating from 1928 to 1936

Source: <https://www.aavh.org/>



Figure 52 Trieu To Mieu temple was restored and inaugurated in 2016

Source: [Kiennguyen546193](#)

(4) Thai To Mieu Temple¹³

Thai To Mieu Temple was built in the third year of Gia Long (1804) in the southeast corner of Hue Imperial City, symmetrical with The To Temple in the southwest. The main building is built in the style of a "double house"; the main hall has 13 compartments and two double wings, and the front hall has 13 compartments and two single wings. To the east of the main house is Long Duc Palace, and to the South is Chieu Kinh Palace. Opposite Chieu Kinh Palace to the West is Muc Tu Palace; to the North of this Palace is a square building. In front of Thai Mieu is the Tuy Thanh Pavilion with a 3-storey structure. To the South of Tuy Thanh Pavilion, Ta Vu and Huu Vu houses are on both sides.



Figure 53 Front space of Thai To Mieu temple, dating from 1928 to 1936

Source: <https://www.aavh.org/>

(5) Hung To Mieu Temple¹⁴

Hung To Mieu Temple was constructed in 1804-1805 on today's The Mieu Temple site. In February 1947, the temple complex was burned down along with the Forbidden City and many other palaces. Emperor Bao Dai rebuilt the Hung Mieu Temple, which is still in the traditional Nguyen Dynasty palace architecture, in 1950, and it was last renovated in 1995.

¹³ Thai To Temple is a temple to worship the Nguyen lords in Vietnamese history. The temple worships from Lord Nguyen Hoang to Lord Nguyen Phuc Thuan.

¹⁴ Hung To Mieu Temple is the place to worship the parents of Emperor Gia Long.



Figure 54 The front of Hung To Mieu temple, dated from 1928 to 1936. Source: manhhai



Figure 55 Hung To Mieu temple was restored in 1995.
Source: <https://hoiandanang.com/listing/hung-mieu-hue/>



(6) Thai Hoa Palace¹⁵

Thai Hoa Palace was built under Emperor Gia Long from February 1805 to October 1805. Going through three essential stages of construction and renovation created significant changes in architecture and decorative arts. Specifically, in 1833, Emperor Minh Mang re-planned the works in the Imperial City, moved the Palace to the South, and rebuilt it to be more massive and splendid. In 1923, under the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh (to prepare for the celebration of the Emperors's 40th birthday the following year), Thai Hoa Palace was again extensively renovated.



Figure 56 The front of the Thai Hoa Palace, dated from 1928 to 1936.

Source: manhhai

¹⁵ Thai Hoa Palace is considered the symbol of the Nguyen Dynasty's power - the largest palace among dozens of palaces in the Imperial City. This is the place where court sessions and important events of the court took place. This is where the coronation of 13 Nguyen Dynasty kings, from Gia Long to Bao Dai, took place.



Figure 57 The hall of the Thai Hoa, dated from 1920 to 1929

Source: manhhai

(7) Can Thanh Palace¹⁶

Can Thanh Palace, a unique architectural work, was built in the 10th year of Gia Long - 1811. The palace architecture is in the "Trung Thiem Diep Oc" style, with three buildings connected. The main hall has seven rooms and two double wings. The front and back halls each have nine rooms and two single wings, connected by two unique crab shell ceilings. The roof is covered with sparkling golden glazed tiles, and doors are installed. The building was burned down during the Viet Minh's Scorched Earth Campaign in February 1947.

¹⁶ The Can Thanh Palace was the private residence of the emperor and his concubines. Inside this palace was also a place of reverence that stored many treasures. Very few people were allowed to enter this palace, so little is known about the activities inside this palace..



Figure 58 Can Thanh Palace. Score: manhhai



Figure 59 Can Thanh Palace furniture with elaborately carved wooden frame.
Source: <https://www.aavh.org/>



(8) The Mieu Temple¹⁷

The Mieu Temple that worships ancestors was built in the second year of Minh Mang in 2 years (1821-1822). This is an extensive wooden architectural work built in the "Trung Thiem Diep Oc" style. Besides The To Temple, other works, such as Tho Cong Tu, Cuu Dinh, Hien Lam Cac, Canh Y Dien, Ta Vu, and Huu Vu, are on campus. This is one of the most beautiful architecture in the Forbidden City area. The To Temple retains its original architectural style after many historical events, renovations, and repairs.



Figure 60 The Mieu Temple façade. Source: manhhai



Figure 61 The temple's interior has altars of Nguyen Dynasty emperors. Source: <https://www.aavh.org/>

¹⁷ The Temple is the place to worship the emperors of the Nguyen Dynasty after their death.

(9) Hien Lam Pavillon











Hien Lam Cac was built in 1821 under the reign of Emperor Minh Mang. It is a three-story wooden building, the tallest in the Imperial City, used to worship and commemorate the achievements of the Nguyen Dynasty Emperors. The architecture of Hien Lam Cac has a strong traditional Vietnamese style, with sophistication in every detail of the wood carvings and a harmonious, symmetrical structure. The building represents the majesty and solemnity of the court and is also a symbol of loyalty and achievements of those recognized by the court.










Figure 62 Architecture of the 3-story wooden Hien Lam pavillon Temple.
Source: <https://www.aavh.org/>



Table 1 Statistics of some typical royal architectural works of the Nguyen Dynasty Built from 1802-1874 (Source: researcher synthesis)

No	Project Name	Year of construction	Image	Function	Architectural Style	Structure
1	Can Chanh Palace	1804 - 1805		emperor's workplace	Traditional	Wood
2	KhonThai Palace	1804 - 1806		Queen's Life	Traditional	Wood
3	Dien Tho Palace	1804 - 1806		The life of the Emperor's mother	Traditional	Wood
4	Trieu To mieu Temple	1804		Worship	Traditional	Wood
5	Thai To mieu Temple	1804		Worship	Traditional	Wood
6	Hung To mieu Temple	1804		Worship	Traditional	Wood
7	Thai Hoa Palace	1805		Court ceremony	Traditional	
8	Can Thanh Palace	1811		The Emperor's Life	Traditional	Wood
9	The mieu Temple	1821 - 1823		Worship	Traditional	Wood
No	Project Name	Year of construction	Image	Function	Architectural Style	Structure
10	Hien Lam pavillon	1821 - 1822		Memorial	Traditional	Wood

11	Truong Sanh palace	1821		The life of the emperor's grandmother	Traditional	Wood
12	Minh Vien pavillon	1827		Entertainment, sightseeing	Traditional	Wood
13	Long An palace	1845 - 1847		Palace	Traditional	Wood
14	Gia Long Tomb	1814-1820		Worship	Traditional	Wood
15	Minh Mang Tomb	1840 - 1843		Worship	Traditional	Wood
16	Thieu Tri Tomb	1848		Worship	Traditional	Wood
17	Tu Duc Tomb	1864 - 1867		Worship	Traditional	Wood

The royal architecture of the early Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1874) bore the strong imprint of traditional Vietnamese culture combined with the influence of Chinese architecture in the spirit of expressing the authority and dignity of the royal family. During this period, royal architecture was strongly developed under the patronage of the early Nguyen Dynasty Emperors, especially Emperors Gia Long and Minh Mang, who focused on building the capital Hue into the political and cultural center of the dynasty. The elements that expressed the characteristics of the royal architecture of this period were:

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(1) Style and planning

The royal architectural works of this period strictly followed the principles of feng shui, expressed through the harmonious harmony between nature and architectural works. The Hue Citadel was built according to the "citadel within the citadel" model, with many layers of surrounding walls divided into separate functional areas, including the Imperial City, the Forbidden City, and other palaces.

(2) Materials and structure

The works use ironwood, stone, and tiles with skillful construction techniques, expressed through the sophisticated carvings on the columns, roofs, and doors. The system of curved roofs carved with dragons, phoenixes, and symbols of power is typical of Nguyen's royal architecture.

(3) Function and symbolism

Each architectural work in the royal palace area has a clear purpose and is highly symbolic. For example, the Emperor resides in the Thai Hoa Palace and issues important decrees to govern the country. In addition, areas such as Dien Tho Palace for the Queen Mother and Thai Mieu are evidence of the custom of ancestor worship in Vietnamese culture. In general, the royal architecture of the Nguyen Dynasty during this period was imbued with religious and monarchical ideology, harmonizing aesthetic elements and symbols of power, contributing to creating a distinct mark for this dynasty in the history of Vietnamese architecture.

1.1.2 Decorative Arts in Architecture period 1802-1874

The decorative arts in Hue royal architecture during this period vividly demonstrate the fusion of Eastern aesthetics and thought, especially the profound influence of Chinese culture. The magnificent architectural works such as temples, palaces, and mausoleums during this period resulted from the talented combination of artisans across the country. Hue Palace was adorned with many sophisticated and diverse types of decoration, from delicate reliefs on wood, stone, terracotta, bronze, masonry, porcelain inlay, mother-of-pearl inlay, bone inlay, gilded lacquer (Figure 66, 67, 68, 69, 70) skillfully combined on the architecture to the paintings on the walls and pillars, creating vivid works of art (Figure 72, 73)

Architectural works used traditional bricks, tiles, wood, and paint during this period. Most of them had wooden structures and brick-surrounded walls with architectural decorations. In particular, from the Minh Mang period (1820-1841) to the end of the Tu Duc period (1848-1883), decorative enamels were commonly used (Figure 71), wood carving combined with traditional gilded lacquer also flourished. Author Tran Duc Anh Son commented, "At the dawn of the Nguyen Dynasty, materials such as wood, bronze, enamel¹⁸, mother-of-

¹⁸ Enamel is a unique type of decorative art popular in Hue architecture, with works of art made from red copper and covered with colored enamel, creating brilliant patterns. Enamel art was introduced to Vietnam in 1827 under the Minh Mang Dynasty. Enamel products are mainly divided into three groups: exterior decoration of palaces, interior decoration, and household items. In particular, the exterior decoration type

pearl, etc. dominated decoration." (Son T. D., Some thoughts on folklore in Nguyen Dynasty decoration, 2008). Decorative themes using painted enamel on copper in architectural works such as gourds, poems, and paintings on the roof ridge, on the neck of Ngo Mon Gate, Thai Hoa Palace, Sung An Palace in the tomb of Emperor Minh Mang, Bieu Duc Palace in the tomb of Emperor Thieu Tri, even on the ceremonial gates in palaces and mausoleums. Enamel is a precious and durable decoration, so it is used for exterior decoration in the roof area. Wood carvings and gilded lacquer are used inside the front and main halls. These are the most critical positions in terms of both the function and architectural aesthetics of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture.



Figure 63 Wood Carving Decoration.

The interior of Hung Mieu, with a wooden structural frame supporting the tiled roof above, is carved with very sophisticated traditional motifs.

Source: manhhai



stands out with details such as dragons and clouds on the roof ridges, as well as decorative cornices and gables in the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture.



Figure 64 Stone Carving Decoration.
Dragon Steps and Dragon Columns at Thai Hoa Palace. Source: Kienthuc.net



Figure 65 Terracotta relief decoration.
The tiger-faced motif on the roof is eight-treasure at Dong Khanh Tomb.
Source: Nguyen Phong

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Figure 66 Seashell, ivory, bone, horn inlay decoration.

The "A poem - a picture" frame decoration at Dien Long An

Source: <https://sdl.thuathienhue.gov.vn/?gd=7&cn=85&tc=85896>



Figure 67 Gold lacquer decoration.

Thai Hoa Palace's interior is painted red and yellow as the primary colors; the motifs are gilded. Source: <https://dotienich.vn/blogs/du-lich-viet-nam/nhung-kien-truc-cung-dinh-nhat-dinh-phai-ghe-tham-khi-den-hue>

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Figure 68 Enamel decorative
Painted enamel on copper decoration on a gate at the Tomb of Emperor Minh Mang.
Source: Nguyen Phuc Bao Minh

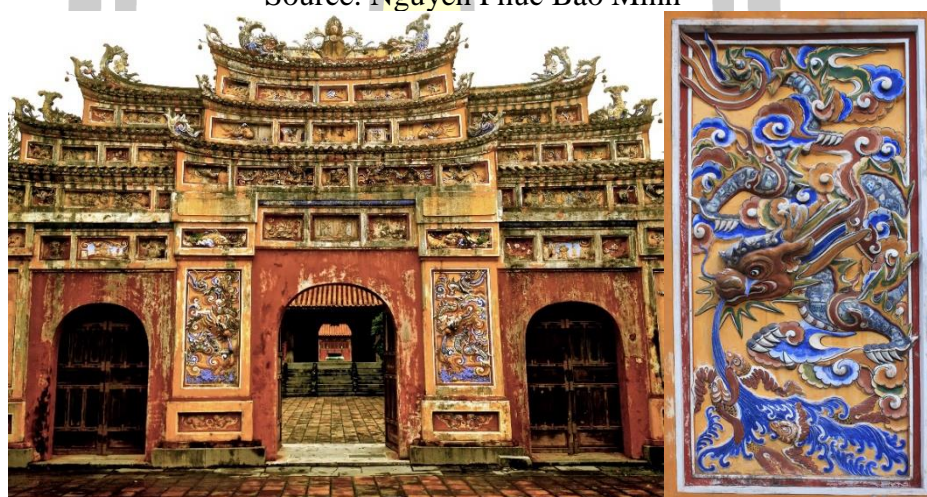


Figure 69 Fresco Decoration.
Decorative motifs at the Gate of The Mieu temple
Source: <https://www.redbus.vn/blog/le-hoi-festival-hue-2024-ton-vinh-van-hoa-lich-su-va-nghe-thuat-viet-nam/>

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Figure 70 Fresco decoration.
Interior of Ta Vu, Hue Imperial City

Source:

<https://www.molon.de/galleries/Vietnam/Central/Hue/Citadel/img.php?pic=30>

In addition, the art of porcelain mosaic was present in the decoration of royal architecture from the early period of the Nguyen Dynasty. According to author Phan Thanh Binh, "In many royal villas, Hue garden houses and especially in the tombs of the Nguyen Lords, we can still see the shadow and traces of porcelain mosaic." (Binh, Research on porcelain mosaic art in royal fine arts of Nguyen Dynasty, Doctoral thesis in art, 2010, p.51) (Figure 74). According to author Do Thi Thanh Mai, "In the early Nguyen Dynasty, corresponding to the Gia Long Dynasty (1802-1820), ceramic decoration was applied quite massively; almost all construction works made of brick, tile, and stone that required decoration were applied with ceramic." At the same time, in this period, the decoration technique was still crude and unsophisticated, showing more folk character (Figure 75)



Figure 71 Porcelain mosaic decoration
Truong Thai tomb - Lord Nguyen Phuc Khoat.
Source: Hue Monuments Conservation Center, 2015





Figure 72 Porcelain mosaic decoration
The roof of Luong Khiem Palace, the tomb of Emperor Tu Duc. Source: manhhai



Table 2 Statistics of decorative styles in some typical architectural works of the Nguyen Dynasty built from 1802-1874

(Source: Reasearcher)

No .	PROJECT NAME	TRADITIONAL DECORATIVE STYLE						
		Wood Carving	Stone Carving	Gold Steel Paint	Enamel	“Ne vua” ¹⁹	Fresco ²⁰	Precious Metal Inlay
								
1	Dien Tho Palace	x				x	x	x
2	Trieu To mieu Temple	x		x		x	x	
3	Thai To mieu Temple	x		x		x	x	
4	Hung To mieu Temple	x		x		x	x	
5	Thai Hoa Palace	x	x	x	x	x		
6	The mieu Temple	x	x	x	x	x	x	
7	Hien Lam Pavillon	x	x	x				
8	Truong Sanh palace	x		x		x	x	
9	Long An Palace	x	x					x
10	Ta Vu House (Citadel)						x	
11	Gia Long Tomb	x	x	x		x	x	
12	Minh Mang Tomb	x	x	x	x	x	x	
13	Thieu Tri Tomb	x	x	x	x	x	x	
14	Tu Duc Tomb	x	x		x	x	x	

¹⁹ “Ne vua” is traditional technique of using Mortar to create decorative patterns

²⁰ is a method of using crushed color particles with water to paint on the surface of wet mortar. This form of masonry painting has high durability and longevity, and is used in interior and exterior decoration.

The decorative art features of the royal architecture of the early Nguyen Dynasty (1802–1874) clearly demonstrate sophistication and a unique style. It is a blend of traditional Vietnamese culture and Chinese culture. These outstanding features include:

(1) Using the Four Sacred Animals theme and royal symbols in decoration: The most prominent is the Dragon motif (a symbol of authority for the emperor), often appearing in decorative details on domes, pillars, and palace doors. In addition, the Phoenix, Unicorn, and Turtle motifs are also symbols of nobility and luck and are also commonly used in architecture.

(2) Use of high-quality materials in decoration: Precious materials such as ironwood, marble, glazed tiles, and glazed bricks were used for construction. These materials not only demonstrate sustainability but also bring luxurious beauty, reflecting the majesty of the royal palace.

(3) Wood carving art: Wood carving is an indispensable element in the decoration of royal architecture, with details of patterns, images of the four sacred animals, or natural symbols such as clouds, water, and The trees. The purity in each carving creates liveliness and emotion for architectural works.

(4) The balance between decorative style and architecture: The Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture in this period emphasized aesthetics by ensuring balance and harmony in the decorative layout. The arrangement of decorative details always followed the strict principles of concepts and philosophies in traditional Eastern culture. In order to ensure prosperity and peace for the royal family.

The above characteristics contributed to creating a unique decorative style for the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture. It reflects the diversity of art and culture during this period.

1.2 Period 1874 -1916

1.2.1 Architecture built by the French in the period 1874 - 1916

In 1873, Hanoi was occupied by France. A year later, in 1874, the Hue court had to cede sovereignty over the six provinces of Cochinchina in exchange for control of Hanoi. In 1882, the French army occupied Hanoi again. A year later, in 1883, the capital Hue was occupied. In 1884, the Nguyen Dynasty signed an agreement to accept the "protection" of the French and officially became a French colony. Vietnam was divided into three parts: Cochinchina was a colony; Bac Ky was a protectorate; Trung Ky was formally autonomous under the Nguyen Emperor but still under the control of a Resident. (Kim, Brief History of Vietnam, 2006).

The new government's first task was to build comfortable living areas and a lifestyle similar to that of the mother country to serve the long-term living needs of the French. The French and colonial governments planned and built houses and public works to meet that requirement. Specifically, from 1873 to 1880 to 1900, the French colonialists built solid structures in the concession provinces, starting with large-scale construction in Hanoi and provinces throughout the country to affirm the image of the dictatorship and inviolability of the empire. The buildings were formal and grandiose. Classical monuments and the Baroque style inspired the decoration. They represented the universality of Western aesthetic standards and order.

A typical example in the North is the Hanoi (Figure 76) Courthouse, one of the earliest buildings built in 1905 by architect A.H. Vildieu in the neoclassical style.

With its majestic architectural form, harmonious proportions on the facade, and careful decoration, it has become a symbol of the power of the colonial government.



Figure 73 The facade of the Hanoi Courthouse features the magnificent design style typical of the early years of French rule in Vietnam. Source: (Bao, 2017 p.122-130)

Similarly, after conquering Cochinchina in 1863 and 1898, the French built a magnificent theater in Saigon (Figure 77). The project was designed by French architects Félix Olivier, Eugène Ferret, and Ernest Guichard. The facade of the theater was influenced by the style of the Petit Palais Museum, which was built in France at the same time. A famous French artist painted all the decorative motifs, facade reliefs, and interiors, similar to the models of theaters in France in the late 19th century and sent from France.



Figure 74 The Saigon Opera House was built in the 19th century and is typical of the grand designs of the early years of French rule in Vietnam. Source: manhhai

The structures with "French local architecture" characteristics were modeled after those brought from France to establish the infrastructure for developing the colonial economy. A typical example is the first structure, the Central Region Resident's Palace, built on the southern bank of the Huong River (Figure 78), which was the supreme body of the colonial regime in Central Vietnam, controlling all activities of the Nguyen Dynasty's feudal court. Some colonial architectural works were built during this period, such as the Morin Hotel (Figure 79), Phu Cam Church (Figure 80), train station (Figure 81), Hue Post Office (Figure 82), Hue Hospital (Figure 83), Providence Academy (Figure 84), etc. The architecture of the works was almost modeled after those brought from France. The styles of this period were mainly Early Colonial, Neoclassical, and Neo-Gothic. According to Bezacier, "Unfortunately, the first attempts to modernize Annamese art were not very successful because many builders of this period abandoned most of the best elements of Annamese art and clumsily replaced them with some elements of French architecture, while this architecture, when added turned out to be worse. Experiments that did not bring good results were not repeated." (Bezacier, 2019, p.363-371). This change in perception leads to the decision to change. Specifically, in 1917, Governor-General of Indochina Albert Sarraut wanted to create a unique architectural mark that honored French cultural identity and combined Indigenous culture to generate sympathy from Indigenous intellectuals with the colonial government. On the other hand, over time, the works built in the previous European style did not meet the requirements of a balance between modern functionality and traditional cultural factors, aesthetics, climate, landscape, and typical living habits of Vietnam. Therefore, these factors must be considered to create a harmonious and unique architecture.



Figure 75 The Building of French Resident Superior of Central Vietnam 1874 - 1878. The first solid construction in Hue was made of solid materials, two stories high. The decorative details are elaborate, using diverse lines and combining sculpture and architecture that are strange to traditional Hue architecture.

Source: <https://www.otofun.net/threads/phan-6-hue-thua-thien-xua.1203128/page-13>



Figure 76 Morin Hotel. Score: manhai



Figure 77 Phu Cam Church built 1902. Source: manhai



Figure 78 The train station was built in 1907-1908.
Source: <https://tranthanhnhan1963g.blogspot.com/>



Figure 79 Hue Post Office photo taken around 1920 – 1929
Source: <https://tranthanhnhhan1963g.blogspot.com/>



Figure 80 Hue Hospital was rebuilt in 1907. Source: Annam- French Indochina, Publications of the general government of Indochina, 1919



Figure 81 Thien Huu School taken in 1910. Source: <https://tranthanhnhhan1963g.blogspot.com/>



Figure 82 Superior Residence Hotel in AnNam (Hue).

Source: <https://tranthanhnhhan1963g.blogspot.com/>



Figure 83 Paul Bert Street is now Tran Hung Dao Street before Dong Ba Market.

<https://tranthanhnhhan1963g.blogspot.com/>



Figure 84 Jules Ferry Street is now Le Loi Street along the Huong River.

Source: <https://tranthanhnhhan1963g.blogspot.com/>

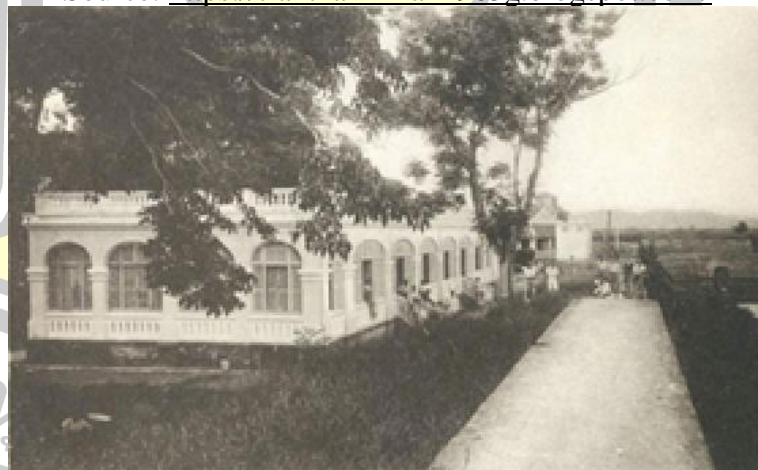


Figure 85 Garrison Infirmary. Source: <https://tranthanhnhhan1963g.blogspot.com/>



Figure 86 Architecture of the French Military Canteen.

Source: <https://tranthanhnhan1963g.blogspot.com/>

The French colonial architecture built on the right bank of the Perfume River created a contrasting beauty compared to the traditional architecture on the left bank of the river. The architectural appearance on the right bank clearly shows the European style of that period and reflects specific forms such as the colonial and Eurasian "style." Such differences in style during this period occurred throughout the country, specifically in Hanoi and Saigon, where many colonial construction companies imported European architectural prototypes. What is remarkable in the capital city of Hue is that the "imported" architectural style is almost rare; instead, the indigenous characteristics are more clearly expressed. Although the number is not large, most colonial constructions respect the environment, creating a peaceful and harmonious architectural space on the banks of the Perfume River and integrating with a vast number of relics typical of traditional architecture. Under the management of the Governor-General of Indochina Albert Sarraut from 1911 to 1914, The second time from 1917 to 1919, the colony began to apply indigenous motifs to public buildings. The recognition of Vietnamese culture in architecture was intended to show respect and tolerance. It was hoped that this would gain the gratitude of the indigenous people. Sarraut's tenure marked a break with the previous notion of French cultural hegemony and a weakening of the 19th-century Beaux-Arts ideal of universal beauty. His policies of association were maintained by a series of 'reform' Governors General who succeeded him. It was no coincidence that the French shifted from a policy of assimilation to a greater interest in indigenous traditions and customs. They aimed to assert the prestige of their building projects, the superiority of the city over the Indigenous people to maintain control of the city, and second, a new desire to show more respect and concern for Indigenous traditions and customs. (Cooper, 2000)



Figure 87 Mr. Albert Sarraut, Governor General of Indo-China

Source: Annam-French Indochina, Publications of the general government of Indochina, 1919

A typical example is the Van Nien water plant built by the French in 1909-1911 (Figure 91), located close to the bank of the Perfume River, near Vong Canh Hill, and the tomb of Emperor Tu Duc, consciously and skillfully designed by architect Bossard, with solid materials but wholly modeled after the traditional architectural form of Hue, looking like a mausoleum. That architectural form gives us a pleasant surprise when we know it is a factory. Perhaps when choosing the location to build the water plant in the middle of the unique landscape of Hue with mountains, rivers, temples, and mausoleums imbued with Hue tradition, the French chose the Hue architectural form to create harmony in the surrounding poetic space. This is one of the works with the highest artistic value built during the French colonial period in the Nguyen Dynasty capital. (An P. T., Hue past and present, Monuments and scenic spots, 2008)

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Figure 88 Van Nien Water Plant (1909 – 1911).

Source: <https://huewaco.com.vn/Default.aspx?cid=127>

It can be seen that Hue's architecture and urban planning during the colonial period were oriented to be built based on respecting local identity and natural conditions. (Minh N. V., 2013) Colonial urban design was seen as a tool to demonstrate the power of governance and consolidate military and economic advantages among the colonies of the French Empire. In addition, colonial urban design was seen as a meaningful means to demonstrate France's strategic vision for its position among the imperialist countries. Colonial works in Vietnam from the first decade of the 20th century onwards developed rapidly in number. Urban design and city planning in Indochina continued to be applied by the French as a tool to redefine their imperial nature and colonial ideals, which were expressed in projects and architectural works and influenced by the appearance of the works.

He entrusted this responsibility to the architect Ernest Hébrard²¹ (Figure 92), The chief architect of the Indochina government. From there, the Indochina architectural style was born. This is a subtle hybrid between the beauty of Vietnamese culture and the sophistication of classical French architecture that is suitable for the climate and traditional landscape of the locality, as Vivier de Streel said. In 1919, Maurice Long replaced Albert Sarraut as Governor General of Indochina. Continuing Albert Sarraut's policy, he proposed that the French government send an architect and

²¹ Ernest Hébrard (1875-1933), a French architect, archaeologist, and urban planner. In 1921, he was appointed to Vietnam as Director of the Department of Planning and Architecture of French Indochina and is considered the pioneer and creator of the Indochina School of Architecture - a hybrid between traditional Indochina architecture and French colonial architecture during that period.

urban planning expert to Indochina to advise the government. He assigned this responsibility to architect Ernest Hébrard, president of the French Urban Planners Association, who in 1921 became the chief architect of the Indochina government. Maurice Long also established a national urban design and planning committee in Indochina. He was the architect who originated the Indochina architectural style. He stated that architecture in Indochina needs to consider the people's characteristics, habits, and traditions. It must be based on studies of Indochina Monuments without copying them. (Hébrard, *L'architecture locale et les questions esthétiques en Indochine*, 1933). The idea behind this style was not to use French templates or to rigidly preserve traditional elements but to create a unique hybrid style. Oriental motifs were applied to urban constructions in Indochina, reflecting the previous French policy of localizing other cultures. It was well understood that the application of modern construction means would facilitate the implementation of new forms that always had to be adapted to the country's conditions. (Hébrard, *L'architecture locale et les questions esthétiques en Indochine*, 1933).



Figure 89 Portrait of Architect Ernest Hébrard. Source: Internet

The notion of these "new forms" demonstrated the radicalism of Hébrard's approach. In practical terms, this idea was expressed through the use of indigenous artisans in building projects. Hébrard's 'ideal' urbanism for Indochina involved the discovery, creation, or 'guided development' of a new style specific to the Indochinese: instead of training European imitators in Indochina, why not guide the Indigenous people along a path that suited their traditions, temperaments, and talents, and allow them to develop generally in the direction of modern art, which was also very special to them. (Hébrard, *L'architecture locale et les questions esthétiques en Indochine*, 1933)

However, Hébrard's idea was that the French did not imagine that local traditions and styles could be preserved and developed in their own direction or that this aesthetic "evolution" could be created by the people of Indochina themselves. In addition, Hébrard's perception of the Indochinese style was based on the premise that this style would be distinguished, selected, and put into practice under the guidance of French experts. Advocating the use of native artisans to arouse their sympathy for the

French empire, Marrast stated: This could not be better achieved than by entrusting native artists with the initiative in decoration, leaving them utterly free within certain limits. (Marrast) A typical example of this policy is that in 1920, the French government organized a design competition for a monument to commemorate the French and Vietnamese soldiers who died on the European front during World War I (Monument aux Morts) and funded its construction in Hue according to the design of Vietnamese artist Ton That Sa on the right bank of the Perfume River opposite the facade of Hue Citadel. This is a large-scale and meaningful architectural work, typical of the colonial period in Hue, combining the characteristics of traditional Vietnamese architecture with the typical monumental art forms of Europe in the first half of the 20th century. (Figure 93)



Figure 90 War Memorial circa 1920. Source: manhhai










The French attack on the capital, Hue, which occurred on July 5, 1885, had a strong psychological impact on the Nguyen Dynasty in Hue and caused great damage to the capital's infrastructure and the national treasury. After this event, the political power of the Nguyen Dynasty only existed in the name because it was manipulated by the French. The autonomy of the Nguyen Dynasty was lost, and its economic potential became dependent. Also, from this period, the influence of Western civilization became increasingly profound in social life, especially in the fields of architecture and art.

In the face of the above historical changes, from 1885 to 1945, the number of newly built works serving the royal family's living needs was not much, and little attention was paid to restoration and embellishment. The annual salary money of the royal court for the princes and princesses was increasingly reduced; the royal court encouraged the royal family members to use the salary money to build their own houses but had to comply with the construction scale according to the court's regulations. This was promulgated as a legal norm of the Nguyen Dynasty. Specifically, in 1843, Emperor Thieu Tri issued a regulation to reduce the construction scale of palace architecture, not allowing the construction of double houses for princes and princesses who

came of age to leave the royal Palace and build their own homes. (Cabinet, 1993)

Table 3 Statistics of some French architectural works built in Hue from 1874 - 1916

(Source: Researcher synthesis)

No.	Project Name	Year of construction	Image	Architectural Style	Structure
1	Central Region Apostolic Delegation	1874 - 1878		Neoclassical	Reinforced concrete
2	Hue Hospital	1894		French Local	Reinforced concrete
3	Saigon Morin Hotel	1901		Neoclassical	Reinforced concrete
4	Phu Cam Church	1902		Gothique	Reinforced concrete
No.	Project Name	Year of construction	Image	Architectural Style	Structure
5	Chaigneau School	1902		Neoclassical, French Local	Reinforced concrete
6	Pellerin School	1904		Neoclassical	Reinforced concrete
7	Hue Station	1906		Neoclassical	Reinforced concrete
8	Van Nien Water Plant	1909		Asian and European	Reinforced concrete
9	Providence Academy	1910		Pre-colonial	Reinforced concrete

It can be seen that over time, the French gradually realized the limitations of building architectural works in the "imported" style, so they made changes in architectural form to suit the local climate and culture. Some outstanding features include:

(1) The combination of Western and Asian styles: The French often designed public buildings and important structures in the neoclassical architectural style but still respected and incorporated traditional Vietnamese elements. For example, they used materials and layouts suitable for the tropical climate.

(2) Use of local materials: To adapt to the local environment and conditions, the French used materials such as wood, red tiles, and baked bricks. The curved roof tiles in the Asian style were often retained or combined with European decorative details.

(3) The architecture of this period was designed to suit Hue's tropical climate. Large windows, airy corridors, and wide porches help reduce heat effectively. Thanks to that, the space is airy, making the most of natural light and avoiding a feeling of suffocation.

(4) French-style urban planning: The French also began to make changes in urban planning in Hue. The area around the Hue citadel was adapted to suit the colonial government's needs, with the development of French-style streets, administrative areas, and public spaces.

1.2.2 Royal Architecture period 1874 -1916

During the reigns of Emperors Thanh Thai (1889-1906) and Duy Tan (1907-1915), some architectural works were renovated, reconstructed, or newly built and began to use materials imported from the West. However, the architectural features and decorative arts still followed the traditional royal court style. Typically, the first four architectural works were influenced by the colonial style, namely the Privy Council, built in 1903 (Figure 94), followed by the Phu Chinh Palace (1906-1907); the mausoleum complex of Emperor Duc Duc was built in 1891 but underwent additional constructions in 1899 and 1906 (Figure 95). The mausoleum complex of Emperor Dong Khanh is particular. He died in 1888 and was buried in the mausoleum area of his father. Emperor Dong Khanh's tomb was constructed in many stages over 35 years (1888 - 1923) by four emperors: Dong Khanh, Thanh Thai, Duy Tan, and Khai Dinh.

Most of the remaining architectural works in Dong Khanh Tomb were built during the reign of Khai Dinh (1916 - 1925). After three months of his reign, Emperor Khai Dinh requested the tomb's restoration (August 1916). Therefore, the tomb bears the mark of two architectural schools of different historical periods. The tomb is a hybrid of two Asian and European cultures expressed through architecture, decoration, and construction materials. The stele house is a variation of Romanesque architecture mixed with East Asian architecture (Figure 96). The tall, thin statues of mandarins are made of cement and bricks instead of stone statues, acrobatic tiles, and checkered bricks. In general, Dong Khanh Tomb opens a period of hybrid architecture of Eurasia and Neoclassical.



Figure 91 The main building of the "Privacy Institute" (the body that advises on essential matters for the Emperor) was built by Emperor Thanh Thai in 1903.

Source: manhhai



Figure 92 The mausoleum of Emperor Duc Duc (who was Emperor for only three days) was built by his son, Emperor Thanh Thai (1889 - 1907), five years after his coronation.

Source: <https://tranthanhnhan1963g.blogspot.com/>

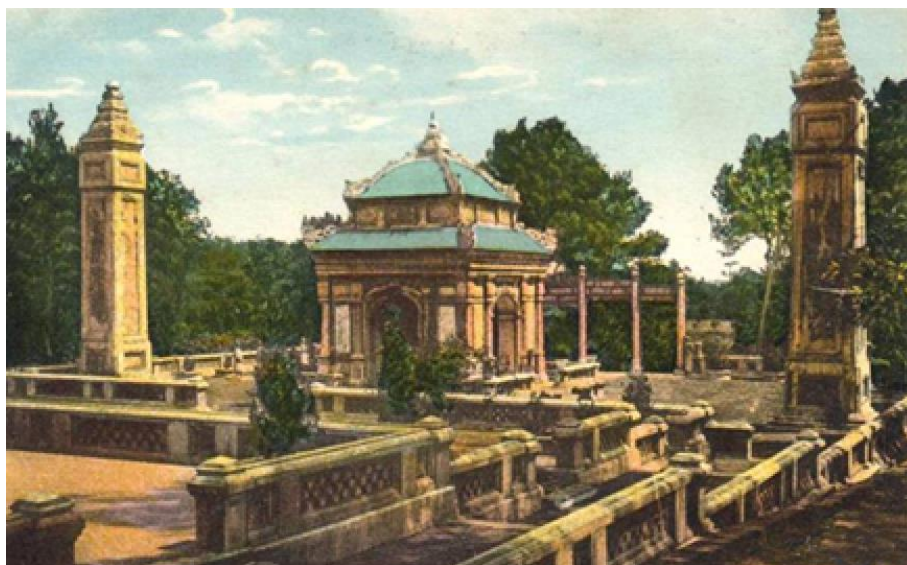


Figure 93 shows the cluster of works in the architectural complex of Emperor Dong Khanh's mausoleum, which Emperor Khai Dinh built in 1916 - 1925.

Source: Tran Vu Duc

Also, in that trend, the villas of princes, princesses, royal relatives, court officials, and French officials, when newly built or renovated, were influenced and hybridized with Western architecture (Figure 97, 98, 99). New constructions were constructed in Western architecture and adapted to Hue's climate conditions and local traditions. It was from absorbing the influence of Western architectural culture that new materials were used in construction works; however, the architectural standards in traditional Hue works were still adhered to. Therefore, the works restored during this period had many unique characteristics, both inheriting traditional elements and having new points due to absorbing foreign cultural elements. These works' types of construction materials and renovations clearly showed the nature of the times.

A typical example is the Villa of Prince Tuyen Hoa (Figure 100), the younger brother of Emperor Thanh Thai, who was loved by the Emperor and allowed and provided money to build a large-scale mansion. This is recorded in the Book of Dai Nam Thuc Luc with the content that Emperor Thanh Thai conferred the title of Prince Buu Thien on his younger brother, Prince Tuyen Hoa, as Duke and gave him 5,000 Dong to buy materials and 4,000 Quan to pay for the labor to build the mansion. (National History Museum of Nguyen Dynasty, 2012). The Tuyen Hoa mansion was built facing the South, with the front facing the Perfume River. The main gate is built of bricks and mortar in an arched shape, and the second floor and roof are in the style of the Royal Palace. A brick wall surrounds the Palace. Behind the main gate is a screen built of bricks in the style of a paper roll, decorated with the motif of "Two dragons fighting for a pearl" and traditional motifs with splendid colors using traditional porcelain mosaic art. Behind the screen is the main architectural work of the Tuyen Hoa Villa (Figure 87). The 2-story architecture is built with new materials mixed with conventional materials in a modern European style. The roof is tiled, and the front of the building is elaborately decorated in the shape of a European castle, showing the mark of a bold hybrid

between two Asian and European architectural styles. Its construction date is ranked among the earliest in Hue.



Figure 94 The gate of Princess Tan Phong villa was built around 1907 and was influenced by French architecture.

Source: Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Hue (BAVH (Sogny, 1934)



Figure 95 The main house of Hoa Quoc Cong villa is based on the traditional Ruong house style but is rebuilt with cement and steel.

Source: Tran Van Dung



Figure 96 The main house of the Tuong An District Prince's villa was built with French architectural influences. Source: Tran Van Dung



Figure 97 Panoramic view of the villa of Prince Tuyen Hoa (Emperor Thanh Thai's younger brother) started to be built in 1900. Source: Pierre Dieulefils

The characteristics of the architecture of this period are:

(1) The combination of tradition and modernity: Under the influence of the French, the royal buildings gradually changed in design and layout. Although they still retained traditional elements such as yin-yang tiled roofs and wooden pillars carved with dragons and phoenixes, details such as arched gates, large glass windows, and neoclassical column systems began to appear.

(2) New construction materials: In addition to traditional materials such as wood, tiles, and stones, architectural works in this period began to use concrete, iron, steel, and glass according to Western construction techniques. The use of new materials helped the buildings become more durable but also partly disrupted the harmony of traditional architecture.

(3) Decreasing symbolic nature: During this period, the Nguyen Dynasty was weakened, so the royal architectural works were no longer as massive and majestic as before. Many constructions in this period were symbolic in nature, serving the need to show off power rather than for practical use.

1.2.3 Decorative Arts in Royal Architecture Period 1874 -1916

The standard features of the architecture of this period show the intersection of two Asian and European cultures expressed in architecture, construction techniques, and materials, or classical French decorative elements were also used. New materials and new structural solutions were bred with local architecture to overcome the limitations of weather and climate in Hue, a tropical monsoon: hot, humid, and rainy. The shortcomings were summarized through the "imported" Western architectural works that the French built in the early stages in Vietnam and Hue.

In royal architectural works such as the imperial Palace, the villas of the royal family, the indigenous cultural characteristics and aesthetics, and traditional decorative arts are emphasized through conventional Vietnamese decorative motifs and motifs, such as the Hue royal court. European decorative motifs are used at a moderate level, not overwhelming the traditional decorative styles. We can feel the European-influenced decorative styles through the classical motifs remaining on the palaces, tombs, leading houses, screens, gates, balcony systems, and windows such as the villas of Tuyen Hoa district duke, Ngoc Lam princess, Hoang Hoa Prince.





In addition, traditional decorative techniques have been thoroughly applied in these works, such as ceramic mosaic techniques, masonry painting, etc., creating a new architectural style with unique Indigenous cultural characteristics, rich in creativity, creating a unique spatial highlight in the architectural complex. (Figure 101)



Figure 98 Decorative motifs of the Hue royal court and ceramic mosaic techniques on the architectural complex of the Privy Council.

Source: Researcher

Table 4 Statistical table of characteristics of some architectural works of Hue Royal Court built from 1874 -1916. Source: Researcher

No .	Project Name	Year of construction	Image	Function	Architect-ural Style	Material	Decorate
1	Emperor Duc Duc's tomb	1899-1907		Worship	Eurasian hybrid	Bricks Lime Mortar	Using traditional royal motifs and decorative styles
2	Privy Council	1903		Government agency	Eurasian hybrid	Reinforced concrete	Using traditional royal motifs and decorative styles
3	Emperor Dong Khanh's mausoleum	1916-1917 1921-1923		Worship	Eurasian hybrid	Bricks Lime Mortar	Using traditional royal motifs and decorative styles
4	Prince Tuyen Hoa's Maison	1900		Private home	Eurasian hybrid	Reinforced concrete	Using traditional royal motifs and decorative styles

During this period, Hue royal architecture focused on aesthetics and traditional decorative arts through the prioritization of Vietnamese motifs in harmony with European motifs. Traditional decorative techniques were applied to create a unique architectural style bearing the cultural identity of the Hue royal court.

พหุ มัณฑนศิลป์

Part 2: Hue royal architectural works of Khai Dinh (1916 - 1925)

In 1916, the French colonial government established Prince Nguyen Phuc Buu Dao (1885-1925), the eldest son of Emperor Dong Khanh (reigned 1885-1889), as Emperor of An Nam, becoming the 12th emperor of the Nguyen Dynasty (Figure 102). Khai Dinh was an emperor who was greatly influenced by Western civilization. As a prince, Emperor Khai Dinh had contact with life outside, close to the life of an ordinary person, which made contact with the West easier. In the *Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Hue - BAVH*, issue 3, 1918, author R. Orband recorded that Khai Dinh once personally traveled from North to South as a prince. France had complete protection in the North, and French culture had deeply penetrated the masses. Exposure to French culture and the blend of French and Vietnamese cultures among the people is more accessible through personal visits.

On the contrary, when he visited Tonkin as a politician in 1918 at the invitation of Governor-General of Indochina Albert Sarraut, it is understandable that he had a significant change in his feelings and policies during his reign. He was also the first emperor of the Nguyen Dynasty to travel abroad. Specifically, in 1922, Emperor Khai Dinh visited France, with one purpose being to observe Western civilization's achievements directly (Figure 103). According to Nguyen Cao Tieu's *Ngu Gia Nhu Tay Ky*, Emperor Khai Dinh visited many famous architectures and landmarks in France, such as Versailles Palace, Louvre Museum, Luxembourg Museum, Arc de Triomphe, Eiffel Tower, famous landscapes and porcelain workshops in Paris, flower gardens in Lyon and participated in the exhibition in Marseille (Tieu N. C., 1923). According to what "Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh bien de that ky" wrote, it is clear that the trip to France in 1922 greatly opened up this emperor's horizons. After returning home, the most important work under Khai Dinh's reign in the Forbidden City, Kien Trung Palace, was built. (Nguyen Dynasty, 2013). Through direct contact with the French, Emperor Khai Dinh's ideology was influenced, leading to changes in his daily dress, language, and court etiquette. Emperor Khai Dinh designed his costumes and changed them regardless of the court's regulations on royal dress (Figure 104), and the palaces were built in a modern architectural style. This was reported in a letter by a contemporary scholar, Phan Chu Trinh, who listed the Emperor's seven crimes that shocked the court then. Among them, two crimes were attributed to the crime of "Dressing improperly according to court rules," which humiliated the nation, and the crime of "excessive luxury," which mentioned the construction of An Dinh Palace: "...After he became Emperor, he was bored with the old palaces left by his ancestors, so he immediately built a magnificent palace in An Cuu village, bought Chinese porcelain, each time costing a few thousand silver, brought it back to break it, chose the pieces with beautiful flowers, and attached images of dragons, unicorns, turtles, and phoenixes, to satisfy his extravagance..." (Trinh, 1958)



Figure 99 Emperor Khai Dinh in his royal robes sitting on the throne
Source: manhhai



Figure 100 Emperor Khai Dinh visited the Unknown Soldier Memorial during his trip to France to attend the "Colonial Exhibition" in Marseille in 1922. Source: manhhai



Figure 101 Emperor Khai Dinh in a "hibrid Western and Vietnamese traditional" costume tailored to his request. Source: manhhai

The early 20th century marked the period when Western architecture profoundly influenced Hue royal architecture.

He was Emperor for a short time, in the context of the court falling into "the end of the world," being dependent on power and facing economic difficulties. He made significant contributions to the restoration and construction of royal architectural works. The most prominent are the works influenced by European architectural styles but still bearing Vietnamese identity. The mark of the royal court is always clearly present. Despite the material poverty, the creative efforts in aesthetic thinking expressed through the architectural works he built made a significant artistic step forward. This is reflected not only in new works but also in old works with traditional royal architecture. The mark of Emperor Khai Dinh is always present in every job he left for posterity. His aesthetic sense breathed new life into the history of Vietnamese fine arts in general and Hue royal architectural art in particular. As Associate Professor and painter Vinh Phoi commented: "At the beginning of the 20th century, under the reign of Khai Dinh, Hue truly integrated with Western fine arts to create an Asian-European architectural style with Hue characteristics." (Phoi N. V., 1998, p.318-331).

2.1 Statistics of Royal Architectural Works during the Khai Dinh period (1916-1925)

Among the architectural works built during the French colonial period and influenced by French architecture, a particular type of building appeared in Hue: the Palace. Because this was the Vietnamese feudal court's capital, castles were built for the Emperor and his family to live in the long term.

Under Emperor Khai Dinh, all the palaces and buildings were renovated or newly built in the Asian-European architectural style. They began to appear in Hue in the second decade of the 20th century. The last two emperors of the previous feudal monarchy of Vietnam had close ties with the colonial government. However, these new-style buildings are insignificant compared to the palaces built in the traditional Hue royal architecture of the previous emperors. Although few, these buildings still bear the distinctive mark of the royal character and are valuable relics typical of this historical period.

Immediately after ascending the throne, Emperor Khai Dinh restored the tombs of his father (Emperor Dong Khanh) from 1917 - 1923 and his grandfather (Kien Thai Vuong). This was followed by constructing a series of new architectural works during his reign. In particular, in 1917-1918, the first work he built was a private palace on the south bank of the Huong River, on the bank of the An Cuu River, which was An Dinh Palace, in the style of a European-style castle. The common feature of these works was the use of new materials for construction, located in the royal palace area, serving the living and working needs of the royal family.

The works during this period can be listed as follows:

(1) An Dinh Palace

The An Dinh Palace was built in 1917-1918 by Vietnamese artisans Luong Quang Mien and Le Quang Duyet. This was the only palace complex of the Nguyen Dynasty and was not located in the royal Palace. The complex covers an area of nearly 2.5 hectares. Initially, it consisted of about ten architectural works arranged almost symmetrically along the central North-South axis. However, many works were destroyed during the war, only half of which remain. The most important are the main gate, Trung Lap communal house, Khai Tuong Pavilion, and Cuu Tu Dai Theater. All were built in the typical Asian-European style under Emperor Khai Dinh.



Figure 102 Le palais An-Cư vers 1925. Source : Léonard de selva, 1999

(2) Thai Binh Pavillon:

Thai Binh Pavillon was built in 2 years (1919 - 1921). It is a two-story wooden building used as a resting place and reading place for the Emperor. Thai Binh Lau was renovated in 1990 - 1991. This two-story house has a "Trung Thiem Diep Oc" style roof. The roof is covered with yellow glazed yin-yang tiles and has many beautiful and splendid decorations.



Figure 103 Thai Binh Pavilion has a solid decorative art style of the Khai Dinh period; the most prominent are the flower garden art and porcelain mosaic. Source: manhhai



Figure 104 Thai Binh pavilion interior with new decorative materials, glass doors, and modern ceramic tiles. Source: <https://www.aavh.org/>

(3) Tu phuong vo su Pavillon ²²:

Tu Phuong Vo Su Pavillon was built in just one year, 1923 - 1924. It was inaugurated on the 40th birthday of Emperor Khai Dinh. This is where the Emperor and the royal family used to relax and admire the beautiful scenery. The space around the building is designed to be significant, with many beautiful scenes, such as flower gardens, lakes, and artificial islands. Tu Phuong Vo Su Pavilion consists of two floors, built in colonial architecture, combining Asian - European architecture in Vietnam in the modern period.

²² Tu Phuong Vo Su Pavillon means Four Directions of Peace. This is a special program of the Royal Palace facing north in the same direction as the Hoa Binh Gate (North Gate of the Imperial Citadel). It is an architectural synthesis expressing the structure representing the dynasty's desire for peace.



Figure 105 Tu Phuong Vo Su Pavillon was built and inaugurated in 1923 to prepare to celebrate Emperor Khai Dinh's 40th birthday in 1924.

Source: <https://www.aavh.org/>



Figure 106 Tu Phuong Vo Su Pavillon was rebuilt after being destroyed in 2028 - 2010

Source: <http://visithue.vn/Tu-phuong-vo-su-va-khat-vong-hoa-binh.html/?pid=MjAyOTR8Y3NkbGRs0>

(4) Directorate of Imperial Observatory²³

The Directorate of Imperial Observatory was built in. The building has a mixed architectural style between Hue traditional style and colonial style, 3-room house style, still using wooden frame but built with load-bearing bricks, sliding tile roof, it comfortably decorates the roads similar to the system. This was the workplace of the Royal Observatory Directorate properties until 1945.



Figure 107 The dilapidated Directorate of Imperial Observatory remains have not been preserved.

Source: https://file.baothuathienhue.vn/data2/image/fckeditor/upload/2018/20181020/images/IMG_2113.JPG?dpi=150&quality=100&w=1920

²³ Directorate of Imperial Observatory) is the agency that observes and contemplates the yin and yang, divination, astronomical phenomena, weather, makes calendars, watches the day, reports the time to determine the harvest season for the people, keeps the watch at Can Chanh palace, and holds the responsibility of advising the royal court on geographical and feng shui issues.

(5) Chuong Duc Gate²⁴:

Chuong Duc Gate was built in 1804 with a simple wooden architecture without a watchtower. In 1811, Chuong Duc Gate was renovated, and a watchtower was added above, at the same time as the Hien Nhon and Hoa Binh gates. In 1826, Chuong Duc Gate was renovated, and in 1830, it was renovated again to prepare for the 40th birthday celebration of Emperor Minh Mang. The most significant renovation of Chuong Duc Gate was in 1921 under Emperor Khai Dinh. During this time, the project completely dismantled the wooden structure of the old gate. It was rebuilt on the old foundation with a larger scale, a massive 2-story gate entirely made of bricks, lime, and cement with decorative porcelain blinds typical of the Khai Dinh period.



Figure 108 Chuong Duc Gate was built in 1921.

Source: <https://www.aavh.org/>

²⁴ Chuong Duc Gate symbolizes the four good virtues of women according to Confucianism. The gate is on the west side of the Imperial City and is reserved for the Queen, concubines, and women entering and leaving the palace.

(6) **Hien Nhon Gate**²⁵

Hien Nhon Gate was built in 1805 in the style of a wooden gate like the Chuong Duc Gate under Emperor Gia Long. During the reign of Minh Mang in 1833, the gate was decorated with ceramic pieces. In 1923, Emperor Khai Dinh ordered the wooden gate to be dismantled, and a three-story gate similar to Chuong Duc's was built. During the war in 1968, the gate was destroyed by bombs. After 1975, the gate was restored as it is today.



Figure 109 Hien Nhon Gate before the reign of Khai Dinh with traditional wooden architecture. Source: [manhhai](#)

²⁵ Hien Nhon Gate is located on the east side of Hue Imperial Citadel, reserved for mandarins and men entering and exiting the Royal Palace.

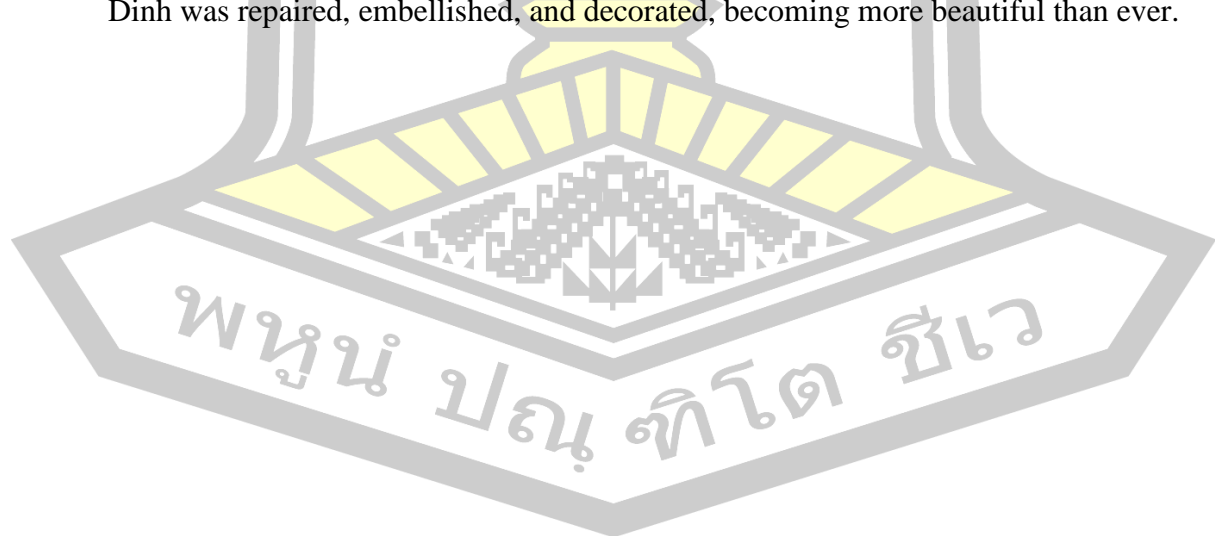


Figure 110 Hien Nhon Gate was built in 1923

Source: [manhhai](#)

(7) Phu Van Lau²⁶

Standing in the middle of Hue Citadel, Phu Van Lau stands tall at 11.67m. More than just an architectural work, Phu Van Lau is a historical symbol of Hue. Built under Emperor Gia Long in 1819, it was once an important place to post royal edicts and decrees of the Nguyen Dynasty, announce the results of the royal examinations, and affirm its essential position in the cultural life of the royal court. Phu Van Lau was also the place to hold important entertainment and banquets, adding to the splendor of the Hue royal court. Phu Van Lau was renovated four times during the period from Minh Mang to Khai Dinh. The structure completely collapsed due to a storm in 1904 and was rebuilt in 1905. In the final stage, Phu Van Lau under Khai Dinh was repaired, embellished, and decorated, becoming more beautiful than ever.



²⁶ Phu Van Lau is the tower where the Emperor's edicts are posted, or the announcement board of the results of the Hoi and Dinh examinations.



Figure 111 Phu Van Lau architecture during the Duy Tan period (1907 - 1916)
Source: Sketch by scholar Gras printed in Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Hue - BAVH 1915

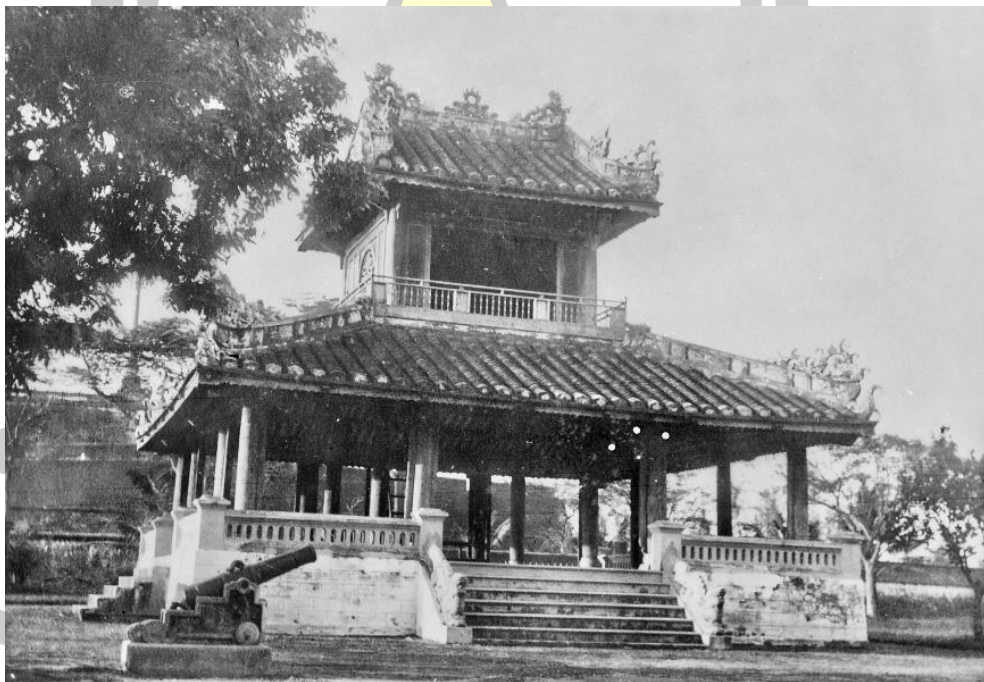


Figure 112 Phu Van Lau in the Khai Dinh period (1916-1925).
Source: manhhai

(8) Truong An Gate²⁷

Truong An Gate was built in the first year of Minh Mang (1821). In the sixth year of Thieu Tri (1846), the gate was extensively renovated, with an upgrade in scale and architectural style. In 1923, under Emperor Khai Dinh, the main entrance was renovated as a three-door gate, with three floors built with bricks and plaster decorated with traditional ceramic motifs. This is one of the three-door gates constructed in a new style with high artistic value.



Figure 113 Truong An Gate from the inside, looking out. Source: manhhai

²⁷ Truong An Gate is the main gate of Truong Sanh Palace, which is located northwest of Imperial City. It was a flower garden where the Nguyen Dynasty Emperors invited their mothers to relax and enjoy the beautiful scenery. During the reign of Khai Dinh, this place was converted into the living quarters of the Queen Mother and Grand Queen Mother.

(9) Kien Trung Palace²⁸

Initially, the Nguyen Dynasty built a 3-storey wooden-framed building called Minh Vien Tower at this location. By the end of the 19th century, the building was demolished. During the Duy Tan period, the Nguyen Dynasty built a 2-storey building called Du Cuu Tower. However, at the beginning of the Khai Dinh period in 1921, he demolished it to make the Kien Trung Tower with new materials and designs in European style, and its appearance reflects Eurasian eclecticism. The materials used were stone, bricks, French patterned tiles, and roofed with terracotta tiles but decorated with traditional Hue motifs.



Figure 114 Kien Trung Palace façade. Source: manhhai

²⁸ Kien Trung Palace is a large-scale architectural work built right on the Dung Dao axis of Hue Citadel, the endpoint of the Forbidden Purple City (an area reserved for the emperor, surrounded by the inner perimeter of the fortress walls in the citadel) and is one of the main works in the royal palace system in the capital. Emperor Khai Dinh lived here, followed by Emperor Bao Dai and Queen Nam Phuong. During the war, the palace was destroyed in December 1946. Only the base, about 2 m high, the railing, and the dragon-shaped porch still exist. By 2019, it was completely restored, restoring the magnificent beauty of a palace for the emperor.



Figure 115 The facade of Kien Trung Palace with the pinnacle of ceramic mosaic art of the Khai Dinh period. Source: manhhai



Figure 116 Kien Trung Palace's interior has a bold European style
Source: manhhai

พูน ปรุ ทิโต ชีเว

(10) Nhat Thanh Pavilon²⁹

Nhat Thanh Pavilon was built between 1920 and 1929. It is a two-story building in the Asian-European style, located east of Can Thanh Palace, south of Thai Binh Lau. It was formerly the location of Minh Than Palace. Nhat Thanh Pavilon was destroyed in 1947 and 1968, leaving only the foundation of the building. In 2018, the building was restored to its old foundation.

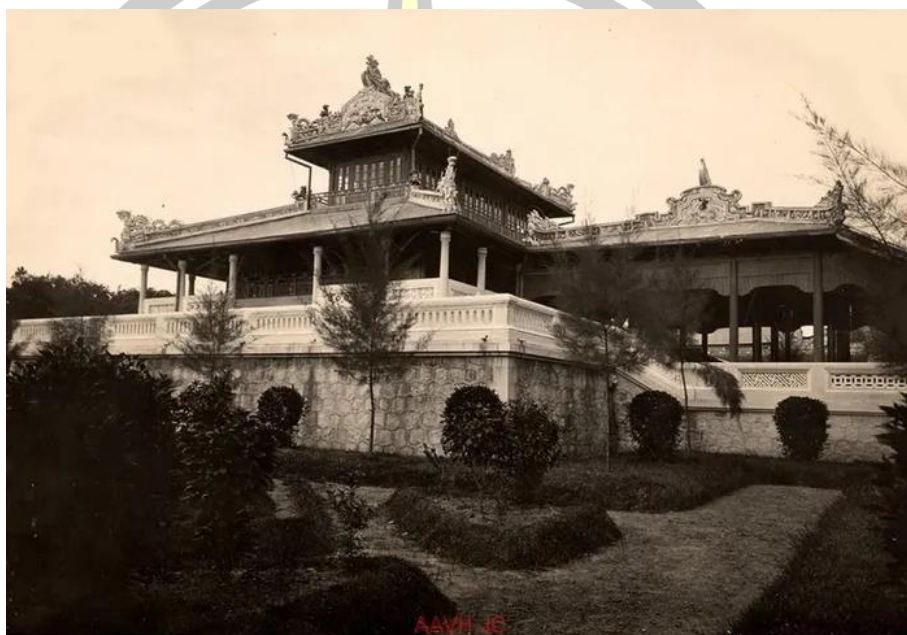


Figure 117 In the gardens of the Palace. A summer house (Nhut -Thanh-Can)
Source: Annam- French Indochina, Publications of the general government of Indochina, 1919

²⁹ Nhat Thanh Pavilon, theo một số nhà nghiên cứu là khu điện thờ Phật của hoàng đế trong Tử Cấm Thành



Figure 118 The Nhat Thanh Pavillon was rebuilt in 2018.

Source: manhhai

(11) Tomb of Khai Dinh

Khai Dinh Tomb, also known as Ung Lang, was built by Emperor Khai Dinh in September 1920 when he was still alive and was completed in 1931. The tomb's structure is entirely different from the previous Nguyen Dynasty emperors' tombs (with a vast space, the architectural works are built with bricks, tiles, and wood); the construction materials are also mainly imported from Europe, including floor tiles, roof tiles, cement. Overall, Ung Lang looks like a European castle in the middle of a majestic mountainous area. The architectural works in the tomb, from the gate, fence, left and fitting guard rooms, and stele house to the main shrine, Thien Dinh Palace, are all in a modern European style. However, the decorative motifs on the body and roof of the works mainly still use traditional Hue decorative motifs. Khai Dinh Tomb is highly valued in architecture and fine arts and is the pinnacle of porcelain mosaic art.

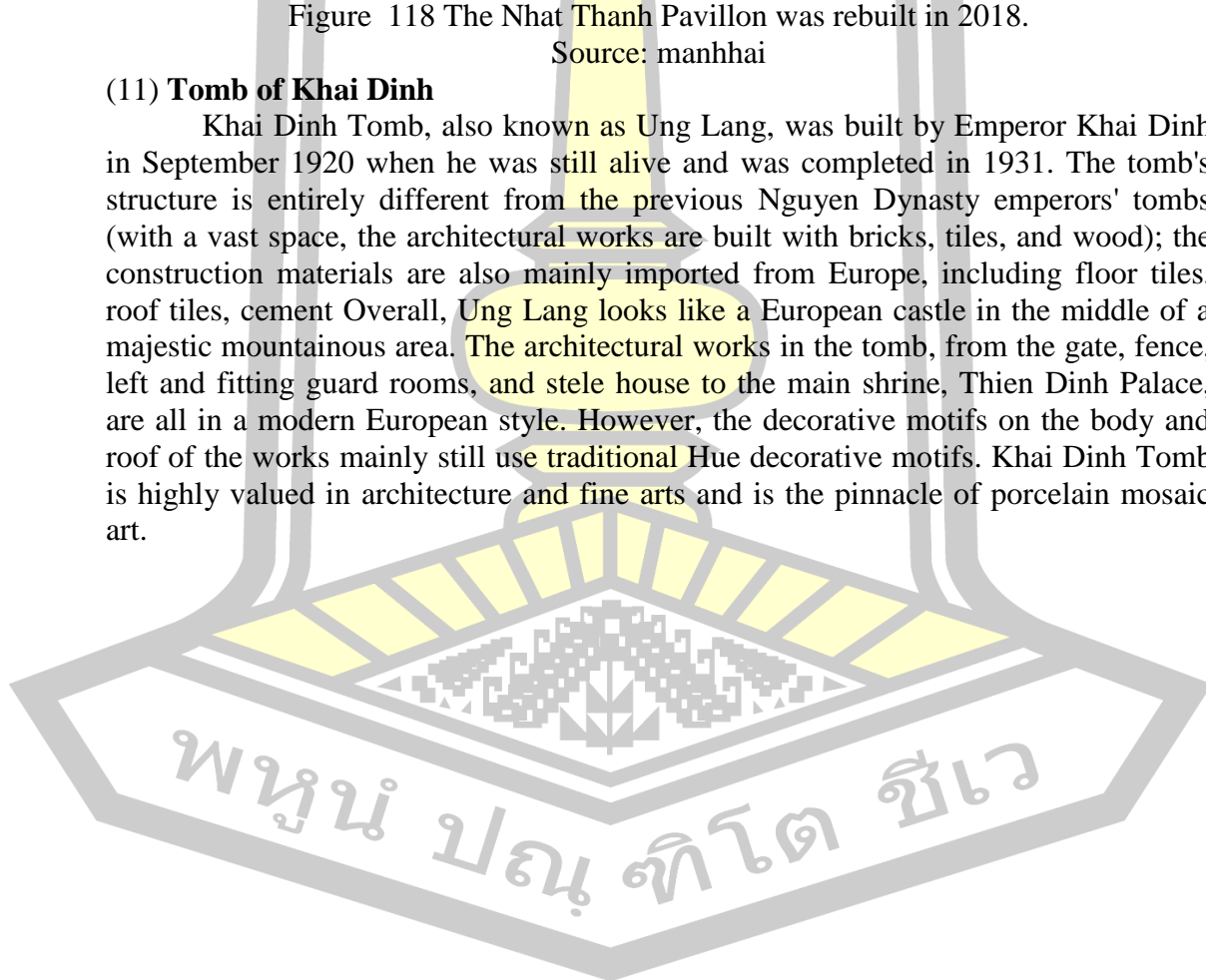




Figure 119 The architectural complex of Khai Dinh Tomb

Source:https://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%C4%83ng_Kh%E1%BA%A3i_%C4%90%E1%BB%8Bnh

(12) Some mansions of princes and princesses were built outside the Hue citadel area

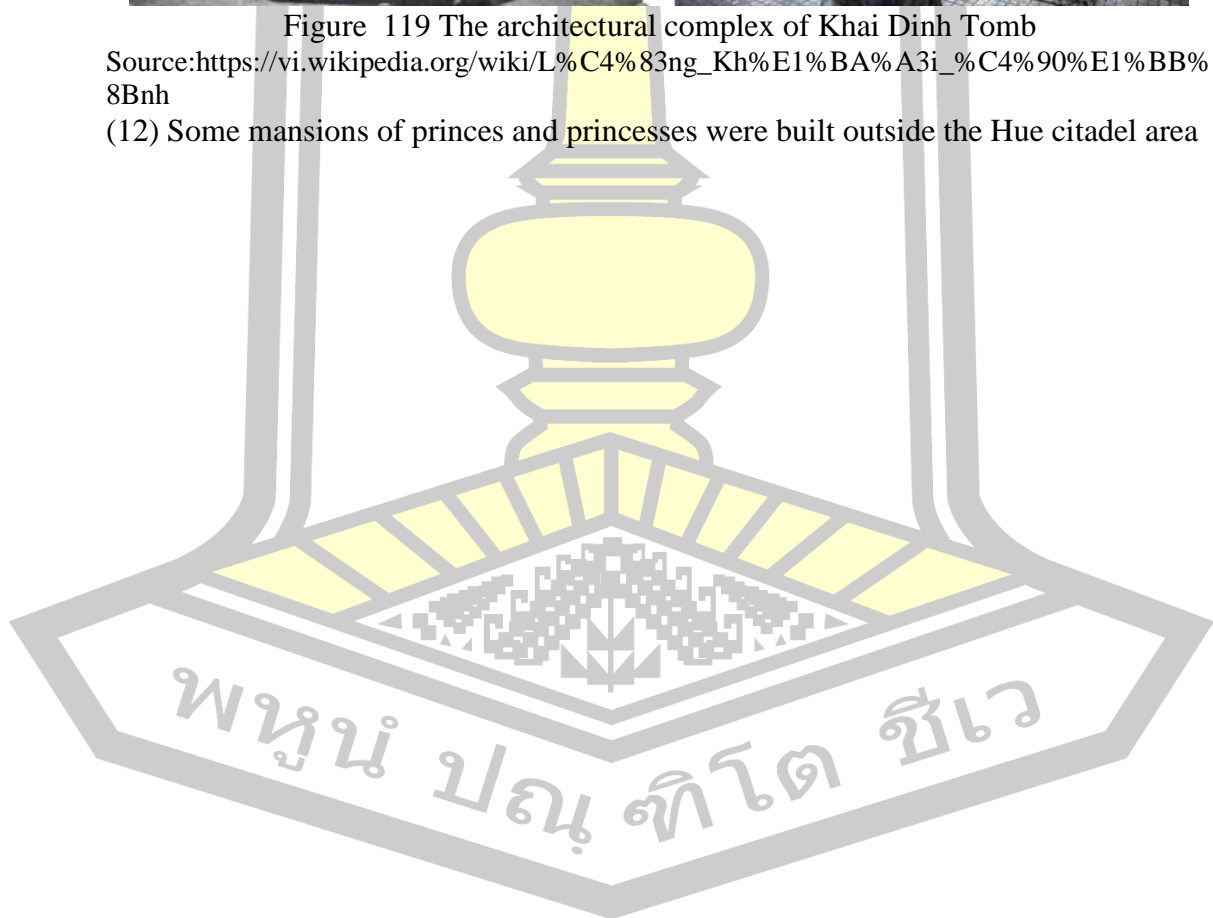
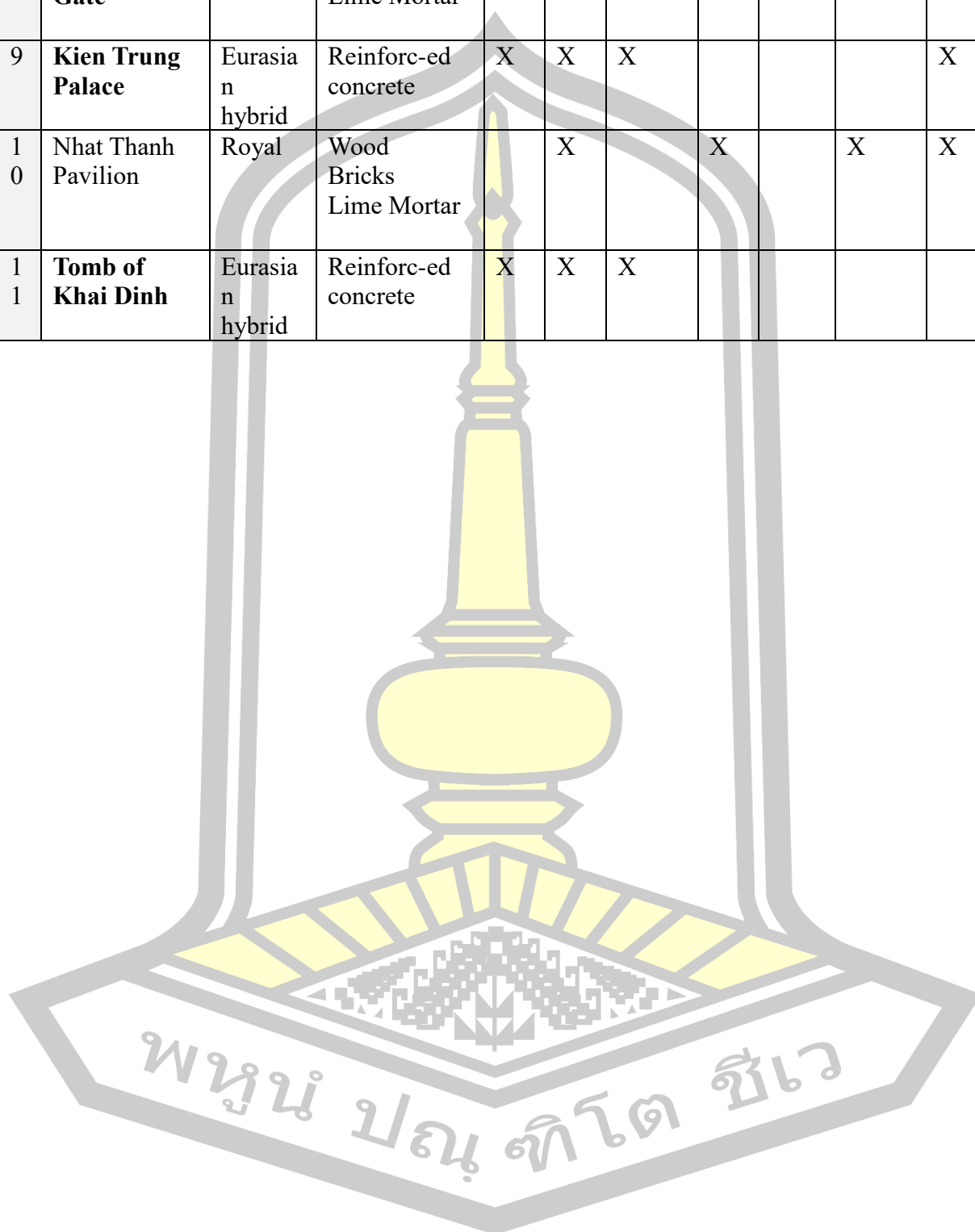


Table 5 Statistical table of architectural and decorative art style characteristics Hue Royal Palace Architecture in Khai Dinh Period 1916 -1925

N o.	Project Name	ARCHITECTURE		DECORATE								
		Architectural Style	Structure	Topic		Type Awake Western decoration	Traditional Royal Decoration Style					
				West	Royal		Wood Carving	Stone Carving	Gold steel Paint	Enamel	“Ne vua”	Fresco
1	An Dinh Palace	Eurasian hybrid	Reinforced concrete	X	X	X	X				X	X
2	Thai Binh Pavillon	Eurasian hybrid	Wood Bricks Lime Mortar	X	X	X	X				X	
3	Tu phuong vo su Pavillon	Royal	Wood Bricks Lime Mortar		X	X					X	
4	Imperial Astronomical Observatory	Eurasian hybrid	Bricks Lime Mortar		X	X						
5	Chuong Duc Gate	Royal	Bricks Lime Mortar		X						X	X
N o.	Project Name	ARCHITECTURE		DECORATE								
		Architectural Style	Structure	Topic		Type Awake Western decoration	Traditional Royal Decoration Style					
				West	Royal		Wood Carving	Stone Carving	Gold steel Paint	Enamel	“Ne vua”	Fresco
6	Hien Nhon Gate	Royal	Bricks Lime Mortar		X						X	X
7	Phu Van Pavillon	Royal	Wood Bricks Lime Mortar		X		X			X		

8	Truong An Gate	Royal	Bricks Lime Mortar		X					X		
9	Kien Trung Palace	Eurasian hybrid	Reinforced concrete	X	X	X				X	X	
10	Nhat Thanh Pavilion	Royal	Wood Bricks Lime Mortar		X		X		X	X		
11	Tomb of Khai Dinh	Eurasian hybrid	Reinforced concrete	X	X	X					X	X



In general, the architecture of the Khai Dinh period shows a strong change, a fusion between tradition and modernity, reflecting a special historical period when the Nguyen Dynasty was facing the strong influence of Western culture. Some characteristics of the royal architecture of this period are:

(1) East-West blend: During the Khai Dinh period, the royal court was heavily influenced by Western culture and architecture, especially France. Royal buildings often have a combination of traditional Vietnamese elements (such as curved tiled roofs and dragon and phoenix motifs) and European architectural elements (such as Corinthian columns, arches, and stained glass windows).

(2) Application of modern materials: During the Khai Dinh period, many modern materials, such as cement, bricks, steel, glass, etc., were mainly used to build solid, high-rise, and highly aesthetic buildings. This changed the artistic style somewhat compared to previous periods when the works mainly used wood and stone.

2.2 Transformation characteristics

The architectural works built by Emperor Khai Dinh during this period in Hue have unique features because they involve French architects and Vietnamese artisans. Many of these works were greatly influenced by French culture. What is even more remarkable is that not only the local traditional architecture but also the royal culture created unique features to distinguish them from architecture elsewhere in Vietnam. Therefore, in Hue, the influence of the "Indochinese style" is expressed through different types of architecture (mansions, architectural works, mausoleums) and with varying levels of influence; in some cases, the appearance of traditional architecture may be partly influenced by European architecture created from new technological building materials. In other words, hybrid forms are made by applying sculpture and decoration (the complex of Emperor Khai Dinh's tombs, Kien Trung Palace). In addition, the hybrid between European and Asian architecture was created within a complex; typically, some buildings were built in European style and others in Oriental style (An Dinh Palace complex). It can be seen that this hybrid has formed the very unique "Indochinese style" and "Hue style" that only Hue has. This type of architecture played the most significant and most notable role in the colonial architecture of Hue and the whole country.

According to the researcher of Vietnamese architecture and art, L. Bezacier, when Emperor Khai Dinh ascended the throne, the previous Chinese influence was partly replaced by Western neoclassical art. This art was popular in France at the beginning of the 20th century. This opinion was continued by the author in the book *L'art Vietnamien*, published in 1954 when he assessed the second period of Nguyen art as the Neoclassical period (*le néo-classique*). This new style only retained some decorative motifs from the past, while the architecture was profoundly changed. (L.Bezacier, *L'art Vietnamien*, 1954). This is a suggestion for researchers to study the unique characteristics of Nguyen art under Khai Dinh through a research object in this period, An Dinh Palace - the first construction built right after he ascended the throne to become Emperor.

Contrary to L. Bezacier's opinion, in his assessment of the period 1916 - 1925, Nguyen Phi Hoanh assessed the constructions that Emperor Khai Dinh

ordered to be built as "a place to show off an enslaved art, a fusion of East and West in the most ridiculous way." (Hoanh, History of Vietnamese Fine Arts, 1970). According to some researchers, Nguyen Phi Hoanh's above assessments of Nguyen's fine arts are based on a political perspective with the notion that "a politically reactionary dynasty can only give birth to a poor and reactionary art." (Nguyen Tien Canh (editor), Nguyen Du Chi, Tran Lam Bien, Chu Quang Tru, 1992). This is also an objective viewpoint for researchers when evaluating the artistic changes in architectural works of this period.

Author Hoang Dao Kinh in the article "The Values of Hue Architectural Heritage" in 1999 (Kinh H. Đ., 1999) . He assessed that Khai Dinh Tomb "should be recognized as a success in the search to combine Eastern and Western architectural traditions, a miraculous success of the masons, especially the porcelain and glass workers."

Similarly, author Le Minh Khoi, in his doctoral thesis on the art of ceramic mosaic decoration on architecture during the Khai Dinh period (1916 - 1925) at the Hue ancient capital relic complex, commented: The art of ceramic mosaic decoration on architecture during the Khai Dinh period contains elements that constitute cultural and artistic values. In terms of cultural value, the art of ceramic mosaic decoration on architecture during the Khai Dinh period could only have been formed during this period and not during any other period throughout the history of the Nguyen Dynasty. In each ceramic mosaic decoration project during the Khai Dinh period, elements always reflect the changes in society in the 20th century. At the same time, they clearly show the behavior of the ancients to inherit and preserve traditions in the face of the wave of Western modernization. The art of ceramic mosaic decoration on architecture during the Khai Dinh period was the product of the East-West cultural exchange process. It accumulated within three cultural layers (indigenous folk, Confucianism-Taoism of the royal court, and Western modernity), expressing the ideology of modernization but not separating from the tradition of the Nguyen Dynasty. (Khoi, 2022, p.5)

These are the comments that help researchers as a basis and orientation to find out the changing characteristics of architectural works built in this period compared to the previous period as follows:

2.2.1 Construction materials and techniques

Before the French established colonial rule in Vietnam, traditional Vietnamese architecture blended and was influenced by unique architectural art forms from different countries: China, Japan, India, and Champa. Conventional Vietnamese architecture synthesizes creativity, manual labor, and sophisticated carvings over thousands of years. Traditional Vietnamese architecture is known for using many different groups of materials, such as bamboo and wood for load-bearing structures; leaves, straw, thatch or palm bark, straw, bamboo leaves, bamboo, bamboo ribs, and reeds used for roofing or mixed with clay to make the structure of the surrounding wall; baked clay and ceramics, laterite bricks, baked tiles for foundations, surrounding walls, and decorative roofs. Under the talent and skillful hands of the artisans, combined with the accumulated knowledge and folk experience, many unique

features have been created by applying traditional architectural constructions such as religious beliefs, public works, and other civil works. The constructions all have different designs and structures according to the dynasties. During the Nguyen Dynasty, from the Palace to the traditional Vietnamese house, architecture was built on a load-bearing wooden frame system with an average area suitable for the living size ratio of Vietnamese people, aiming for ventilation, closeness, and harmony with nature, ideal for the tropical climate of Hue.

The encounter with Western culture has caused a profound change in Vietnamese architecture. In addition to using available materials, which have left a strong mark on Indochina architecture, Westerners (mainly the French) have contributed to perfecting traditional materials. The blending of ancient building materials, which is very popular with ancient works, is also recreated in a relatively vivid way with new architectural forms. The most obvious is the intentional combination of new and old building materials, creating a new, more brilliant, modern architectural face suitable for the local ecological environment. Specifically, since the French arrived in Vietnam to establish a colonial government, the Vietnamese have been exposed to modern construction techniques, scientific design, and measurement for the first time in history.

Until Dong Khanh (1885-1889), a new type of architecture appeared in the royal architecture system, using concrete, iron, and steel materials and mainly decorated with relief and porcelain inlay. Therefore, in addition to the wooden architecture system that accounts for the majority of the Hue royal architecture, there were also architectural works built with hard materials in the neoclassical architectural style, especially in the period of the last two emperors of the Nguyen Dynasty, Khai Dinh (1916-1925) and Bao Dai (1925-1945).

Western architectural styles most strongly influenced the royal architectural works built during the Khai Dinh period and became popular. He was the first emperor to apply new materials to construction. The change is also reflected in the construction techniques of the works in this period; most of the walls used baked bricks to build walls (2-3 rows) to ensure load-bearing capacity and adapt to the climate. Stone blocks were used as foundations and bases, often without mortar, to avoid water seepage from the ground to the wood (Lim, Joan) soaked in water to prevent termites from making beams/purlins and waxed/painted to prevent moisture from making floors, doors, and decorative details. Iron was used to make door bars, stair railings, and decorative details. Brick arches were used in different styles for small-width doors. The initial popular floor structure was a system of I-shaped iron beams loaded with hollow bricks. In the later stages, steel beams were used to support concrete floors. An exciting feature is the combination of French and Vietnamese in the structure of the work: the wooden truss system in the folk architecture style was combined with the steel truss system on the roof or was transformed to suit the use of mixed materials. This combination reduces the construction load, takes advantage of local materials, and leaves a clear local mark. (Toan, Natural factors and Indigenous cultural traditions in French colonial architecture in Vietnam, PhD thesis, 1998, p.55)

2.2.2 Architectural form

The traces of the colonial architectural heritage in Hue have begun to receive attention and extensive research among researchers in Vietnam. New styles such as neoclassicism, Eurasian eclecticism ("Indo-Chinese style"), French-influenced architectural styles, and "early colonial style" are becoming prominent. In particular, "Indo-Chinese style" is the most popular trend, with the ability to combine traditional European and Asian architecture. Compared to other large cities in Vietnam, Hue's architectural works are often more minor in scale but show a more active local character. In contrast, European architectural works are usually transformed under the influence of historical landscapes and local architectural traditions. The French recognized this and employed local craftsmen because, according to them, "these craftsmen can be of great help by decorating new buildings with traditional patterns which they execute very skillfully; the decorative motifs will always harmonize very well with the knowledge of a country. (Hébrard, *L'architecture locale et les questions esthétiques en Indochine*, 1933). This difference creates the uniqueness and attraction of Hue architecture. Architects applied new technological and architectural techniques to create more expansive volumes and columns during this period. The solution to adapt to the local climate has shifted from designing eaves to covering the corridors with windows. Windows and doors are mainly created from glass doors and shutters, designed in arched or semi-curved styles. The walls are built thick to limit the influence of outside temperature on the interior space. Western architecture has influenced the architectural form of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal court in Hue since the early 19th century, but it was mainly the military citadel style; it was not until the early 20th century under Emperor Khai Dinh (1916-1925) and then Bao Dai (1926-1945) that the integration of cultural elements was demonstrated. Western architecture has deeply influenced Hue royal court architecture.

2.2.3 Decorative arts in architecture

(1) Use Western decorative motifs

Western motifs are also a novelties of decorative art in architecture during the Khai Dinh period compared to decorative art in architecture during the previous period. The images of Western objects in royal architecture are also in complete contrast to the pictures of traditional Eastern objects, contributing to the novelty of royal decoration. The Western styles appearing in the theme of decorative objects at Thien Dinh Palace in Khai Dinh Tomb were recognized by author Tran Duc Anh Son as "the first time in the history of decoration during the Khai Dinh period that images of table clocks, candlesticks, champagne glasses, wine trays, mirrors... appeared alongside motifs extracted from Confucian classics (Son T. D., *Some comments on the decoration at Khai Dinh tomb*, 2018). At An Dinh Palace, images of vases, angels, and medals appear with traditional motifs. (Figure 123)



Figure 120 Some Western motifs combined with Eastern motifs in architectural decoration.

Source: Researcher

The policy of the Nguyen Dynasty during the Khai Dinh period was to maintain the monarchy. Therefore, symbolic images of the royal power and royal family expressed through traditional themes were used mainly in decoration. However, the Nguyen Dynasty also identified modernization as one of the solutions to maintain it because it affected not only political, cultural, and scientific factors but also daily life and work. Emperor Khai Dinh also stated: All customs must be renewed and should not be overly bound by rituals." (Nguyen Dynasty, 2013).

Meanwhile, the styles of books, pens, glasses, and watches are familiar, essential objects of modern life. Perhaps in the decoration of Khai Dinh's architecture, within the allowed limits, they were added alongside traditional motifs to express the reformist ideology of the court but still under the control of conventional symbols. Simply put, this is the image of the "era" for traditional royal decoration, and the value they bring cannot overwhelm the feudal symbols, such as the Confucian-Taoism symbols that Emperor Khai Dinh tried to preserve. In addition, the above new styles also diversified the model styles for the subject, helping to avoid repetition when presenting the same topic.

(2) Decorated in Western styles

Not only architecture but also Western decorative art elements were absorbed and artistically applied to Nguyen Dynasty architecture. Associate Professor Painter Vinh Phoi said, "The decorative style from the Dong Khanh to Khai Dinh period had a great change in Hue's decorative form." (Phoi N. V., 1998, p.318-331). The most obvious manifestation of the presence of Western art elements is the decorative motifs on the walls, columns, window frames, and picture frames of Khai Tuong Pavillon, An Dinh Palace, and Kien Trung Palace, bearing the mark of Baroque decorative art. Along with that are six murals decorated in Western art style placed right in the reception hall of the Palace. During the Khai Dinh period, decorative art on architecture and Western elements was still welcomed. However, they were transformed to suit Asian elements and expressed more clearly through decorative designs using geometric aspects, materials, and colors.

(3) The art of porcelain mosaic reaches its peak

As the capital of the Nguyen Dynasty, Hue gathered talented artisans from all over the country to build the Citadel. Here, majestic architectural works were built, affirming the position of a nation's capital. These works used precious materials with sophisticated decoration techniques and combined the quintessence of art from other regions. Hue Citadel exudes a unique and majestic beauty. Therefore, it can be affirmed that Hue's artisans' talent and skillful hands have created a subtle difference from other regions of the country. From the beginning of the 20th century, L. Cadière in *L'art à Hue* commented: The character of the Central people in Hue shows meticulousness and sophistication in every detail, creating a unique whole. This way of perceiving art is different from the works of Northern artists, with its own characteristics, almost a unique school of art. The influence of the locality has created a new way of thinking, and it is not an exaggeration to affirm that this is a new art. (L. Cadière, 1998). According to Hébrard – the architect who originated the Indochinese style, "it was the local craftsmen who created the skillful decorative details in the spirit of a country." (Lang, 1998). One of the unique features that made a mark in the decorative art of royal architecture during this period was the art of porcelain mosaic originating from folk decorative art. According to researcher Tran Lam Bien: "At the beginning of the 20th century, when the prestige of the royal court was significantly reduced, folk art appeared in royal relics." (Nguyen Tien Canh (editor), Nguyen Du Chi, Tran Lam Bien, Chu Quang Tru, 1992). Sharing the same opinion, author Do Thi Thanh Mai also agrees that the loss of sovereignty to the French colonialists and the inability to manage the country economically and socially, the Nguyen Dynasty's royal court standards in architecture and decoration were increasingly shaken, creating conditions for folk arts to Penetrate strongly the royal court, including ceramic decoration. (Mai, 2003). Assessing the value of this decorative art form, researcher Phan Thanh Binh said that the way of inlaying and processing materials in Hue ceramic mosaic art showed that traditional techniques had been improved through the search and creation of talented artisans in the Nguyen Dynasty. With ideal conditions for raw materials and the high aesthetic requirements of the royal court, Hue ceramic mosaic art developed enormously in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The decoration of ceramic mosaics in architectural works was not only a manifestation of value but also reflected the trend of royal art and the cultural and spiritual features of feudal society. By the time of Khai Dinh, decoration with ceramic mosaic had become a popular trend and reached its peak in terms of aesthetics. Associate Professor and painter Vinh Phoi commented: "The architectural works of An Dinh Palace, Hien Nhan Gate, Chuong Duc Gate, Thai Binh Lau, and Kien Trung Palace have also been renovated and decorated with light from pieces of porcelain and colored glass bottles, creating many visual impressions, changing the traditional aesthetics due to bright colors. At the same time, the traditional folk technique of lime and molasses was introduced into royal art." (Phoi N. V., 1998, p.318-331).

As Henri Gourdon observed in 1931, the art of mosaic decoration "was used sparingly until recently, when it has become a fundamental element in modern decoration." (Henri Gourdon, 2020, p.52). It can be said that the inanimate pieces of pottery, through the hands of carefully selected artisans, are arranged into reliefs on the gables, ridges, and roof edges, contributing to increasing the majesty and splendor of the royal architecture. These small details create the difference and uniqueness of the Hue Palace architecture, making viewers fascinated and amazed by the delicate beauty hidden in every corner of the Palace.

In short, the decorative art of the Khai Dinh period reflects the period of innovation and cultural exchange, when traditional Vietnamese art harmoniously combined with foreign elements, creating a unique and rich style. The characteristics of the decorative art of this period are:

(1). Sophisticated decoration and elaborate details: Decorative art was deeply influenced by Western architectural and fine art styles, such as Baroque, Gothic, and Neoclassical. The architecture of this period is notable for its sophisticated and complex decorative details with a combination of many different types of decoration. The most prominent is the porcelain mosaic decoration. The decorative motifs were cut and assembled from broken porcelain, ceramics, and glass pieces, creating vivid and impressive works.

(2). Traditional and national symbols: Despite the cultural exchange with the West, the traditional symbols of the Hue royal court were still maintained and widely used, such as dragons, phoenixes, and religious and spiritual motifs. (3) Rich colors: Decorative art during this period used many bright and prominent colors, especially yellow, blue, and red, expressing the royalty and authority of the royal family. The ceramic mosaic technique created a diverse blend of colors and shapes, creating outstanding beauty for the works.

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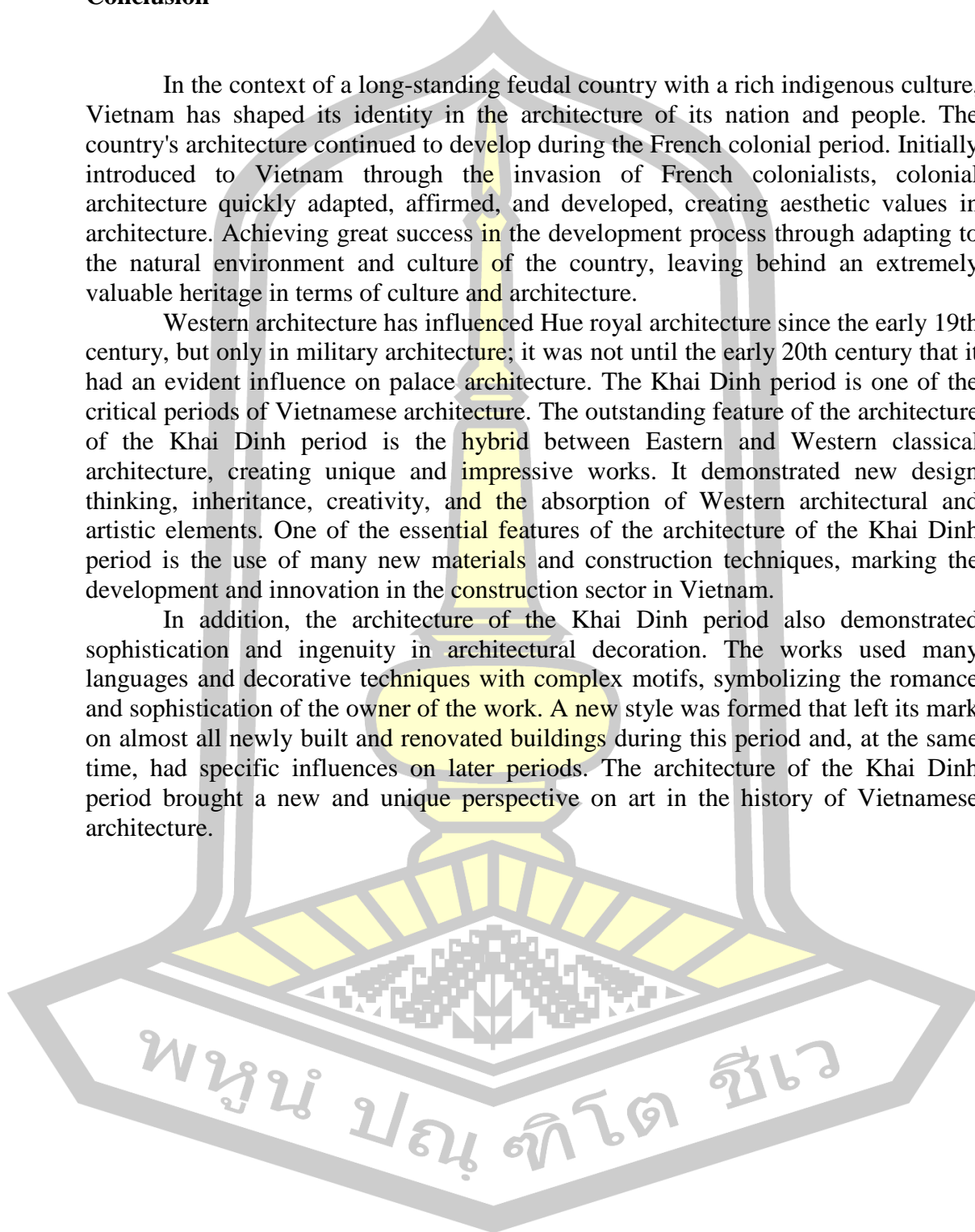


Conclusion

In the context of a long-standing feudal country with a rich indigenous culture, Vietnam has shaped its identity in the architecture of its nation and people. The country's architecture continued to develop during the French colonial period. Initially introduced to Vietnam through the invasion of French colonialists, colonial architecture quickly adapted, affirmed, and developed, creating aesthetic values in architecture. Achieving great success in the development process through adapting to the natural environment and culture of the country, leaving behind an extremely valuable heritage in terms of culture and architecture.

Western architecture has influenced Hue royal architecture since the early 19th century, but only in military architecture; it was not until the early 20th century that it had an evident influence on palace architecture. The Khai Dinh period is one of the critical periods of Vietnamese architecture. The outstanding feature of the architecture of the Khai Dinh period is the hybrid between Eastern and Western classical architecture, creating unique and impressive works. It demonstrated new design thinking, inheritance, creativity, and the absorption of Western architectural and artistic elements. One of the essential features of the architecture of the Khai Dinh period is the use of many new materials and construction techniques, marking the development and innovation in the construction sector in Vietnam.

In addition, the architecture of the Khai Dinh period also demonstrated sophistication and ingenuity in architectural decoration. The works used many languages and decorative techniques with complex motifs, symbolizing the romance and sophistication of the owner of the work. A new style was formed that left its mark on almost all newly built and renovated buildings during this period and, at the same time, had specific influences on later periods. The architecture of the Khai Dinh period brought a new and unique perspective on art in the history of Vietnamese architecture.



CHAPTER IV

HYBRID ART AND THE MODERNITY OF THE AN DINH PALACE

Chapter 4 aims to clarify the third research objective, which is to identify the hybridity in art and the modernity of An Dinh Palace. This chapter focuses on two main issues. Firstly, based on the concepts of hybridity and cultural adaptation, it analyzes and identifies the outstanding features of hybridity in art expressed through An Dinh Palace's architectural features and decorative elements. Secondly, it analyzes and clarifies the signs proving the modernity of the Palace originating from the social context and progressive thinking of Emperor Khai Dinh. Thereby, the study concludes that An Dinh Palace contributed to embellishing the architectural identity of the Nguyen Dynasty.

Part 1 Hybridity in Architectural Form

1.1 Zoning

1.1.1 Location of An Dinh Palace.

Located among the villas of foreigners, An Dinh Palace is separate from the Royal Palace. After 1884, this area became a bustling European quarter on the south bank of the Perfume River, planned by the French with majestic architectural works such as the Governor's Palace, Morin Hotel, post office, hospital, bank, train station, and Western-style villas. This was an affirmation of the power of the French, expressed through the architectural works chosen as a harmonious combination of Beaux-Arts, Art Nouveau, and Art Deco styles, following the popular trend in Europe at that time. The choice of the location to build An Dinh Palace shows a close connection with the French colonialists and their culture. (Paula Swart, Bary Till, 2015, p.117 - 133) (Figure 125)

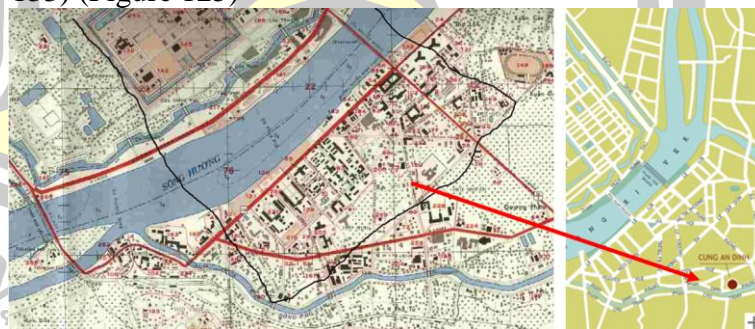


Figure 121 Western Quarter planning area and An Dinh Palace location
Source: Vietnam city map – Hue series L909. Edition 3 – ams (29 ETB)



Figure 122 An Dinh Palace seen from above. Source: Researcher



Figure 123 3D Perspective of the architectural complex at An Dinh Palace
Source: Nguyen Quang Huy

1.1.2 Overall layout

Deep in the city's heart, An Dinh Palace is a majestic architectural work located on a rectangular plot of land planned during the French colonial period. The main gate of the Palace faces Phan Dinh Phung Street, the side gate leads into the Palace from Nguyen Hue Street, and on both sides are small alleys. On the left side of the facade is "Han Vinh Tu Duong," the place to worship the paternal family, and on the right side is "Phu Quoc Cong Tu," which marks the history of the maternal family of Emperor Khai Dinh. The An Dinh Palace is divided into ten construction items arranged along the North-South axis, creating a harmonious architectural whole. (Figure 128)

In terms of architecture, An Dinh Palace has the typical features of a French palace with a surrounding garden but also subtly combines typical architectural elements of Asia and Europe. From architecture, construction technology, and wall painting to decorative art, every detail shows the skillful combination of two cultures. The layout is organized in a dispersed form; the architectural blocks are arranged and oriented along traffic axes, creating a clear division of functions. The garden is designed, and ornamental plants are planted alternately and placed in symmetrical pots, creating a poetic, natural picture.

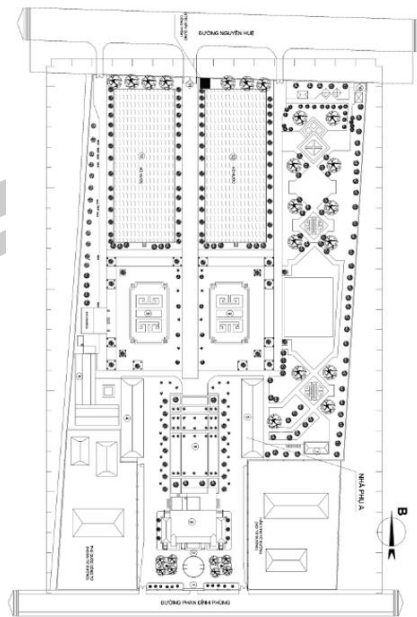


Figure 124 Master Plan of An Dinh Palace. Source: Hue Monuments Conservation Center

Like other palace complexes of the Nguyen Dynasty, the focus is on combining traditional Vietnamese architectural planning principles with Eastern philosophical ideas. The overall architectural criteria are drawn from ancient philosophical principles and feng shui. According to the Sinologist Vinh Cao, a descendant of the Nguyen Dynasty royal family and a profound scholar of the Book of Changes, numerology, and feng shui. Feng shui believes that when considering the direction of any house (or Palace), the front is called Chu Tuoc (red sparrow), belonging to the South, symbolizing the Fire element; the right side, looking from the inside out, is Bach Ho (white tiger), belonging to the West, symbolizing the Metal element; the left side is Thanh Long, belonging to the East, symbolizing the Wood element; the back is Huyen Vu, belonging to the North, symbolizing the Water element. Applying the five elements of creation and suppression to create a balanced situation, then relying on the five elements of the six relatives to discuss, plan, and arrange. (Son T. D., Hue Nguyen Dynasty a look, 2008)

Emperor Khai Dinh also thoroughly applied this idea when planning the An Dinh Palace's architectural layout. After buying more land from the surrounding people to expand the construction area of the Palace, Emperor Khai Dinh then built an additional maternal temple, "Phu Quoc Cong Tu," on the left side of the Palace. According to the researcher's interpretation, building this additional church, on the one hand, showed Emperor Khai Dinh's filial piety towards his maternal grandparents. On the other hand, to change and modify the land according to feng shui to make the land better because if only the shape of the land was short on the right side and long on the left side before, then according to the book "Mainstream Geography" - Choosing the direction of the house and land according to ancient concepts, this land is not suitable for long-term residence. (Ton Nhan and Nguyen Nguyen Quan, 2000, p.51) Therefore, he built an additional temple on the maternal side to create a position on the left Thanh Long, and on the right is Bach Ho, the existing paternal temple.

On the other hand, with such an arrangement, the land has a trapezoid shape, with a size that gradually increases from the road surface to the back, meaning that the

structure is smaller at the part in contact with the road surface and progressively expands towards the back. The land that grows at the back is like a funnel or a gourd for easy imagination. This type of land or house that expands at the back helps to accumulate more air behind, bringing good feng shui and collecting a lot of luck and fortune for the homeowner. (Figure 128)

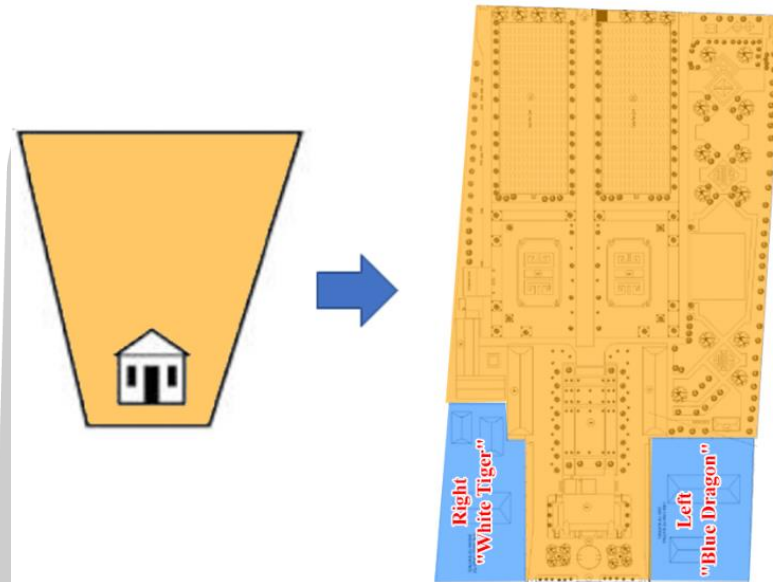


Figure 125 The An Dinh Palace is arranged with land suitable for feng shui.

Source: Researcher

1.1.3 Main Plan of An Dinh Palace

First, we can see that the location of An Dinh Palace faces south 194 degrees, in front of An Cuu River. This planning idea satisfies two important factors in feng shui. These are methods of regulating the elements of wind and water to help bring good energy and prevent bad energy. The south is the sun's direction, bringing the owner great fortune and prosperity. According to the Eight Trigrams of the Innate, the south is considered the direction for the Emperors (with the Qian trigram - king, heaven). According to the Later Heaven Bagua, the South symbolizes light and fire, the direction of the gods, and the best direction to bring prosperity, wealth, and health to the owner. In the past, Kings often sat in the North and looked to the South. This is like looking towards the light, wisdom with the desire to rule the world more wisely. Another characteristic is that Vietnam's climate is tropical and subtropical, with sunshine, monsoons, abundant rainfall, and high humidity.

Therefore, building a house facing south is a perfect choice for the home and is the direction that helps the building receive full light and the best wind circulation. Besides following the general rules of feng shui as above, in the concept of Asians in general and Vietnamese in particular, there is a saying: "When marrying a wife, look at the woman's age - When building a house, look at the man's age," According to researchers, choosing the South direction to build a villa when Prince Khai Dinh came of age and was granted land to build his own home, choosing an age to find a suitable direction to build a house. According to the lunar calendar, Emperor Khai Dinh was born on October 8, 1885, in the year of At Dau (Chicken). In the concept of feng shui, At Dau is suitable for building a house facing South because the South direction belongs to Thien Y direction. This is one of the lucky positions, especially for the

homeowner's future and future family members. In feng shui, the direction of the house Thien Y symbolizes the longevity and luck of the homeowner. Thien Y is also another name for the constellation Cu Mon. Cu Mon is often interpreted as a symbol of a noble family, the highest symbol of a powerful lineage. The constellation possesses the characteristics of the Earth element; the power of this constellation is often made rich and powerful by Mother Earth. This is also the third lucky star in the tremendous lucky stars of feng shui.

In addition, the An Cuu River in front, called Minh Duong, plays an important role in helping to gather good energy for the project. Like other royal villas, An Dinh Palace was planned and built according to contemporary social criteria such as "First near the market, second near the river, third near the road" so that the project's owner could travel and communicate conveniently. (Figure 130)

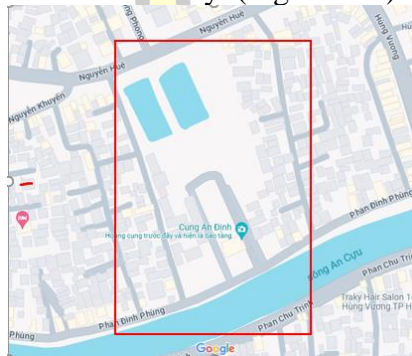


Figure 126 An Cuu River in front of An Dinh Palace. Source: Google Maps

1.1.4 Site layout

The An Dinh Palace is located close to the North bank of the An Cuu River on a fairly large land area, including the grounds of Ton Tu and Ngoai Tu, but is slightly narrow in the middle. The area of the Palace is limited by a brick wall, two sides of which are 0.5m thick and 1.8m high, with an iron fence above. The front side runs parallel to Phan Dinh Phung Street. In the middle of the front side of the Palace, along the river bank, there is a system of steps from the road down to the water surface to serve as a boat dock. The back side of the wall runs along Nguyen Hue Street. On this side, there is the Palace's back door. Ton Tu and Ngoai Tu are located in two separate, more minor, symmetrical courtyards on both sides, and both have their three-door gate in the front. In the area of An Dinh Palace in the past, there were quite a few architectural works, most of which were concentrated in the front part because the overall construction plan of the Palace had gone through different stages of formation, as mentioned above. From front to back, we can count the main architectural works: Main Gate, Trung Lap Pavilion, Khai Tuong Pavilion, and Cuu Tu Dai Theater.

The overall plan of An Dinh Palace is based on the existing plan for the former French Western Street. The intention of developing space from a certain nucleus is the most evident and vital expression of axial symmetry. Traditional Eastern and Western spaces both follow this principle. Similar to many colonial architectural works, An Dinh Palace has a strictly symmetrical layout of the ground and elevation through the central axis; the ground is divided according to the rules to achieve a balanced rhythm according to the rules of convexity - concavity and solidity - voidness, true to the spirit of Western Classical

architecture, expressing majesty and power. The notable point here is the division of architectural space based on the Western golden ratio principle, bringing balance and harmony to the overall space (Figure 130).

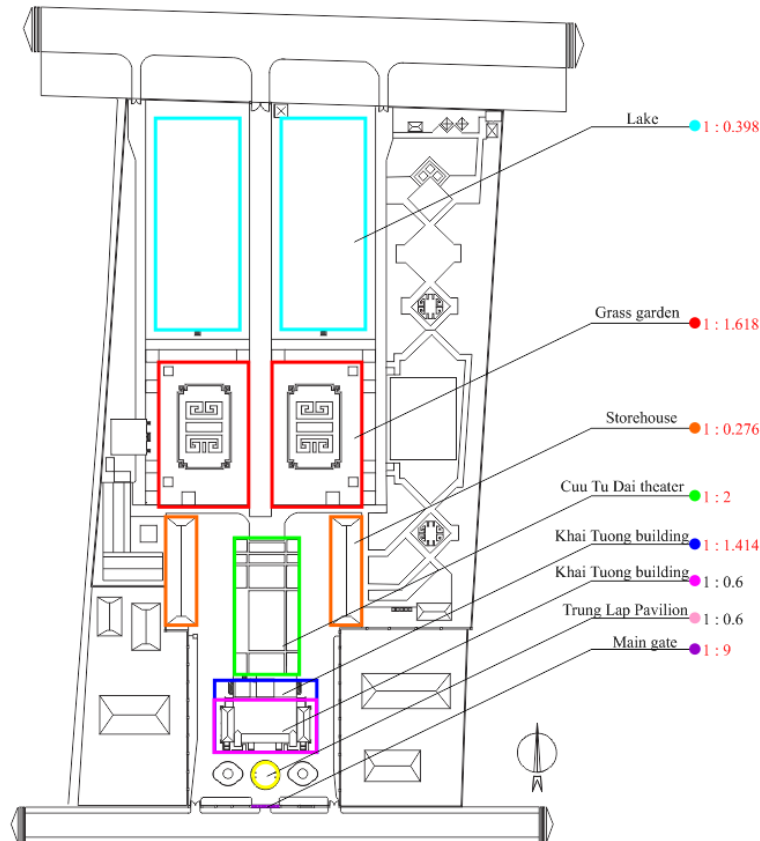


Figure 127 Floor plan drawing follows the principle of the absolute golden ratio
Source: Researcher verified

The design idea takes Khai Tuong house as the center to connect a series of architectural items from the boat dock, palace gate, Trung Lap pavilion, front yard, flower beds, Khai Tuong house, Cuu Tu Dai theater, horizontal house, animal cage, lake and Palace garden, back gate. It can be seen that the overall spatial layout and details in each unit of architectural works at An Dinh Palace are dominated by clear Eastern concepts. This can be seen in the case of the Trung Lap Palace's location arrangement, which is considered a screen to prevent lousy air and unfavorable elements from entering the Palace. This arrangement shows the religious beliefs of the Hue people in the past. According to author Vinh Cao in the Palace with some principles of Feng Shui, "The Palace also uses screens to limit the "Minh Duong" (Bright space) part, creating a private space but not too narrow compared to the width of the Palace." (Cao, 2023)

Another example is the Khai Tuong Palace, the most important architectural work in An Dinh Palace. Its construction area is rectangular, with an area of 745m². The building has three floors and 22 rooms of different sizes, depending on location and function. The ground floor is divided into seven

rooms for receiving guests and entertaining. The first floor has eight rooms for eating and living, and the second floor has seven rooms for worship. (Figure 131)

The division of living space on the ground floor and the first floor is arranged in the form of a three-room, two-wing house - Hue Ruong House (In modern language: a three-room, two-wing house is a house with three main rooms and two additional small rooms at the two gables). This is a popular traditional civil architecture with scale and architectural structure development. Author Chu Son affirmed that "Kings live in Ruong houses. Royal relatives live in Ruong houses. Officials live in Ruong houses. Rich people live in Ruong houses. Buddhas and Saints live in Ruong houses. Ghosts also live in Ruong houses. Ancestors live in Ruong houses. Descendants also live in Ruong houses. Ruong houses are still a characteristic of Hue's architecture and culture in the old days." (Son C. , 1999).

An adaptation in the architecture of the Khai Tuong floor is that the porch in the architecture of the house (the long front of the rooms is a buffer from the yard to the main house, creating a very flexible multifunctional transitional space, suitable for the weather of Hue, with the function of blocking cold winds in winter and heat radiation in summer) is brought into the interior to facilitate the movement of the owner and servants, separating the areas of the rooms to create a high level of privacy for the owner when using. On the first floor of the Khai Tuong floor, the arrangement of the corridor will make it easy to move between the bedrooms. The arrangement of the bedrooms is influenced by the East Asian culture, which always values the relationships that bind each other and the closeness and safety between family members. This is entirely different from the culture that values individuality and privacy of Europeans in houses that often have a shared space, from which there are paths to all the functional rooms in the house.

The most impressive space of Khai Tuong Palace is the reception hall on the ground floor, which is decorated with six paintings depicting the tombs of previous emperors with elaborately decorated wooden frames, gilded to create a luxurious impression. It can be seen that the layout of An Dinh Palace is consistent with the traditional diagram of a Vietnamese house, where the central area, the most important and solemn space in the house, is reserved and used for worship. (Figure 132)



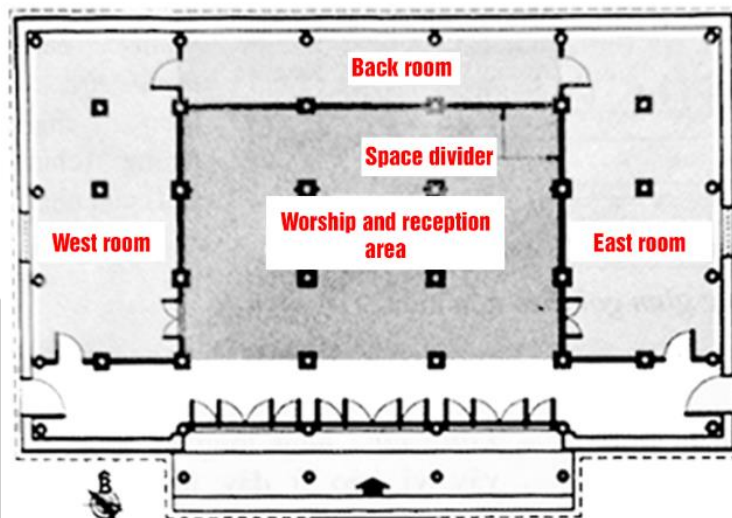


Figure 128 Interior space layout and function of each room in a Hue traditional house
Source: Le Vinh An, Nguyen Thi Kim Nhung

The An Dinh Palace's location and overall planning still have many essential characteristics of a Western castle architectural work. However, this work retains the architectural style - royal art of the Nguyen Dynasty with a symmetrical layout, the axis leading to the north-south arranged "in front is the palace, behind is the garden." In particular, the issue of compliance with Eastern feng shui factors, such as the direction of the house and the water surface, still exists.

The flower garden trimmed in a Western geometric style also somewhat loses the romance and emotional quality in the architecture. The Palace as a whole still shows symmetry, harmony, unity, and harmony with the surrounding landscape, creating the majesty and solemnity of a royal palace.

1.2 Architectural form

The architectural form of An Dinh Palace is a harmony between two schools of Neoclassical and Oriental architecture (Figure 133). It can be seen that the structure and appearance of the works at An Dinh Palace all contain Eastern philosophies, and all have a three-part vertical construction style that creates a clear structure, including the foundation, the body, and the roof. This expresses the "Three Talents" theory with "Heaven - Earth - Human." Earth - the foundation brings stability. Human - the middle body, this is the Emperor's Palace, so the body is higher than standard construction works in the folk. At the top is Heaven - the peaceful roof covering the whole is the most crucial element.



Figure 129 The architecture of the An Dinh Palace complex
With a clear hybrid of two Asian and European styles. Source: Nguyen Phuc
Bao Minh

1.2.1 Elevation form

Among the total construction items of An Dinh Palace, the most notable are three constructions, including the main Gate, the Trung Lap Pavillon, and the Khai Tuong Building. In addition to the above three constructions, the Cuu Tu Dai Theater has also collapsed completely. The archaeological results and architectural images show that the construction is large and has highly aesthetic architectural features. In general, these constructions are a hybrid of European classical architectural styles with the revival of many postmodern architectural styles such as Baroque, French Renaissance architecture, and Hue royal art.

Regarding the overall architectural lines, it is still based on the form, symmetrical proportions, rich in symbolism often seen in European castles with typical details of Western architecture such as columns, arches, moldings, etc., and prominent colors such as white in the Renaissance style, creating a sense of grandeur and majesty true to the nature of a magnificent castle for the Emperor. Combining traditional and Western features while still carefully maintaining harmony with nature has created the typical features of the appearance and layout of An Dinh Palace. Western elements are shown in the construction items, from the division of the ground plan to the size ratio of the construction dimensions, more specifically, the windows where the architects thoroughly applied the golden ratio principle in architecture. The goal is to create aesthetics and balance for the construction details. A noticeable feature of the hybridity is the main entrance, a two-story structure built of lime and brick and richly decorated with relief art of porcelain and multi-colored glass.

(1) Main Gate

The main entrance to the Palace is located on the south side of the land (from the An Cuu river bank) and goes through a small gate shaped like a 7.5 m high ornately decorated victory monument (7.4 x 2.7 m in plan) with the division of horizontal and vertical structural levels according to the golden ratio standard in architecture. (Figure 134) The main gate is built as "Tam quan" - with three entrances

commonly found in pagodas or some mansions in traditional Vietnamese architecture but with only one entrance in the middle (Figure 135). The two sides are used to display parallel sentences and decorations. On the two sides of the lower and upper floors are pairs of fake pillars and two fake roofs. Both the inside and outside of the door are decorated with traditional royal decorative motifs such as dragons, phoenixes, unicorns, celestial lakes (wine gourds), flowers, leaves, hieroglyphs, etc., symmetrically in pairs according to the architectural characteristics of the Palace during the Khai Dinh period (1916-1925). (Figure 136, 137)

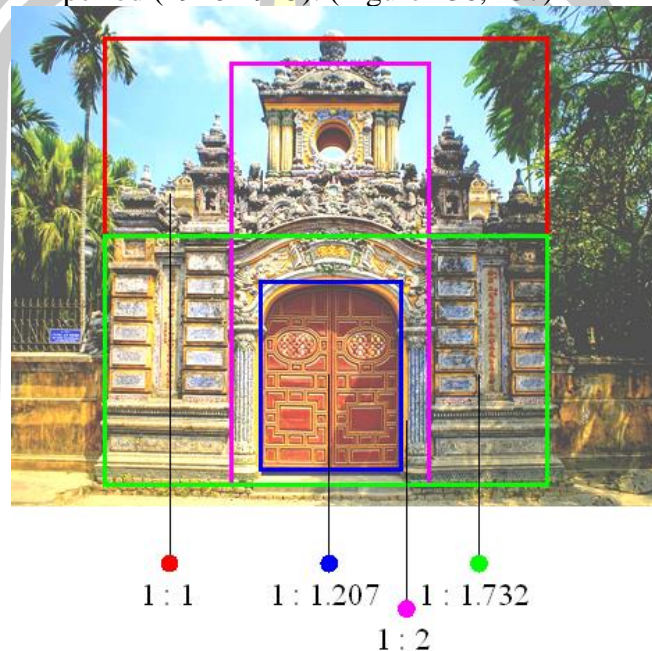


Figure 130 The golden ratio in the main gate architecture is based on the golden rectangle (Hambidge, 1948). Source: Researcher verified



Figure 131 The gate of Tu Hieu Pagoda in the style of a three-door gate
Source: https://lanhue.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/IMG_1377.jpg



Figure 132 The main gate of An Dinh Palace in the style of a three-entrance gate
Source: Nguyen Phuc Bao Minh



Figure 133 The main gate is seen above. Source: Researcher

The architectural style and decoration of the Palace door, especially the way of building pairs of fake round pillars decorated in Corinthian Style, imitating the Roman art style, but the column caps are decorated with the image of upside-down lotus leaves made of porcelain pieces, which are very light and graceful. The bright color tone and the decoration with porcelain pieces and stained glass are like a polysemous mosaic and the attraction of the decorative art of the front entrance. Therefore, according to Benzacier's comments, this gate has a special creative far from the Western style because the Vietnamese style inspires it.

(2) Trung Lap Pavillon

Trung Lap Pavillon has a unique octagonal architecture that exudes elegance and grace. The Communal House is located in the center of a circle with a diameter of 10m between the front gate and the main gate to Khai Tuong Palace. The ratio of dividing the base, body, and roof parts horizontally and vertically according to the golden ratio (Figure 138). The brick base is 1m high, leading up by two rows of stairs facing East-West. Each step has nine levels associated with the number 9, symbolizing the emperor's supreme authority in the ancient feudal society in the traditional style. The Communal House houses a life-size bronze statue of Emperor Khai Dinh, cast in 1920. The decorative tiled floor is framed along the perimeter with a railing made of stylized pomegranate-shaped balusters in the Renaissance style - Pomegranate flowers in classical decoration are assigned the meaning of fertility, freshness, and revival. This is a clear Asian-European hybrid point. Traditional indigenous architecture also has baluster details on wood carvings in the form of bars for protection, but using balusters for corridors is a Western architectural influence. Another notable point is the arrangement of the Pavillon on a miniature landscape with neat lawns in a previously built circular area and neatly trimmed trees as a background to enhance the beauty of the building. This expresses the influence of the classical European garden design style, with rows of trees and lawns shaped and trimmed in elegant geometric shapes. (Figure 139, 140)

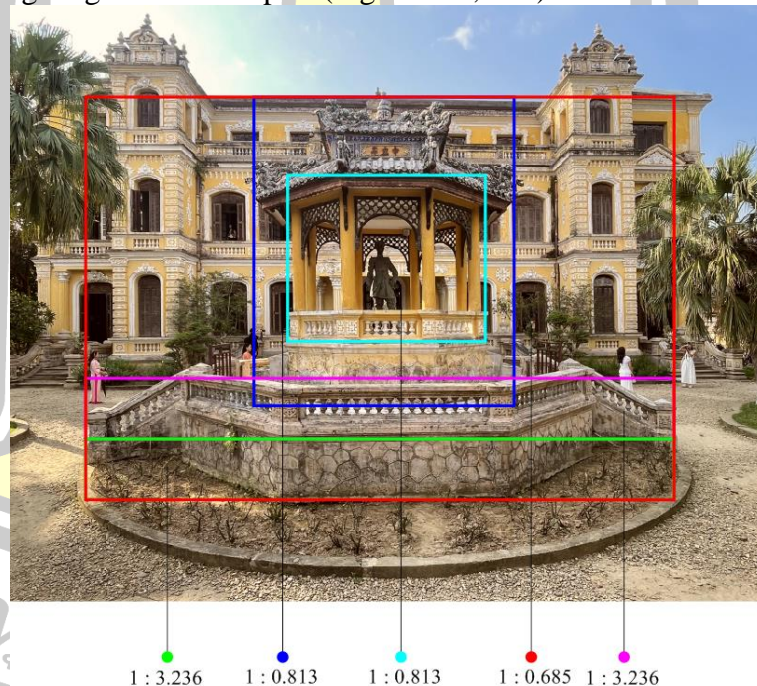


Figure 134 The Golden Ratio in the Architecture of Trung Lap Pavillon is Based on the Golden Rectangle (Hambidge, 1948)

Source: Researcher Verification

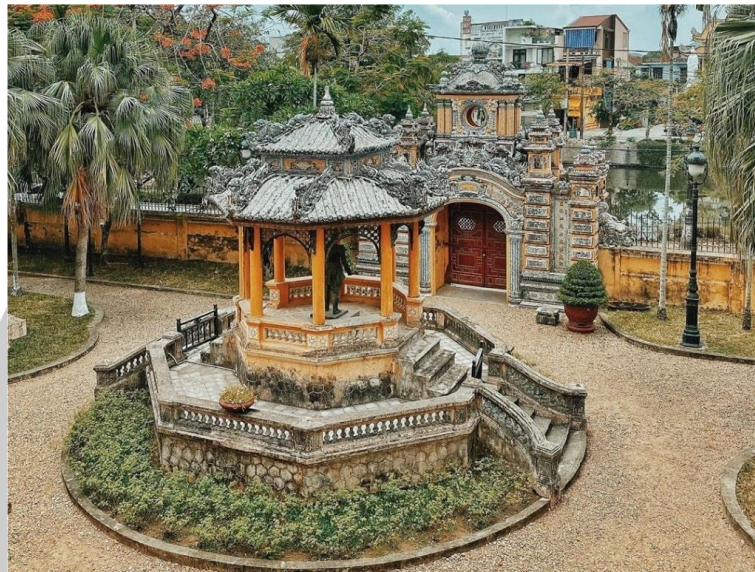


Figure 135 Trung Lap Pavilion Architecture

Source: <https://titangroup.vn/lau-bat-giac-sofitel-hanoi-ecopark/>



Figure 136 Trung Lap Pavillon from above. Source: Researcher

(3) Khai Tuong Building

Khai Tuong Building is the center of the architectural complex of An Dinh Palace, which has three floors in the style of a European castle in the early 20th century (Figure 141, 142, 143, 144). The building is located on a reinforced concrete strip and a stone foundation 1.6 m high; the 3-story brick wall is 50 cm thick on average, and the ground floor and the rooms on the 1st and 2nd floors are built with arched bricks with a roof-0.5 m span along the I-beam. The roof above is arranged along the metal beam. With a relatively thick load-bearing wall structure, the architectural block has a massive, solid appearance.

The facade is designed according to the model of classical European architecture. The facade is symmetrical and divided by alternating cornices between floors in the Neo-Renaissance style. However, the central porch and side porch design

have neo-Baroque characteristics. The windows and balconies on the entrance are decorated with arched railings, creating a lightness for the overall solid architecture. The architecture of the building is decorated with delicate details such as sturdy pillars, soft decorative patterns, graceful pediments, elegant borders, and elegant domes. In the middle of the facade with elaborate decoration. The entrance is highlighted by a portico with columns in stylized architectural order; the corner areas are protected by triangular sandstone above the windows on the second floor. The decoration of the panels is complemented by cement moldings along the central axis, using both traditional Hue royal and European forms and motifs. The facade of the building, viewed from the front from below, is divided into three horizontal sections and seven vertical sections. The vertical dividing lines are rows of moldings and steps running horizontally and vertically. The vertical dividing lines of the protruding and recessed blocks and the decorative details embossed on the surrounding walls create a vivid shadow effect. The body is arranged with a balustrade built in the shape of a lattice in front of each window with a Western molding. The front is also elaborately decorated with delicate patterns following the decorative motifs of Renaissance architecture, French style architecture, and modern Roman style interwoven with Eastern royal motifs such as a system of 2.4 m high Corinthian style columns with relief decoration on the column cap with lotus flowers and Bodhi leaves in relief style. The building is also decorated with reliefs, angelic images of three blocks extending to the outside, decorative patterns on the window arches, balcony doors, etc. From the front of the building, you will see the lines and decorative motifs of the facade, which are utterly symmetrical with the wall and emphasize the middle block with the elaborate ornamental details that have created the building with a majestic royal appearance.



Figure 137 Khai Tuong Building façade. Source: Internet



Figure 138 The Right side of the Khai Tuong Building. Source: Researcher



Figure 139 The Side view from the back of the Khai Tuong Building. Source: Researcher



Figure 140 The Back of the Khai Tuong Building. Source: Researcher

It can be seen that Khai Tuong Building architecture has applied the golden ratio in determining the relationship between the width and height of architectural components such as buildings, roofs, columns, doorways, yards, stairs and dividing the space of rooms on floors to ensure a harmonious balance while meeting the needs of the owner of the project. The subtle application of the golden ratio has brought a balanced, harmonious beauty and the visual satisfaction of the admirer. This can be seen in Western classical and neoclassical architectural works that often bring

luxurious and natural beauty, thanks to the sophistication in the use of the golden ratio in design. (Figure 145 - 150)

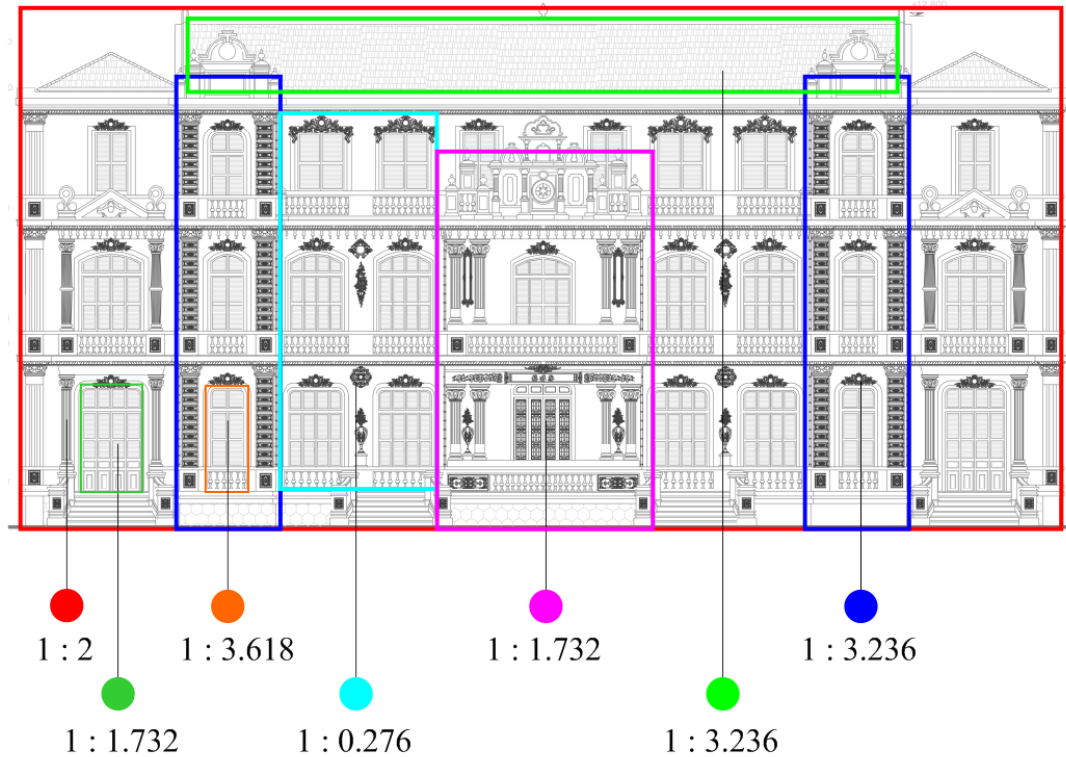


Figure 141 The golden ratio in the facade architecture of the Khai Tuong Building is based on the golden rectangle (Hambidge, 1948). Source: Researcher verification

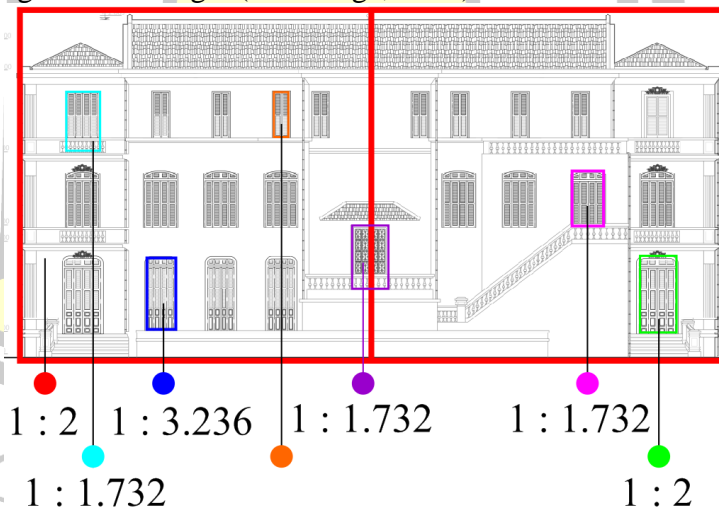


Figure 142 The golden ratio in the architecture of the Khai Truong Building's façade is based on the golden rectangle (Hambidge, 1948). Source: Researcher verification

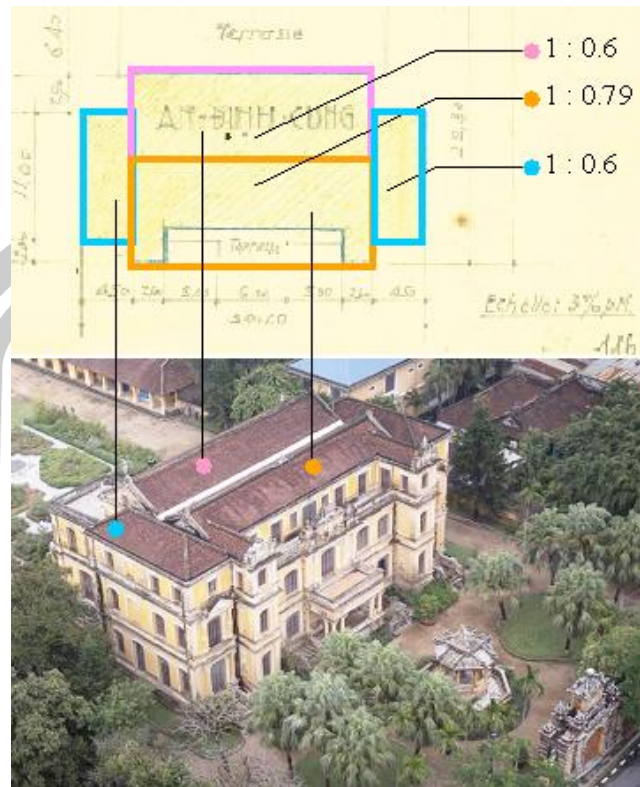


Figure 143 The golden ratio in the roof area arrangement at Khai Tuong Building architecture is based on the golden rectangle. Source: Researcher verification

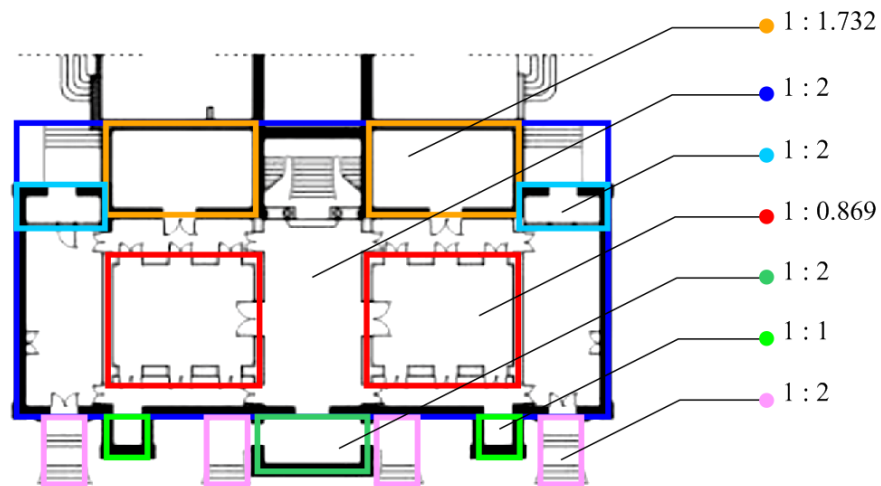


Figure 144 The golden ratio in the ground floor space arrangement at Khai Tuong Building architecture is based on the golden rectangle. (Hambidge, 1948)
Source: Researcher verification

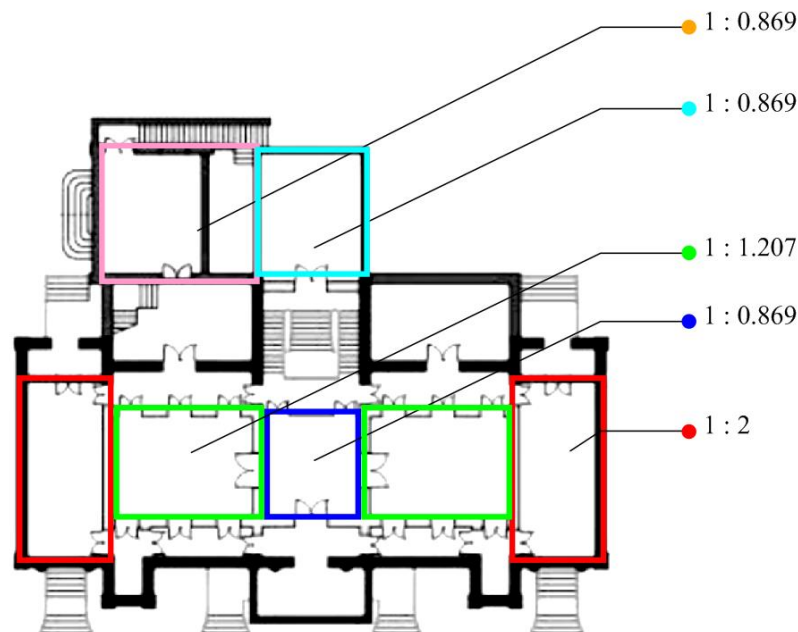


Figure 145 The golden ratio in the first-floor space arrangement at Khai Tuong Building architecture is based on the golden rectangle. (Hambidge, 1948).
Source: Researcher verification

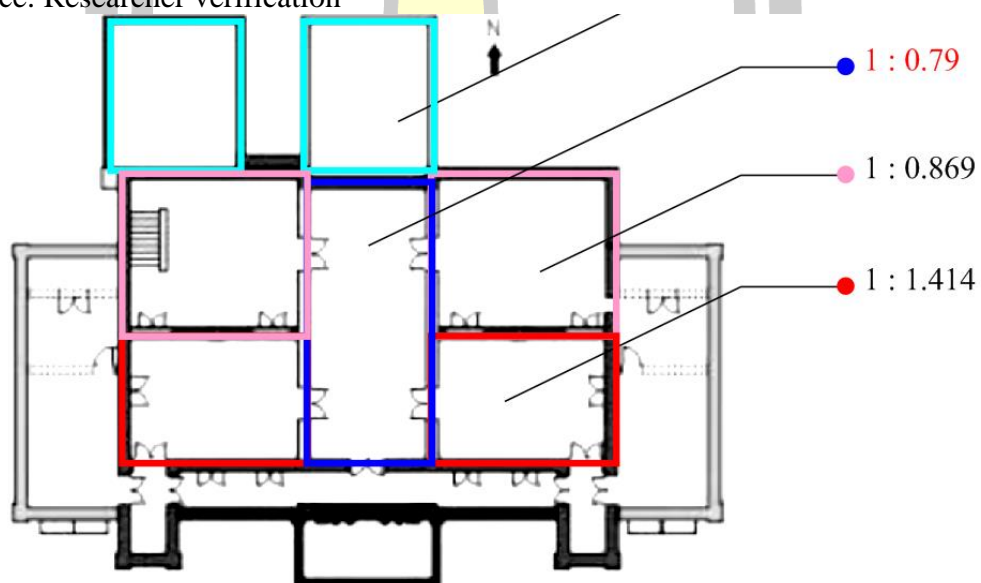


Figure 146 The golden ratio in the layout of the second-floor space at Khai Tuong Building architecture is based on the golden rectangle
Source: Researcher verification

(4) Cuu Tu Dai Theatre

Cuu Tu Dai Theatre, with its elaborately decorated and splendid royal stage, once existed. This is a typical work of artistic value at An Dinh Palace that was destroyed during the war. The preserved documentary images show the four-sided structure of the interior architectural space formed by rows of large columns designed as Romanesque-style arches (Figure 152). The arches use decorative designs on the architectural surface. In particular, the column system follows the European Doric

Style but is divided into compartments and arranged with ornamental designs, which functions similarly to the traditional Hue royal wooden architecture. The idea of using architectural space to form a decorative space for the interior of the building is a deliberate hybrid. Almost all the themes and decorative motifs of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal court converge in this space. The floor plan also shows the golden ratio's application in dividing the building's length and width. (Figure 153)



Figure 147 The 3D perspective of the reconstruction of Cuu Tu Dai Theater architecture

Source: Nguyen Quang Huy



Figure 148 Interior of the front stage of the Cuu Tu Dai Theatre. Source: manhhai

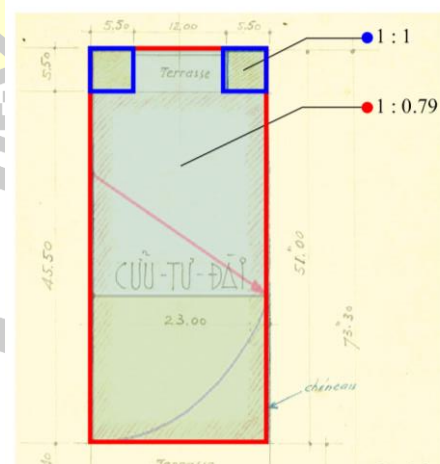


Figure 149 The golden ratio in the layout of the Cuu Tu Dai theater is based on the golden rectangle. Source: Researcher verification

(5) Outbuildings

In addition to the main palatial architecture, An Dinh Palace has other small structures. Two rows of ancillary buildings along both sides behind the Cuu Tu Dai Theater are the residences of the palace servants and the royal car garage, and two large lakes near the end of the campus, adding to the elegant beauty of the landscape. In the past, the campus also had cages for wild animals such as crocodiles, lions, bears, tigers, pythons, and monkeys. These ancillary structures demonstrate the hybridity between the quintessence of French architecture and the traditional beauty of Hue, with a system of thick load-bearing walls combined with columns, glass doors and shutters, and graceful arches in the Western architectural Style. However, the characteristics of the local climate are clearly shown through shutters, bringing ventilation to the interior space. The frame and roof system are made of wood and covered with Liet tiles, maintaining the traditional style. The roof is designed to overhang to effectively block sun and rain, suitable for Vietnam's tropical monsoon climate. (Figure 154)



Figure 150 Outbuildings with East-West Hybrid Architecture. Source: Researcher
The typical works that still exist today show that hybridizing two Eastern and Western art streams was quite successful.

1.3 Structure and Construction Materials

The An Dinh Palace uses the latest techniques and structures of the time. Typically, the Khai Tuong Tower and the Cuu Tu Dai Theater have the main load-bearing structure being brick walls, and at small-width doorways, brick arches are used with different styles. It is mainly built with modern imported materials such as lime mortar, cement, iron, and steel mixed with traditional materials (lime, paper, etc.). Henri Gourdon says, "The use of iron and cement created a significant change that interested Emperor Khai Dinh. Therefore, the Palace of the Emperor, An Dinh Palace, and the Palace of Van Nien on his mausoleum were all built of reinforced cement" (Gourdon, 2017). The floor structure uses steel beams to support the concrete floor. An exciting feature is the combination of French and Vietnamese in the structure of the building. However, it appears like a European castle; the wooden trusses in the traditional style of the Ruong house architecture are used for the roof system. The roof is built in the style of "Trung Thiem Diep Oc" (made from two buildings in a roof-joining style). The top of the roof is

decorated with traditional lotus flower and leaf motifs made of cement and inlaid with colored glass. This is a popular roof style and decoration in the architecture of the Nguyen Dynasty palaces, and the roof is covered with tiles according to the traditional technique of the "Ruong" house of Hue (Figure 155). This hybrid creates quite effective visual effects in connection with the local landscape. In addition, this roofing method also meets the requirements for coping with the tropical monsoon climate of Hue. (Figure 156, 157)

The solution to adapt to the local climate has evolved from a large-scale porch system to organizing the corridor space with windows. Windows and doors are all made of wood shutters, glass doors, built-in arches, or semi-arches that can withstand loads. The porch has formed a sturdy, load-bearing frame. The walls are built thicker to avoid the impact of heat from the outside into the interior space. However, the climate adaptation solutions are incomplete without an extensive roof system covering the building. Floor tiles decorate the rooms with colorful asterisk-shaped patterns combined with geometry, made in Vietnam using French technology.

In short, the foundation of the effective hybridization between the use of traditional Asian images and lines with Western architectural layouts and shapes has created a new form, a difference through this combination, creating harmony and naturalness between the elements. The shaping techniques mentioned above show that architecture has its language. However, based on the main foundation of Western architecture, with the participation of indigenous architectural components, the characteristics of An Dinh Palace architecture differ from those of the architecture in France.

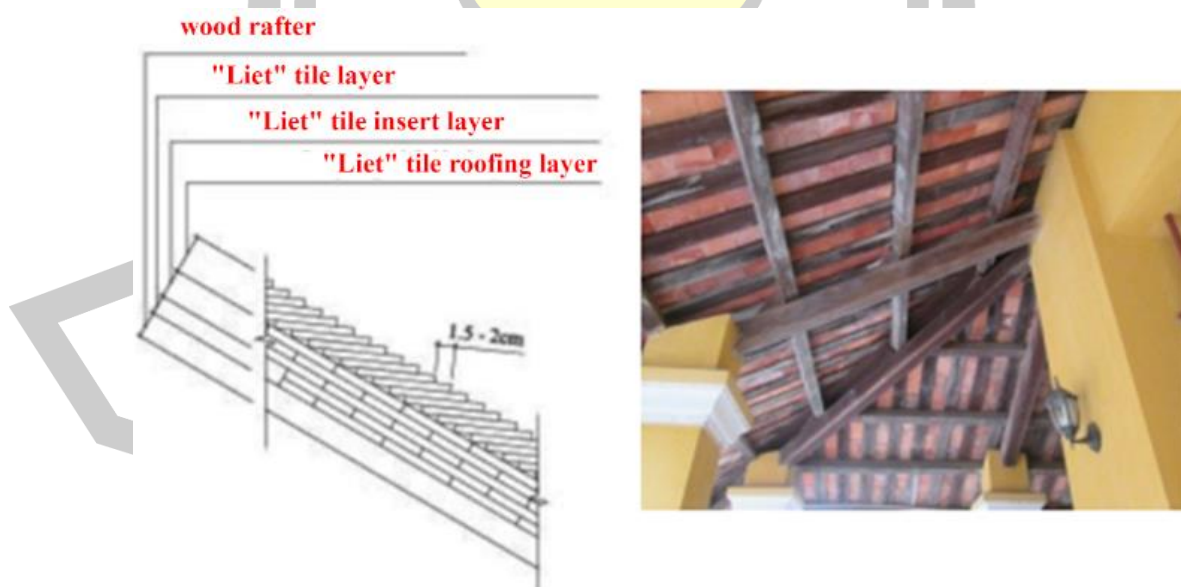


Figure 151 Traditional 3-layer tile roofing technique on wooden frame system of constructions in An Dinh palace. Source: Internet

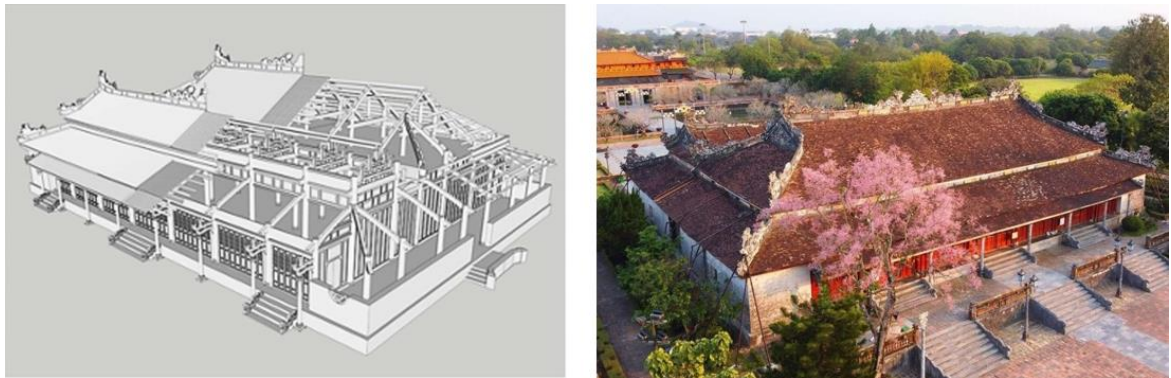


Figure 152 "Trung Thiem Diep Oc" roof style at Thai Hoa Palace
Representative of the royal architectural Style of the early Nguyen Dynasty.
Source: Le Vinh An, Nguyen Thi Kim Nhung



Figure 153 The roof of the Khai Tuong Building is in the traditional architectural style "Trung Thiem Diep Oc.". Source: Researcher

Part 2 Hybridity through Decorative Arts

At An Dinh Palace, decorative art was embellished not only to make the architectural work more inspiring and create aesthetic value but also to convey the thoughts and messages that King Khai Dinh wanted to convey to future generations. That is "a world filled with aspirations with symbols spread across the decorative style system, that is the most prominent feature, which in Hue, in both architecture and objects, we can see everywhere. (Thong, Hue fine arts are viewed from the perspective of meaning and decorative symbolism, 2001). The decorative themes at An Dinh Palace are primarily in the Eastern Style with profound humanistic implications and specific symbolic meanings. The decorative themes used here have become cultural and aesthetic symbols with strong philosophical meanings such as Bat Tien, Bat Qua, Tu Thoi, phoenix holding poetry, dragon worshipping the moon, Thai Cuc gourd, etc., or they are symbols of royal power, national governance ideology, Confucian - Taoist -

Buddhist philosophical values, at the same time reflecting the wishes and aspirations for longevity, wealth, peace, the desire for all things to grow, favorable weather and wind. In it, "each work of art, each idea has a shape, and for art lovers, it is forever an open topic, but for outsiders, it is an eternal puzzle." (Nguyen N. T., 2006). The An Dinh Palace also has many Western themes, such as bunches of grapes, vases, flowers, wings, medals, etc. These images are completely new compared to the traditional decorative themes of Vietnam and Hue. These arrangements make modern objects seem to "sink" into the traditional decorative space; they peacefully exist in common life in their own space. (Thong, Nguyen's Fine Arts, 2019). The artisans then distributed the decorative images here into sunken, raised, dark, and light areas, making them soft, flexible, and lively. The decorative themes in the Nguyen Dynasty's Royal Fine Arts expressed the spirit and content of Confucianism. Still, the folk artisans Vietnamized the themes and decorative styles smoothly and creatively, thus creating transformations imbued with the national soul, making each image lively and close, full of expression, and making the perception of the theme more diverse, rich, and vibrant. (Binh, Porcelain mosaic art, 2021). The hybrid characteristics in the theme, style, and decorative layout at An Dinh Palace can be seen through the construction items at An Dinh Palace and will be identified through the following detailed analysis:

2.1 Themes used in decoration

Decorative art has a special significance for the Nguyen Dynasty's art and An Dinh Palace in particular. The hybridization of many layers of culture and art in each historical period is revealed in each type of decorative theme used. It not only beautifies the architecture, but decoration is also a means to establish the necessary laws and order in society. (Nguyen Tien Nam, Le Bich Ngoc, 2003, p.313-317). Through decorative art, we also deeply understand the characteristics of each historical and political period. Specifically, during this period, the Nguyen Dynasty was dominated by France in terms of political power. The role of the Nguyen Dynasty was only expressed through the ceremonial activities of the court. In addition, it can be seen that at An Dinh Palace, intellectual art has significantly contributed to conveying the thoughts, philosophies, views, tastes, tendencies, and dreams of the owner of the work. The interweaving and imposition of Chinese culture for more than a thousand years, along with the influence of Western civilization during the French colonial period, has influenced not only the political and socio-economic fields but also the cultural and artistic fields, including architectural decorative arts. The "imitating" of ornamental patterns and the creativity of Emperor Khai Dinh is shown through the skillful harmony with traditional indigenous elements to build for himself a system of philosophical concepts about the universe, the world, and humanity. This exceptional point makes the decorative art in An Dinh Palace always carry profound meanings, containing messages about the previous generations' ideology, aesthetics, and spirit. Decorative themes at An Dinh Palace can be listed as follows:

2.1.1 Themes of the Universe and Nature

Themes of the universe - nature and objects such as the sun, moon, clouds, and water waves are used for most of the designs on the decorative system of architectural works at An Dinh Palace, especially on the roof of the main gate and Trung Lap Temple. Decorative motifs belonging to this theme system are decorated in the central and highest position of the architecture, symbolizing the authority of the Emperor and having auspicious meanings, expressing prosperity and happiness.

2.1.2 Animal Theme System

The most decorated animal motifs are at the main gate and the Trung Lap pavilion. Familiar mascots such as Dragon, Unicorn, Turtle, and Phoenix were commonly used in royal architecture, symbolizing the nobility, and were considered conventions in decorative art then. In addition, symbols such as Cranes, Lions, Fish, Bats, and Butterflies were also used in decoration, symbolizing luck and good fortune. Although the image of the four sacred animals originated from Chinese culture and is popular in East Asia, it was not until the Nguyen Dynasty that this image appeared richly, had its personality, and reached the pinnacle of art.

2.1.3 Thematic System of Flora

The flora in the decoration of An Dinh Palace plays an important role, creating an elegant and meaningful beauty. The characteristic of the flora here is the familiar presence of flowers and plants with the typical beauty of Vietnamese culture. From familiar flowers such as yellow apricot, orchid, and chrysanthemum to plants with spiritual meanings such as bamboo, peach, pomegranate, gourd, or Buddha's hand, all are carefully selected, contributing to creating a vivid picture of culture and aesthetics. Flowers such as lotus, bodhi, acanthus, mugwort, jasmine, lemon or rice flowers, roses, peonies, and bunches of grapes, etc., have not only natural beauty but also contain meaningful messages about longevity, elegance, and prosperity, cleverly expressing the close connection between humans and nature, between heaven and earth and all things, containing a profound message about harmony and sustainable development. Because the tree's roots are hidden in the ground and its branches reach the sky, it is seen everywhere as a symbol of the concepts established between heaven and earth..." (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbant, 1990).

Flowers, leaves, and fruits represent the interests and desires of the project's owner. Also, in the theme of plants, the four seasons motif is expressed through the images of the Apricot Tree (Spring), Orchid (Summer), Chrysanthemum (Autumn), and Pine Tree (Winter).

2.1.4 Object theme system

The theme system uses images of precious objects with deep symbolic meaning and exquisite beauty. At An Dinh Palace, besides the familiar presence of Nguyen Dynasty decorative motifs, we encounter the motif of eight precious objects: Pipa or Zither, Fan, Book, Brush, Flower Basket, Rhinoceros Horn, Gourd, Stupa, and Sacred vase. These objects carry metaphors about a fulfilled and happy life and simultaneously show the characteristics of the Eight Treasures motif, an eternal spiritual symbol in the culture of Vietnamese feudal dynasties. In addition, some objects bearing the mark of Western cultures, such as the Rose Vase, Angel, Order of the Dragon of Annam, "Khai Dinh Emperor," and the Bell, are decorated as an expression of the personal taste of the owner of the work.

2.1.5 Fairy and Legend Thematic System

In the decorative art of the Nguyen Dynasty, the fairy theme was also used in An Dinh Palace through the image of a group of eight fairies. Although popular in China, this decorative motif was used more sparingly in Vietnam.

According to the remaining documentary images, the eight statues of Bat Tien were built at the same time as Trung Lap temple, placed on eight pillars on either side of four rows of steps leading down to the front yard in front of the Khai Tuong

Building. Each statue exudes a unique style with high artistic value. Unfortunately, everything has been lost for a long time. Traces of one of the eight statues were found in the underground drainage works of Khai Tuong. The statue is missing its head, the remaining body is 90 cm high, the waist circumference is 85 cm, and it is made of plaster covered with bricks and tiles and has a steel frame inside. The outer garment bears the typical details of the imperial court costumes of the Nguyen Dynasty mandarins.

In addition, there are two gatekeepers at the main gate, Tan Thuc Bao and Uat Tri Cung. Also known as Shen Shu and Yu Lun, originating from Chinese culture, further embellish the architectural space. In addition, images of the daily life of Confucian scholars in the past also contribute to recreating a part of the cultural history of the dynasty.

2.1.6 Thematic system of motifs – inscriptions

The An Dinh Palace stands out with a rich, dense system of patterns, showing high decorative value. Unique fresco motifs, inspired by the art of European wallpaper decoration, harmoniously combine Eastern and Western elements to create unique motifs that can only be found in this palace. Decorative art is based on repetition and alternating motifs, bringing flexibility and diverse transformation. Each motif behind it is like an exciting story. The characteristics of Hue royal decoration are expressed through geometric patterns or fringe style. At the Khai Tuong building, grape-leaf-shaped friezes decorate the intersection between the wall and the ceiling and rose and wormwood-leaf friezes create clusters of interwoven motifs that highlight the door frame. Or clusters of floral motifs are arranged into decorative frames for the ceiling in the Baroque style.

The decorative motifs at An Dinh Palace show diversity in style and are based on familiar themes in traditional decoration. Images of flowers and leaves are combined in a vine style or a mesh style, creating unique motifs such as honeycombs, hexagons, octagons, fox eyes, etc. The swastika background is also a popular pattern or motif of crossed diamond shapes in a mysterious knot with a symbolic meaning of connection and reincarnation. Popular in the decoration here are also Chinese characters written in hieroglyphic style, forming beautiful circles. Characters such as "Longevity," "Swastika," "Blessing," "Happiness," and "Clear mind" have good meanings and are also widely used in decoration at An Dinh Palace. In addition, the stele inscriptions and parallel sentences decorated at the Main Gate and Khai Tuong Building also show the intention of arranging the layout appropriately.

2.1.7 Decorative Painting Theme System

The six mural paintings in the lobby of the Khai Tuong building are painted in murals depicting the landscapes of the tombs of the Nguyen Dynasty emperors, arranged in an impressive, symmetrical manner. From the center looking out, the first painting on the left depicts the majestic beauty of King Gia Long's tomb; the opposite depicts the tomb of Emperor Minh Mang, exuding solemnity.

Continuing on the left is the painting of Emperor Thieu Tri's tomb; opposite is Emperor Tu Duc's tomb; both are depicted with elegant beauty. The remaining two paintings, located on the front wall right at the entrance to the lobby, the one on the left is the scene of Emperor Dong Khanh's tomb, the one on the right is the scene of Emperor Kien Phuc's tomb, all creating a vivid overall picture of the Nguyen Dynasty's tomb complex.

It can be affirmed that only at An Dinh Palace does such a unique form of using paintings for decoration appear. These six paintings are considered the earliest Western-style paintings made in Vietnam (Figure 158). Through realistically depicting the tombs of the Nguyen Dynasty emperors, the paintings demonstrate the critical role of the tradition of ancestor worship in Vietnamese culture.

The one-point perspective method used in the paintings instead of the familiar two-point perspective method has created a unique feature, bringing a modern style to ancestor worship. Professor Chu Quang Tru commented on the paintings, affirming the work's ability to reproduce the landscape realistically. He paid particular attention to the overall architectural layout, emphasizing the unique characteristics of each tomb. The European perspective painting style was adopted by contemporary artists while also smoothly combining the vivid perspective of the East. This unique combination creates a distinctive style, neither purely Eastern nor entirely Western. This reflects the cultural exchange, expressing the creative spirit of Vietnamese artists trained in the West while preserving their traditional identity. (Tru, 2000, p.147-148)





Figure 154 Six murals depicting the tombs of six Nguyen Dynasty emperors (Gia Long, Thieu Tri, Minh Mang, Tu Duc, Dong Khanh, and Kien Phuc) in a realistic style and Western perspective. Source: Nguyen Phong

Table 6 Statistical table of the proportion of decorative themes of Hue royal court combined with Western culture and other cultures at An Dinh Palace

No	Origination	Theme						
		Themes of the Universe and Nature	Animal Theme System	Thematic System of Flora	Object theme system	Fairy and Legend Thematic System	Thematic system of motifs – inscriptions	Decorative Painting Theme System
1	Hue royal court	100%	100%	71,2%	57%		100%	50%
2	Western			28,8%	28,5%	20%		50%
3	Other				14,5%	80%		

2.2 Decorative Techniques and Materials

The sophisticated combination of unique decorative techniques and materials creates the beauty of An Dinh Palace. The combination of Eastern and Western decorative arts creates a unique feature for the building, quite different from other palaces in the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architectural complex. This building is a testament to the diversity in decorative arts, expressed through techniques such as porcelain inlay with materials from porcelain, ceramic, and colored glass; plaster and plaster painting; wood carving; oil fresco painting, gilded steel lacquer, decorative wrought iron, decorative marble tiles, etc. (Figure 159)

Porcelain mosaic is a term used to describe a traditional royal decorative art form. This method uses pieces of porcelain that are cut, pressed, and skillfully assembled onto the surface to create sophisticated patterns on architecture or round statues. From there, unique and impressive artistic images are created. The art of porcelain mosaic in the Nguyen Dynasty often used the method of embossing and then inlaying porcelain pieces onto the surface of architectural structures and sections. (Binh, Porcelain mosaic - a highlight of Hue cultural heritage, 2010, p.92-96). This popular technique was used to decorate the Nguyen Dynasty palace during the Khai Dinh period. At the main gate of An Dinh Palace, porcelain inlay techniques are

mainly used to create sophisticated motifs. Porcelain and colored glass pieces are meticulously cut to create mascots, flowers, and geometrical decorations that have an elegant look. Each porcelain inlay motif here contains a deep spirit and meaning. The Dragon and Phoenix at the main gate are a harmonious combination of rhythms created by the architectural structure. The dragon's body is assembled from pieces of blue and white porcelain to create scales, and the tail curves with a stylized chrysanthemum shape are attached to pieces of multi-colored porcelain. The sacred vases inlaid with light blue and white porcelain stand out on the eight pillars. The phoenixes facing the scroll on the door arch are meticulously decorated in blue and white tones combined with green cloud patterns. Overall, the dominant excellent color of the main gate of An Dinh Palace brings a gentle and elegant feeling.

The architecture of Trung Lap Pavillon has a delicate beauty with eight winding dragons on the roof and the image of eight fruits vividly expressed by the porcelain mosaic technique. The porcelain mosaic art of the Nguyen Dynasty reached its peak in the interior space of the Cuu Tu Dai Theater. Here, the Four Seasons motifs (plum, orchid, chrysanthemum, bamboo), lion playing with a ball, tiger face, etc, are embossed and meticulously assembled from countless pieces of sophisticated porcelain and glass to create vivid images. Each image in this architecture is a separate work of art. All combined, they create a majestic interior space that makes viewers admire and marvel. The porcelain mosaic technique in An Dinh Palace demonstrates ancient artisans' meticulousness, intricacy, and extraordinary patience. They created a unique work of art from the most minor details, reflecting the pinnacle of porcelain mosaic art in the Khai Dinh period.

Khai Tuong Building is adorned with sophisticated beauty and a unique "decorative language" - cement relief painting technique. In decorative relief masonry art, mortar is vital in creating impressive decorative shapes in Nguyen Dynasty architectural works. Mortar is a primary factor that makes sophisticated patterns and motifs' mass and complete details. This technique is used to achieve high aesthetic efficiency here. The motifs originating from the Orient are arranged into new clusters of motifs creatively, different from the traditional motif, expressed in the Baroque Style of relief on the wall body and above the door, creating luxury and grandeur for the work, at first glance, similar to the decoration on the palaces in ancient Greece and Rome.

The ancient visual arts were fully expressed through the works and works of art. The masters skillfully expressed the aesthetic depth, clearly reflecting the culture and spirituality of a period.

The point that makes the difference in the decorative art of An Dinh Palace is the mural art. Under the skillful and meticulous hands of the artisans, the delicate beauty of the walls of the rooms in Khai Tuong Palace has been breathed into life. They are decorated with unique decorative motifs, with gentle, romantic colors such as cream, light gray, sage green, pink, light pink, and blue on the first floor. The delicate patterns are repeated, creating solemnity and attraction; the moldings and ceilings seem to be wearing a new coat with sophisticated lines. The motifs are painted with plastic-based paint and covered with a protective varnish. The motifs of the two cultures are arranged alternately, repeating according to the rules of rotation, and the combined design creates creative patterns and a unique style.

Although not the primary technique in the decoration at An Dinh Palace, the artifacts here show the wood carving technique, showing sophistication in every detail. The gilded decorative door frames are elaborately carved, exuding luxury and nobility. The difference comes from the mural frames, engraved with oriental motifs mixed with Western motifs, with rolled acanthus leaves as the central theme in the Baroque style. These frames are like splendid classical dresses, adding to the beauty of the six murals in the main hall on the ground floor of the Khai Tuong Building. In addition, iron is not used much, but the iron flowers decorated the windows at An Dinh Palace have a clear local mark. Although created at different levels, the iron flower motifs contain traditional Vietnamese beauty or remind one of familiar decorative motifs. The decorative floor tiles are modern, influenced by Western decoration with dark colors and sophisticated patterns inspired by local culture, such as auspicious knots or Thi flower motifs, giving the Khai Tuong Building space a classic beauty.

2.3 Decorative Style

According to Hery Suhersono, decorative style is a harmonious combination of lines, shapes, and colors, creating a unique beauty based on human imagination. In other words, decorative style is the repeated motifs and patterns that create a distinctive feature in decoration.

We can see this decorative style in works of art, bringing aesthetic value and appeal to viewers. Decorative styles are formed based on people's observation and understanding of the surrounding world, creating diverse decorative styles. Plants, animals, people, natural elements, and even religious values can all become sources of inspiration for unique decorative styles. People turn these elements into harmonious images, creating a unique beauty for each work. (Glebet, 1982).

2.3.1 Main gate decoration style

The main gate of An Dinh Palace is a two-story, majestic, and magnificent building built with lime and bricks. Work built with lime and bricks. This artistic masterpiece contains the message of peace and good wishes. With sophisticated techniques of embossing porcelain and brilliant colored glass, it has created elaborate decorative motifs. The main gate is designed with only the main entrance in the middle, and the two sides are decorated to lead to the splendid world inside. The two sides of the lower and upper floors are decorated with pairs of pillars and false roofs, creating a majestic and solid look. The unique feature of the main gate is the embossed motifs that decorate both the inside and outside of the door—with motifs bearing royal symbols such as dragons, phoenixes, unicorns, lions, gourds, flowers, leaves, etc., arranged symmetrically, creating harmony and balance, showing the connection with the architectural decorative art style of the Nguyen Dynasty.

On the archway is a horizontal lacquered board shaped like a scroll with three embossed golden characters, "An Dinh Palace." These characters are not only the palace's name but also contain wishes for the dynasty's peace, stability, and prosperity. Both sides of the door are decorated with two parallel sentences written by Emperor Khai Dinh in Chinese characters. The parallel sentences have profound meanings, expressing that the emperor is safe here, thanks to fate and blessings. The first two letters of each parallel sentence are "An" and "Dinh," which, when combined, form the name "An Dinh," which is the name of the palace.

Behind the main gate, on the door arch, there is also a horizontal lacquered board in the shape of a scroll with the two words "Cuu nhu" embossed. "Cuu nhu" are nine blessings of the ancients, symbolizing longevity and prosperity. These two words express good wishes for the next generation with the hope that the descendants will inherit the dynasty's career and always prosper. On both sides of the back door are parallel sentences written by Emperor Khai Dinh himself. The characteristic of this parallel sentence is to emphasize that the construction of An Dinh Palace was not from the people's money but only a tiny piece of land to be passed down to future generations. The parallel sentences express the emperor's humility and describe his simple life as a prince.

The main gate of An Dinh Palace is a perfect combination of architecture and decorative art. This is not only the gateway to the palace but also a unique work of porcelain mosaic art, reflecting the talent and dedication of ancient artisans. (Figure 160)



Figure 155 The main gate of An Dinh Palace is decorated with ceramic mosaic art. Details such as decorative columns, cornices, decorative moldings, and panels are in Western architectural Style. Source: Researcher

2.3.2 Trung Lap Pavilion Decoration Style

The octagonal Trung Lap Pavilion is in the center of a 10m circle between the front gate and the main gate to the Khai Tuong Building. The two-story brick base is 1.9m high, with a decorative tiled floor, surrounded by a graceful railing formed by stylized pomegranate-shaped balusters, bearing a clear mark of the Renaissance style. The pomegranate image, symbolizing prosperity and rebirth, has become a unique highlight. Traditional indigenous architecture also has baluster details on wood carvings in the form of door bars that serve a protective function. However, using balusters for corridors is a Western architectural influence.

The pavilion has a gently curved roof and two traditional floors of ancient octagonal architecture. The two roof floors are divided into spaces decorated with traditional motifs (auspicious symbols, fruits with good meanings) made of reinforced



Figure 157 The statue of Emperor Khai Dinh, a symbol of the subtle fusion of Asian and European art, was completed around 1918. This work is the result of the combination of the talent of French sculptors and the skillful hands of Vietnamese bronze casters. With its creative martial arts uniform, the statue clearly shows the Emperor's "modern" style and is placed in the center of Trung Lap Palace.

Source: Researcher

2.3.3 Khai Tuong Building Decoration style

The highlight of An Dinh Palace is Khai Tuong Palace, a building with Western architectural Style, but hidden deep inside is the quintessence of traditional Hue art in a complete way in the overall architecture, from the harmonious layout to each sophisticated decorative detail. The main facade of Khai Tuong Palace is a unique art painting decorated with European-style reliefs, expressed in the technique of masonry. The layout is similar to modern Roman architecture, with familiar themes such as bunches of grapes, flowers, vases, angels, round columns, square columns, etc, with Eastern motifs such as dragons, phoenixes, eight precious stones, and herbal motifs.

In addition to the art of porcelain mosaic and relief sculpture, the decorative fresco system in the interior of the Khai Tuong Building contributes to enhancing the magnificent beauty of the project, with a space that is both luxurious and imbued with traditional cultural imprints. The artistic features of the interior of the Khai Tuong Building is most clearly expressed through the frescoes. Each painted theme mirrors the worldview of the owner and the era. Not only that, it also contains secrets about the life and unique aesthetic thinking of Emperor Khai Dinh. It can be seen here that the decorative details all meet the aesthetic requirements on the principle of fully satisfying the elements in the visual arts, contributing to the formation of the typical artistic style of the Nguyen Dynasty in the early 20th century - an important transitional period in the history of Vietnamese art.

The main hall of the Khai Tuong Building is decorated with six murals by royal artists according to the ideas of Emperor Khai Dinh. These paintings recreate the beauty of the tombs of the emperors of the early Nguyen Dynasty. They are located in the center of the ground floor. In traditional Vietnamese culture, this space is the solemn place to worship ancestors; it means commemoration, showing respect and reverence for ancestors. This is a creative form of ancestor worship.

The murals, painted with oil paint directly on the wall, have wooden frames in the Baroque style with elaborate carvings inspired by Vietnamese and Western cultures, such as apricot blossoms, lotus leaves, Acanthus leaves, Lily of the Valley flowers, etc. The entire frame is covered with sparkling gold, reflecting the luxury of royal decoration. The perspective of Western painting was skillfully adopted by Vietnamese artists in the 20th century, harmoniously combining it with the lively spirit of the East. According to Martin Kemlein, the six murals in Khai Tuong Pavilion - An Dinh Palace are not only the earliest Western-style paintings in Vietnam but also the first oil landscape paintings among the modern works of Vietnamese fine arts. (Martin Kemlein, *Hue's hidden pearl*, 2010). (Figure 158)











At the Khai Tuong Building, the designer's intention is clearly expressed. Each room covers the space with many different decorative motifs corresponding to each meaning. The ground floor is where the quintessence of Eastern and Western culture converges most strongly when the floral motifs, lotus, apricot blossom, and chrysanthemum typical of the East blend with roses, hibiscus, orchids, creating a harmonious, multi-colored whole. The five-color Hue color scheme, typical of Hue fine arts, is cleverly used to decorate Western flowers, creating a unique feature.









On the first floor, the decorative style combines floral motifs arranged in a grid to create modern modular layouts with brown and pink tones that create a strong impression. The stylized Chinese characters are inside circular or rectangular frames, which can contain much information in one word, with good meanings, cleverly arranged with pure white pear flowers as the main background, while the grape leaves and flowers become subtle highlights at the foot of the wall.

On the second floor, with the worship function, although not yet repaired or restored, the decorative motifs from the East are still clearly present through some wall panels that have been peeled off and examined. The traditional eight-treasure motif and the stylized Chinese characters in the pictographic style appear vaguely, exuding a robust Eastern spirit, creating a solemn and sacred space for worship. (Figure 165)

The creativity in ceiling decoration style on the floors of the Khai Tuong Building is shown in the combination of traditional Oriental motifs with the Baroque-inspired layout. (Table 5, 6) This unique hybrid between content and form is a prominent creative point, creating splendor and majesty for the project, like a classical European-style castle, but hidden deep within it is the spirit and soul of Vietnam. In addition, unique motifs are created from repeating geometric lines, a popular decorative style in ancient architecture. The repetition of a basic motif creates the characteristic of the geometric pattern while allowing for diverse variations depending on the spatial location at the Khai Tuong Building. (Figure 163, 164)

Table 7 Statistical table Baroque-style arranged plant traditional motifs are interspersed with Western motifs to form decorative clusters using traditional decorative techniques on the exterior of the Khai Tuong Building. Source: Researcher

No.	Motif	Location	No.	Motif	Location
1	 Peach blossom motif combined with European geometric motif	On the door, 2nd floor facade of Khai Tuong Pavillon	2	 Peach blossom motif combined with European geometric motif	On the door, ground floor facade of Khai Tuong Pavillon
3	 Peach blossom motif combined with European geometric motif	On the door, ground floor facade of Khai Tuong Pavillon	4	 Peach blossom motif combined with acanthus leaf motif and European geometry	On the door, side of Khai Tuong Pavillon
5	 Acanthus leaf motif combined with traditional leaf motif	Ground floor side view, Khai Tuong Pavillon	6	 Acanthus leaf motif combined with lotus motif	Rooftop Khai Tuong Pavillon
7	 Lotus and Bodhi leaf motif	Ground floor side view, Khai Tuong Pavillon	8	 Asterisk motif combined with European style pattern	Ground floor side view, Khai Tuong Pavillon
9		Ground floor side view, Khai Tuong Pavillon	10		Ground floor side view, Khai Tuong Pavillon

No.	Motif	Location	No.	Motif	Location
	Chrysanthemum motif combined with European style patterns			Asterisk motif combined with European style pattern	
11		3rd floor facade, Khai Tuong Pavillon	12		3rd floor facade, Khai Tuong Pavillon
	Asterisk motif and auspicious symbol			Peach blossom motif combined with European geometric motif	
13		2nd floor facade, Khai Tuong Pavillon	14		3rd floor facade, Khai Tuong Pavillon
	Acanthus leaves and stylized European floral motifs			European style vase and flower motif	
15		3rd floor facade, Khai Tuong Pavillon	16		Ground floor side view, Khai Tuong Pavillon
	Medallion motif combined with the Dragon symbol and the Emperor's title			Rose	
17		Ground floor facade, Khai Tuong Pavillon	18		Ground floor side view, Khai Tuong Pavillon
	Rose vase, Angel with Bodhi leaf motif and traditional decorative motifs			Rose vase, with laurel leaf motif decoration	












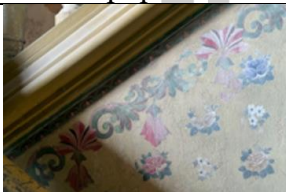







No.	Motif	Location	No.	Motif	Location
19		2 nd floor facade, Khai Tuong Pavillon			Ground floor facade, Khai Tuong Pavillon
	Acanthus leaf motif combined with European style motifs			Apricot blossom motif combined with acanthus leaf motif	

Table 8 Statistics table botanical motifs, arranged in Baroque Style, alternate with Western motifs to form decorative clusters like wallpaper, using Western fresco techniques on the interior floor of the Khai Tuong Building.









Source: Researcher

No.	Motif	Location	No.	Motif	Location
1		Ceiling pattern Ground floor, Khai Tuong building	2		Ceiling pattern Ground floor, Khai Tuong building
	Lotus leaf motif combined with Acanthus leaf and Lily of valley flower motif			Peony motif combined with acanthus leaves, grape leaves	
3		Ceiling model, Ground floor, Khai Tuong building	4		Ceiling model, Ground floor, Khai Tuong building
	Daisy pattern arranged in traditional grid pattern			Acanthus leaf and hibiscus motif	

No .	Motif	Location	No .	Motif	Location
5		1st floor mural, Khai Tuong building	6		1st floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Rose pattern with 5 traditional colors and grape leaves			Rose pattern with 5 traditional colors and grape leaves	
7		Ground floor, Khai Tuong building	8		Ground floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Lotus and Bodhi leaf motif			Peach blossom motif combined with stylized European patterns	
9		Ground floor mural, Khai Tuong building	10		Ground floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Rose pattern with 5 traditional colors and grape leaves			Acanthus leaves and hibiscus flowers	
11		Ceiling model, 1 st floor, Khai Tuong building	12		Ceiling model, 1 st floor, Khai Tuong building
	acanthus leaves and traditional patterns			Orchids form a chain	

No	Motif	Location	No	Motif	Location
13	 Rose pattern with 5 traditional colors, grape leaves and acanthus leaves combined with seal script pattern	Ground floor mural, Khai Tuong building	14	 European stylized leaf pattern	Ceiling model, 1 st floor, Khai Tuong building
15	 Rose pattern with 5 traditional colors,	Ground floor mural, Khai Tuong building	16	 Protea cynaroides motif	Ground floor mural, Khai Tuong building
17	 Peony motif combined with acanthus leaves	Ceiling model, 1 st floor, Khai Tuong building	18	 European stylized leaf pattern	1 st floor mural, Khai Tuong building
19	 Butterfly pattern combined with floral pattern	1 st floor mural, Khai Tuong building	20	 Peony motif combined with acanthus leaves, grape leaves	Ceiling model, 1 st floor, Khai Tuong building
21	 Hibiscus flower motif, acanthus leaves, grape leaves	Ceiling model, 1 st floor, Khai Tuong building	22	 Hibiscus flower motif, acanthus leaves, grape leaves	Ceiling model, 1 st floor, Khai Tuong building

No .	Motif	Location	No .	Motif	Location
23		1st floor mural, Khai Tuong building	24		1st floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Daisy motifs arranged in European pattern background			Daisy pattern arranged in traditional grid pattern	
25		1st floor mural, Khai Tuong building	26		1st floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	European stylized leaf pattern			Seal script pattern has good meaning and plum blossom	
27		1st floor mural, Khai Tuong building	28		1st floor mural, Khai Tuong building
29		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building	30		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Hibiscus flowers painted in 5 traditional Hue colors			Seal script with auspicious meaning and roses	

No .	Motif	Location	No .	Motif	Location
31		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building	32		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Swastika combined motif with auspicious symbols			Hibiscus flowers painted in 5 traditional Hue colors	
33		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building	34		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Seal script with auspicious meaning			Seal script with auspicious meaning	
35		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building	36		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Seal script with auspicious meaning			Eight Treasures Motif and Seal Characters	
37		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building	38		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Eight Treasures Motif			Seal script with auspicious meaning	






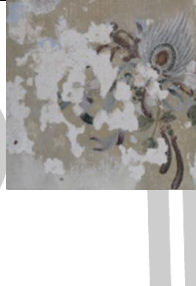

No .	Motif	Location	No .	Motif	Location
39		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building	40		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Seal script with auspicious meaning			Seal script with auspicious meaning	
41		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building	42		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Seal script with auspicious meaning			Eight Treasures Motif	
43		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building	44		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building
	Eight Treasures Motif and Seal Characters			Eight Treasures Motif	
45		2nd floor mural, Khai Tuong building			
	Eight Treasures Motif and Seal Characters				



Figure 158 Decorative tile floors with traditional plant motifs are stylized in a modern style suitable for the Khai Tuong Building's architectural style. Source: Researcher

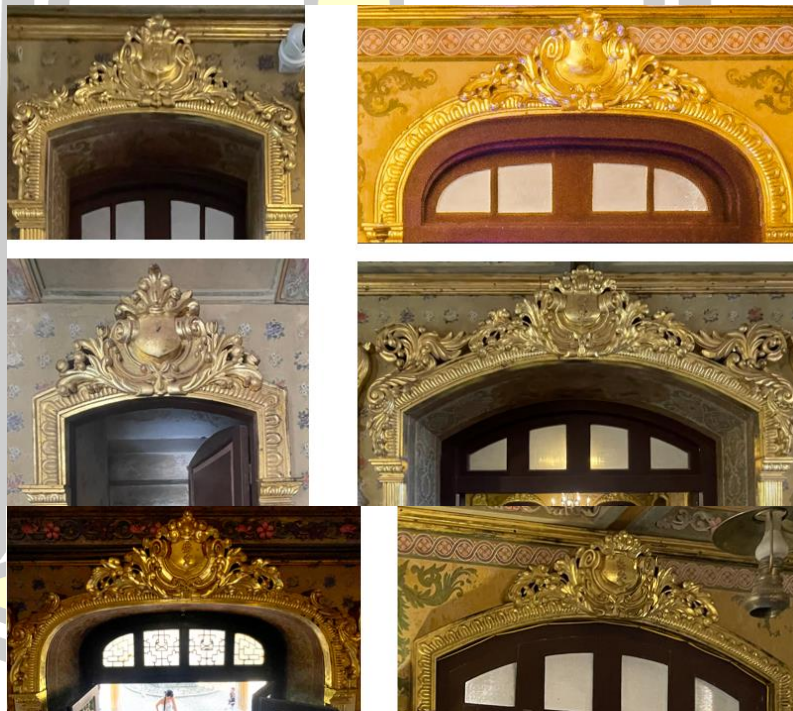


Figure 159 Lotus petals, lily of the valley, and acanthus leaf motifs combine harmoniously, creating a splendid decorative highlight for the door frame. Source: Researcher



Figure 160 A room on the 2nd floor of the Khai Tuong Building for worship.

Source: Researcher

2.3.4 Cuu Tu Dai Theater Decoration style

The Cuu Tu Dai Theatre is a unique architectural work with a strong Western influence, reflected in its architectural form influenced by the modern architecture of the Khai Dinh period. The facade architecture, with its design and decoration inspired by the Hanoi Opera House, is refined by the art of colored plaster relief sculpture, similar to the decorative Style of the Khai Tuong Building. The theatre's interior has an Asian feel, similar to the Thien Dinh Palace in the Khai Dinh Tomb, with walls elaborated with porcelain and glass mosaic art, expressing the typical decorative themes of Eastern and Vietnamese culture under the Khai Dinh Dynasty.

The subtle combination of Asian decorative art and Western architecture creates a unique feature for Cuu Tu Dai. Here, talented artisans have demonstrated their talent through exquisite porcelain mosaic works, harmoniously combined with modern architecture, creating a unique artistic space. The decorative themes here are very diverse, from feng shui mascots such as tigers, dragon fish playing with water, and lions playing with balls to plant themes such as the four seasons of plum, orchid, chrysanthemum, bamboo, containing meaningful messages about the colorful beauty of nature and representing the noble qualities of humans. In addition, the themes of the Eight Treasures, Eight Fruits, Fish, Bats, etc, express wishes for luck and prosperity, imbued with the cultural identity of the East. (Figure 166)

The Cuu Tu Dai Theater reflects its owner's boldness, freedom, and open-mindedness. The project has harmoniously combined cultural traditions and modern spirit. This is a valuable cultural and artistic treasure that contributes to preserving the quintessence of Vietnamese culture.



Figure 161 With its bold European architecture, Cuu Tu Dai Theater is decorated with unique traditional motifs of the Hue royal court, using sophisticated porcelain mosaic techniques. Source: manhhai

2.3.5 Style of interior decoration

The aesthetic thinking of Emperor Khai Dinh in the construction of An Dinh Palace shows a subtle consistency, from the exterior architectural design to the choice of interior decoration. Right on the balcony facade of the Khai Tuong building, a Chinese text is embossed in cement, personally drafted and engraved by Emperor Khai Dinh himself, affirming the use of his salary to decorate the Palace. The products were imported from Europe and mixed with handcrafted works made by Vietnamese craftsmen in European Style. Among those products, wooden furniture, such as cabinets, tables, chairs, stools, beds, etc, received special attention from Emperor Khai Dinh. On this furniture, he engraved two words, "An Dinh," or four words, "Khai Dinh nien tao," which means producing during the Khai Dinh period to affirm his mark. (Figure 167 - 171) The style of these wooden furniture was inspired by the Style of Henri II, IV, and V Louis – France but decorated with decorative motifs imbued with the culture of the Nguyen Dynasty, creating a unique artistic hybrid. These creative products can be called "Khai Dinh Style."

The decoration combines sculpture and painting, using many decorative motifs throughout the architecture, creating a harmonious unity between architecture and furniture. The decoration focuses on every tiny detail; the individual parts are combined to form a complete whole with a harmonious and delicate rhythm. The soft, meticulous, graceful curves and the classic beauty of the carved border patterns are decorated with gold and black tones and splendid gilded details. This combination brings luxury to the items, designed in the Rococo and Baroque styles. Although designed and shaped in the Western Style, An Dinh Palace furniture still uses traditional royal decorative motifs with profound meanings, such as mascots, flowers, and leaves. (Figure 172-178) These motifs represent the authority of the Emperor. The unique combination of Western and traditional styles in An Dinh Palace furniture has created a distinct difference from the royal decorations of previous dynasties. Together with conventional gilding, inlaying, painting, embossing, and carving techniques, these products have created the identifying features of Nguyen royal furniture. (Figure 179-181)



Figure 162 Louis-style wardrobe, decorated with floral motifs and royal mascots, the wardrobe front has a dragon carved with Chinese characters meaning An Dinh.
Source: Researcher

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Figure 163 The cabinet is crafted in the "three mountains" style and is a hybrid of the Henri II style. The two words "An Dinh" are embossed, along with motifs symbolizing prosperity and longevity, such as dragons, pine trees, bamboo, plum blossoms, bats holding the word Tho, and the Chinese characters Phuc, Loc, and Tho.
Source: Hue Royal Antiquities Museum



Figure 164 The cabinet is designed in the Henri II style, with elaborate carvings of typical Hue royal motifs. Source: Hue Royal Antiquities Museum

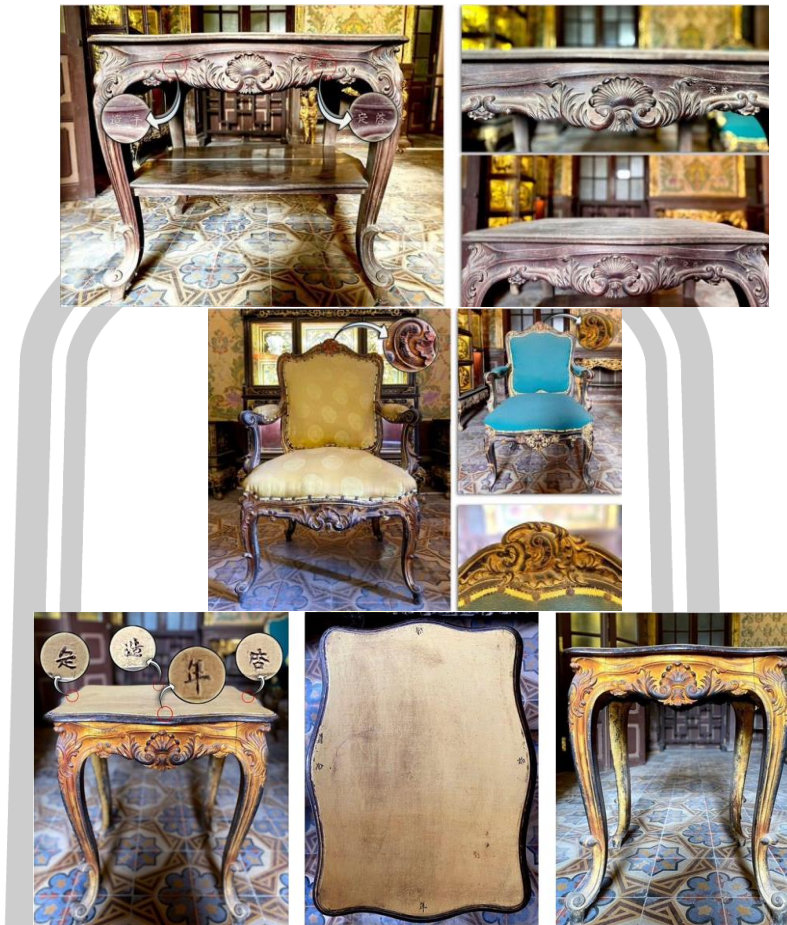


Figure 165 Louis-style tables and chairs are all engraved with the year "Khai Dinh nien tao" or "An Dinh". Source: Hue Royal Antiquities Museum



Figure 166 Louis-style tables and chairs are all engraved with the year "Khai Dinh nien tao" or "An Dinh". Source: Researcher



Figure 167 pedestal combines Louis and traditional styles, decorated with carvings, mother-of-pearl inlays, and gilded lacquer originating from the Nguyen Dynasty court.

Source: Researcher



Figure 168 Dressing table, Louis-style wardrobe with oriental floral motifs.

Source: Researcher



Figure 169 A bed in Louis style decorated with lotus and Eight Treasures motifs of the East mixed with rose motifs of the West. Source: Researcher



Figure 170 The Emperor's bed is designed in Louis style, decorated with dragon motifs, and equipped with convenient European iron wheels for easy movement.
Source: Researcher.



Figure 171 The cabinet is designed in the Henri II style with dragon-shaped floral motifs, and the cabinet's front is engraved with the two words An Dinh. Source: Researcher

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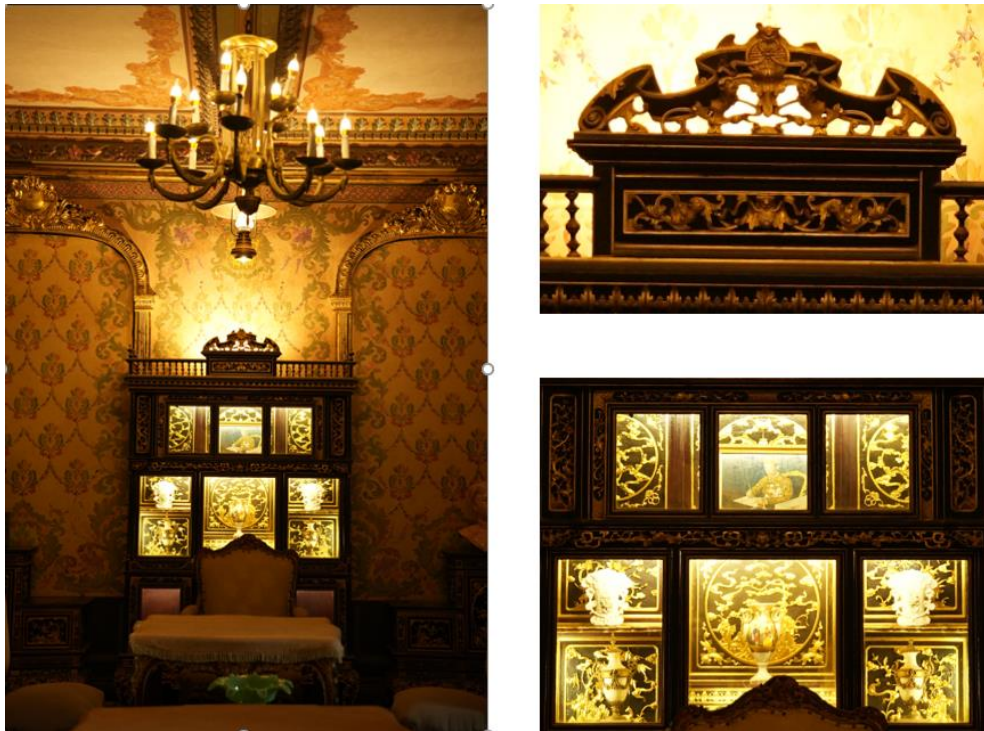


Figure 172 Louis-style decorative cabinet with dragon and cloud motifs, four seasons (Plum blossom, orchid, chrysanthemum, bamboo), and the front of the cabinet is carved with a longevity motif. Source: Researcher



Figure 173 Louis furniture models carved with plant motifs originating from the Orient.

Source: Researcher

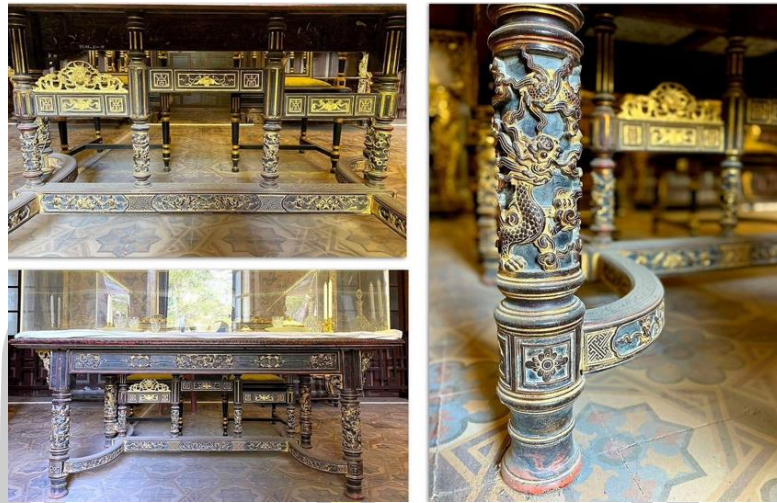


Figure 174 The Henri II-style table is covered with carvings of Dragons and Chrysanthemums are symbols of the Emperor. Source: Hue Royal Antiquities Museum



Figure 175 Combining Hue's royal-style sofa and Henri II-style table becomes one set.

Source: Researcher



Figure 176 Khai Tuong Lau nameplate is designed in a traditional style and theme combined with Western rose motifs. Source: Researcher



Figure 177 The porcelain tableware was specially commissioned by the Emperor in France and decorated with the royal logo. Source: Researcher

The architecture and decoration of An Dinh Palace represent a subtle hybrid between traditional Vietnamese architecture and Western decorative art styles, especially Neoclassical and Baroque styles. This is not only an outstanding architectural work but also a symbol of cultural and aesthetic transformation in a special historical period of Vietnam. This work represents the meeting and harmony between Eastern and Western cultures, between tradition and modernity, reflecting the psychology and thinking of the Vietnamese royal class in the process of integration with the outside world in the early 20th century.

Part 3 The Modernity of An Dinh Palace

Modernity is a multifaceted concept, which is the perception of social change. Huntington (1968), Inkeles (1969), Lerner (1958), Levy (1966), and Schwartz (1972) view modernity as a process of comprehensive transformation in social life. However, Eisenstadt (1966) argues that modernity is not simply change but also a positive response to those changes.

According to Huntington (1968), modernization is a multidimensional process affecting human thinking and action. Halpern (1966) focused on the ability of organizations to manage change, viewing it as a proactive response to change. Eisenstadt (1966) combined these two perspectives, affirming that modernization is both a process of change and the ability of institutions to adjust and control those changes. Vietnamese culture is a diverse picture. The history of Vietnamese culture is a blend of cultures that form a unique Vietnamese culture. Specifically, Vietnam has received and adapted to the cultural influences of India, China, Champa, and Western culture, creating a unique hybrid in many aspects. This is the ability to adjust and control changes according to Eisenstadt's point of view, which modernity requires. However, this process leads to a conflict between indigenous and foreign elements, between preserving the inherent cultural identity and elements received from the outside. Cultural blending is the adaptability factor that creates a Vietnamese cultural identity. Vietnamese culture has always maintained its essential character without being assimilated by other cultures throughout thousands of years of domination.

In the late 19th to early 20th century, Western civilization followed the French colonialists through the strong colonial exploitation route to Vietnam. This created an essential bath in the monarchical ideology in Vietnam for more than ten centuries. This process changed the religious status of the Nguyen Dynasty emperors. This

impact took place in two directions: first, the colonial government imposed requirements, and the Hue court itself changed its policies to adapt to the requirements of the new context. Second, establishing the French protectorate throughout Indochina opened a period of cultural absorption and integration into Vietnamese society, marking an important turning point in the cultural life of the Vietnamese people, including the culture of the Hue royal court. The legitimacy of the dynasty, the power of the emperor, and the perception of cultural identity were also strongly affected by new ideas. Since Khai Dinh ascended the throne as the 12th emperor of the Nguyen Dynasty, he sought to adapt to survive, integrate, and innovate in many fields with the idea of hybridizing Vietnamese and Western cultures in all areas of royal life. This was an innovation ahead of its time. The architectural works that were renovated and newly built at that time had their own style, called the "Khai Dinh style." The royal decoration began to be Western, with new designs and motifs compared to the traditional decoration of the Hue royal court.

According to Laborde, Western architectural techniques and styles gained an official position in Hue architecture during this period. This affected the overall appearance that existed before. (Laborde, 1928). During this period, French technical experience gradually replaced traditional construction methods. The new idea tested was the construction of An Dinh Palace, a typical case, followed by several works in the royal palace area such as Kien Trung Palace, Hien Nhon Gate, Chuong Duc Gate, etc., and finally, his tomb. These works were built according to European traditions using modern technology and new materials. However, the general layout of the planning carried out according to the feng shui tradition, the theme of decorative sculptures and decorations, showed the influence of Confucianism. This was a unique phenomenon in Hue architecture at that time. Emperor Khai Dinh's successor, Emperor Bao Dai, brought a European aura to the Hue architectural complex because he was trained and matured from French education. This reflected the changes in society, court life, and urbanization in Vietnam in the first half of the 20th century.

Cultural exchange and adaptation are common phenomena and can even be considered the "key" to developing and updating each culture. However, cultural diversity and emerging factors also create problems that must be solved. Within a culture, adaptation plays a vital role in solving the change and adaptation within that culture itself. It depends on the social context and the way of reception of each member in that culture. However, cultural and artistic acculturation does not stop at internal interpretation. Cultural acculturation between cultures is seen as a "journey" in search of unity and assimilation of differences.

Cultural diversity is a characteristic of society and a necessary factor to promote progress. Cultural diversity is the foundation for building identity and is a condition for innovation and creativity. It drives development and enriches people's intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual lives.

Each culture has its core values, so cultural assimilation between cultures is a complex process. But Emperor Khai Dinh did it. He became a pioneer in transforming the architectural style of the Nguyen Dynasty towards integration, and An Dinh Palace is a typical example of modernizing indigenous culture and creating identity.

The vital point of successful hybridizing art at An Dinh Palace is mutual support, which helps both cultures to be honored. In the case of Vietnam and France,

the two cultures have had many exchanges and adaptations throughout history, creating unique cultural values for the two countries.

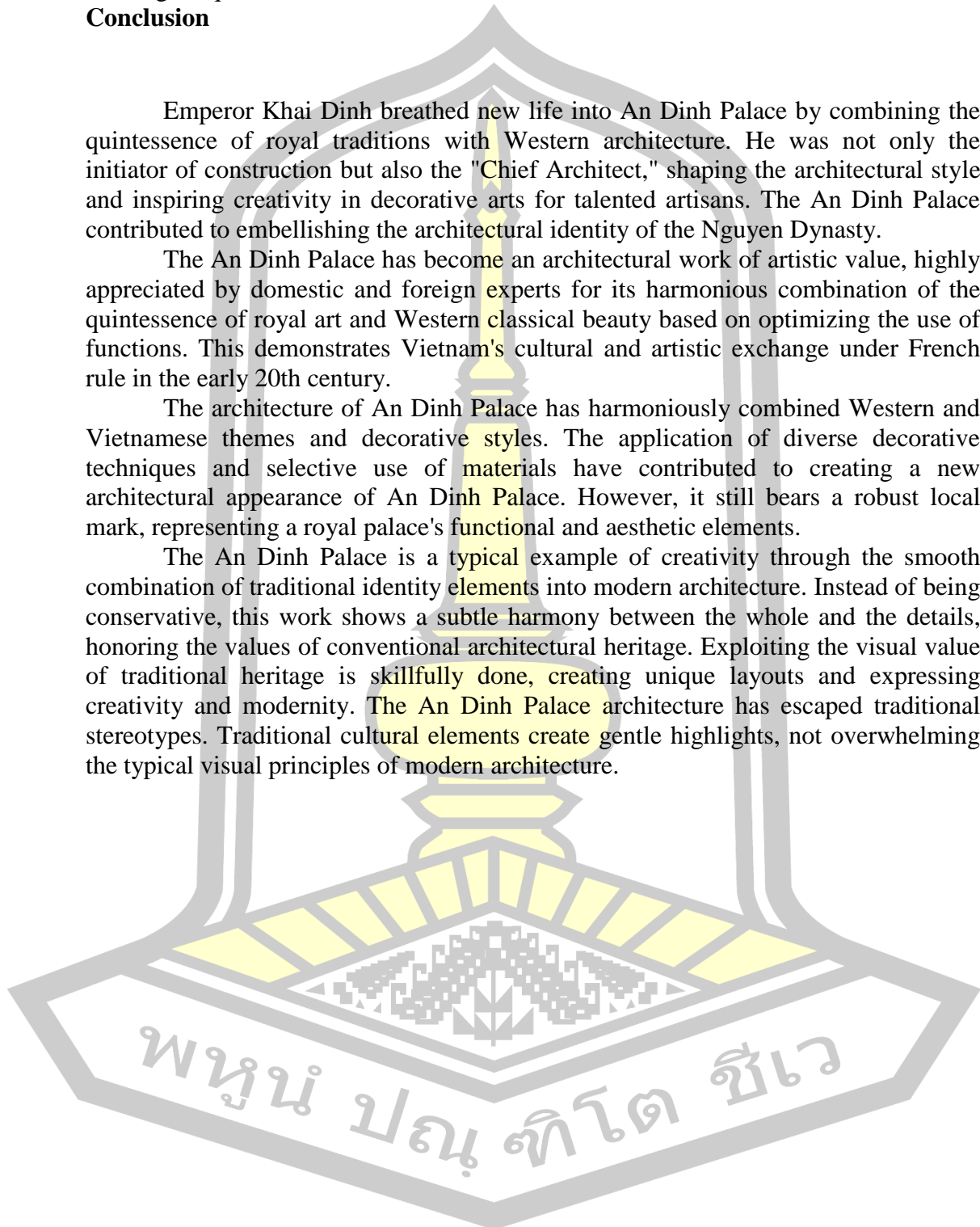
Conclusion

Emperor Khai Dinh breathed new life into An Dinh Palace by combining the quintessence of royal traditions with Western architecture. He was not only the initiator of construction but also the "Chief Architect," shaping the architectural style and inspiring creativity in decorative arts for talented artisans. The An Dinh Palace contributed to embellishing the architectural identity of the Nguyen Dynasty.

The An Dinh Palace has become an architectural work of artistic value, highly appreciated by domestic and foreign experts for its harmonious combination of the quintessence of royal art and Western classical beauty based on optimizing the use of functions. This demonstrates Vietnam's cultural and artistic exchange under French rule in the early 20th century.

The architecture of An Dinh Palace has harmoniously combined Western and Vietnamese themes and decorative styles. The application of diverse decorative techniques and selective use of materials have contributed to creating a new architectural appearance of An Dinh Palace. However, it still bears a robust local mark, representing a royal palace's functional and aesthetic elements.

The An Dinh Palace is a typical example of creativity through the smooth combination of traditional identity elements into modern architecture. Instead of being conservative, this work shows a subtle harmony between the whole and the details, honoring the values of conventional architectural heritage. Exploiting the visual value of traditional heritage is skillfully done, creating unique layouts and expressing creativity and modernity. The An Dinh Palace architecture has escaped traditional stereotypes. Traditional cultural elements create gentle highlights, not overwhelming the typical visual principles of modern architecture.



CHAPTER V

CHARACTERISTICS AND CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC VALUE OF THE AN DINH PALACE IN VIETNAMESE ART HISTORY

Chapter 5 aims to clarify the fourth research objective, which is to analyze the characteristics and cultural and artistic values of An Dinh Palace in the history of Vietnamese art. This chapter focuses on decoding the meaning of the themes, motifs, and cultural messages hidden behind the decorative art while analyzing the aesthetic criteria in the architecture of An Dinh Palace. From there, it is affirmed that An Dinh Palace has achieved cultural and artistic values. The research shows that the art of An Dinh Palace is a smooth combination of traditional features and modern elements. It clearly expresses the spiritual life and cultural identity of the Vietnamese people. In addition, the thorough application of traditional cultural and artistic elements in the design and construction of An Dinh Palace demonstrates a robust national spirit in the context of a country under occupation.

Part 1 Featured cultural and artistic value of An Dinh Palace

In the turbulent transitional context of the early 20th century, Vietnam, especially the capital Hue, faced the flow of history and the cultural exchange between East and West. The Nguyen Dynasty, on the verge of decline, witnessed the efforts of Emperor Khai Dinh to adapt and maintain his position. He skillfully created a unique royal culture, blending the quintessence of Vietnamese tradition with subtle influences from the West. This cultural exchange was reflected in royal life, from solemn ceremonies and daily activities to costumes, cuisine, and architecture, creating a colorful cultural picture still preserved intact in the ancient capital of Hue.

With his strategic vision, Emperor Khai Dinh implemented policies to preserve the form of the feudal regime while combining it with the ideology of modernization. In that challenging context, he built and restored many architectural works, mixing Western architectural elements and creating a new look for the complex of Hue's ancient capital relics from 1916 to 1925.

According to research, An Dinh Palace is a typical example of the bold changes initiated by Emperor Khai Dinh, clearly demonstrating the unique combination of classical and modern architecture between the East and the West. The presence of Western architectural forms in classical designs, harmonious layout, delicately combined decorative spaces, unique architectural shapes, and diverse construction materials have created a unique and distinct architectural style.

Compared with the architecture and royal decorative arts of previous dynasties, the unique features of the architecture under Emperor Khai Dinh contributed to embellishing the diverse beauty of the Hue ancient capital relic complex.

1.1 Innovation based on traditional inheritance

Through the study of the general features of the history of the birth and development of architecture and art, it has been shown that An Dinh Palace is a work that inherits the decorative art of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture. It is a work that bears the distinctive mark of royal art, quite different from folk works and French architectural works imported into Vietnam at that time. However, based on inheriting that cultural heritage, An Dinh Palace has shown innovation in construction techniques and materials, as well as in the form of decorative art through every detail meticulously cared for, demonstrating the creativity and characteristics of this period.

1.2 Using Western elements in the expression

Western art has infiltrated the architecture of An Dinh Palace, not only through architectural forms but also through sophisticated decorative techniques. At the Khai Tuong Building, the wall patterns, ceilings, door frames, and picture frames are typical of Baroque influence. The six murals in the reception hall, completed under the Khai Dinh Dynasty, realistically simulate the tomb landscapes of previous dynasties using Western techniques and perspectives. Many Western techniques have also been applied to the decoration of this project. Typically, traditional porcelain mosaic art is also applied, combining Western-colored glass materials with local porcelain materials to create designs with many shapes, materials, and vivid colors through each decorative project.

1.2.1 Western Elements in Architecture

Since the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh (1916-1925) and his successor Bao Dai (1926-1945), Hue royal architecture witnessed the appearance of works bearing the unmistakable mark of Western architectural style. Emperor Khai Dinh, the pioneer monarch in applying new construction materials imported from the West, such as cement, steel, and ceramics, created An Dinh Palace - a majestic Neoclassical architectural work reminiscent of the beauty of European castles. Since the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh (1916-1925) and his successor Bao Dai (1926-1945), Hue royal architecture witnessed the appearance of works bearing the unmistakable mark of Western architectural style. Emperor Khai Dinh, the pioneer monarch in applying new construction materials imported from the West, such as cement, steel, and ceramics, created An Dinh Palace - a majestic Neoclassical architectural work reminiscent of the beauty of European castles.

1.2.2. Western elements in decorative arts

The smooth combination of Western and local traditional elements creates the identity of the decorative art of the Khai Dinh period. These characteristics are formed through two main approaches. First, Western models are absorbed and skillfully transformed, integrating with the traditional creative spirit. Second, artisans use Western creative techniques to express decorative motifs with an Eastern solid identity. These two creative directions have contributed to creating a new and unique appearance of the decorative art of An Dinh Palace.

1.2.3 Transforming Western Style into Traditional Style

Khai Tuong Buiding, which was started as soon as Emperor Khai Dinh ascended the throne, clearly demonstrates the absorption and transformation of Western architectural styles based on the traditional art of the Hue royal court. At first glance, Khai Tuong Lau easily creates the impression of purely Western architecture,

with design and decoration languages, from the layout of interior and exterior spaces to carved motifs, all following Western models.

However, with a deeper study of the structure and decorative art details of Khai Tuong Lau, we can recognize a unique and intentional hybrid. On the foundation of Western architecture, the Khai Tuong Building's beauty of royal culture is creatively expressed through elements of Indigenous cultural concepts, creating a modern mark that contains traditional quintessence.

In addition, the decorative art at An Dinh Palace has created a unique feature by combining the quintessence of Western architecture and traditional art elements. The royal motifs are cleverly integrated into the foreign architecture, creating a space that is both modern and exudes pure Vietnamese beauty. This combination is even more impressive when the Nguyen Dynasty royal family regulations are applied by selecting themes and motifs typical of the Hue royal court. Thanks to that, the overall architecture exudes a unified look, bearing a solid imprint of Indigenous culture. With Neoclassical architecture, An Dinh Palace focuses on decorative details such as sophisticated moldings on walls and ceilings, elaborate decorative patterns, and classical Greek columns. Details such as stair handrails, chandeliers, flooring materials, and furniture all bear the typical imprint of Europe. In addition, the subtle blend of pure Western decorative style and traditional royal motifs revealed the artistic understanding and refined aesthetic taste of Emperor Khai Dinh and talented artisans. (Figure 183)

The Khai Tuong Building, which has Baroque decoration, is a typical example of this combination. The usual beauty of the Baroque style enhances the luxury and splendor, expressing the authority of a palace for the Emperor. In addition, the idea of designing furniture in the style of Henri II, Louis - France, suitable for the style of the building, is also subtly noticed here. The hybrid is clearly shown through the furniture used in daily life, with decorative details inspired by royal themes. Cuu Tu Dai Theater is another example of the sophisticated application of Western styles in royal architecture. The theater's exterior appears to be a massive, imposing structure built with cement and steel in the Western style. However, the interior is filled with Eastern symbols, with sophisticated motifs inlaid with porcelain, reaching the peak of art during the Khai Dinh period. Each painting, each relief, is like a colorful work of art, made from thousands of pieces of porcelain and colored glass, sparkling brightly, creating a modern space and imbued with traditional cultural identity. (Figure 184) The unique combination of Eastern and Western decorative styles creates a harmonious layout without hybrid features. Researcher Nguyen Huu Thong has made a subtle assessment: the skillful arrangement of Western decorative motifs interspersed with traditional Eastern styles has made modern objects "sink" into the conventional decorative space. As the author Nguyen Huu Thong said, they "peacefully exist in everyday life with their own space." (Thong, Hue Fine Arts from the perspective of meaning and decorative symbols, 2001)



Figure 178 The staircase architecture is in Neoclassical style, reminiscent of European castles. The baluster details are like vases. Decorative hats and classical floral motifs bearing the Hue royal court decoration mark. Source: Nguyen Phong

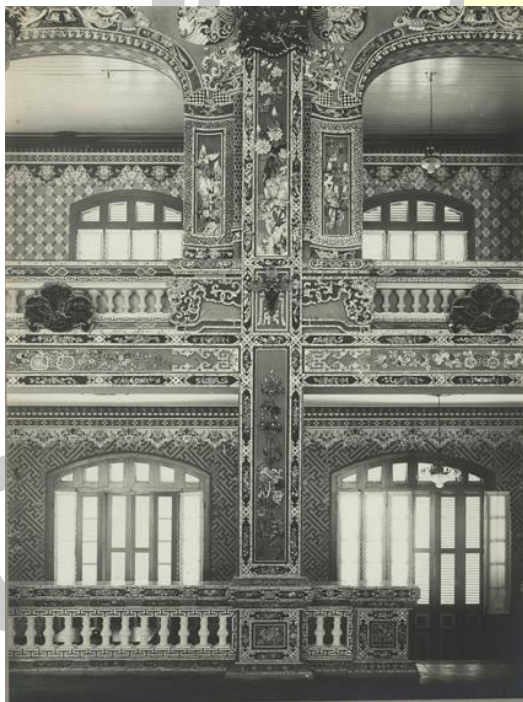


Figure 179 Cuu Tu Dai Theatre - The beauty of the royal court on a modern architectural background. Source: manhhai

1.2.4 Using Western mural painting techniques to express traditional motifs

It can be seen that, in addition to its unique, magnificent, and sophisticated architecture influenced by Western art, the Khai Tuong Building in An Dinh Palace is also a rather lavish and majestic architectural work. With a total area of nearly 3,610 square meters, the walls and ceilings of the Khai Tuong Building are covered with beautiful frescoes created by talented royal painters according to the ideas of Emperor Khai Dinh. This fresco system, spanning three building floors, was painted using the Secco technique, using paint on dry mortar. Paintings utilizing organic binders are called secco (meaning 'dry' in Italian). (Aoki S, Taniguchi Y, Rickerby S, Mori M, Kijima T, Bomin S, Kirino F. (Eds.), 2021)

The paint was made from raw resin and covered with glossy varnish. The painting techniques and materials at that time were groundbreaking and different from traditional Vietnamese art. The artisans skillfully combined murals and decorative reliefs. Instead of importing European silk wallpaper, hand-painted wallpaper was chosen to suit Hue's hot and humid climate, especially during the rainy season. The six murals in the Khai Tuong Building are unique highlights, with sophisticated strokes influenced by European style but depicting Vietnamese landscapes.

Researchers consider these paintings to be the first mural art in Vietnam. It bears the personal mark of the talented Emperor. Not only are they excellent works of art, but they also affirm the superior artistic thinking of this Emperor compared to previous emperors of the Nguyen Dynasty. (Figure 158)

In addition to the recognized artistic value, the murals in the rooms of the Khai Tuong Building also demonstrate sophisticated royal decoration techniques; the artisans have turned the walls into emotional works of art. Each room is decorated with its own color scheme and motifs, reflecting the meticulousness of the layout design, the understanding of the functions of the spaces, and special attention to the psychological suitability and age of each royal family member. (Figure 185)

On the second floor, the place for worship, the swastika motifs with strong Buddhist cultural features are used intentionally. In addition, the Chinese hieroglyphs arranged in the wish "Long life of a hundred years" are arranged in harmony with the royal eight treasures motifs, like a spiritual prayer to the world of Gods and Buddhas to grant a long, fulfilling, and prosperous life. (Figure 186)

This is a unique meeting between Western art and Vietnamese tradition, between form and content. The richness and diversity of decorative motifs and decorative color systems here are rare in the interiors of ancient castles in Europe and ancient architectural works in Vietnam, and they can almost only be found in An Dinh Palace.



Figure 180 The Neoclassical beauty exudes from the interior space of the Khai Tuong Building. Where the walls bear the mark of the intersection between traditional Vietnamese decorative art and European wallpaper, this unique combination has created an entirely new style, expressed through the distinct decorative motifs in each room. Source: Researcher



Figure 181 Chinese hieroglyphic motifs with congratulatory meanings decorate the wallpaper form using Western mural techniques on the 2nd floor of the Khai Tuong Building. Source: Researcher

1.2.5. Western elements in materials and colors

The primary material is the most unmistakable evidence of Western elements' presence in An Dinh Palace's decorative art. One of the unique features of the decorative art here is the art of porcelain mosaic. Typical examples are the main gate of the palace, Trung Lap Pavilion, and Cuu Tu Dai Theater. Porcelain, colored glass, and clear glass imported from France, China, and Japan can be seen. These materials are combined with antique porcelain, which is available to form the surface of each decorative design. The combination of these two groups of Eastern and Western materials makes each porcelain mosaic decoration on the architectural works at An Dinh Palace have the solemnity of ancient porcelain and the brilliant sparkle of porcelain and colored glass, creating a balance and harmony in tone. (Figure 187, 188) As author Chu Quang Tru commented: "The artisan has taken advantage of the enamel color and pattern color of the porcelain pieces, with transparent colored glass, creating a contrast between the deep, hard and the shiny, clear, and enriched by the reflection back and forth, making the shapes beautiful in lines and blocks even more beautiful in color." (Nguyen Tien Canh (editor), Nguyen Du Chi, Tran Lam Bien, Chu Quang Tru, 1992, p7-15)

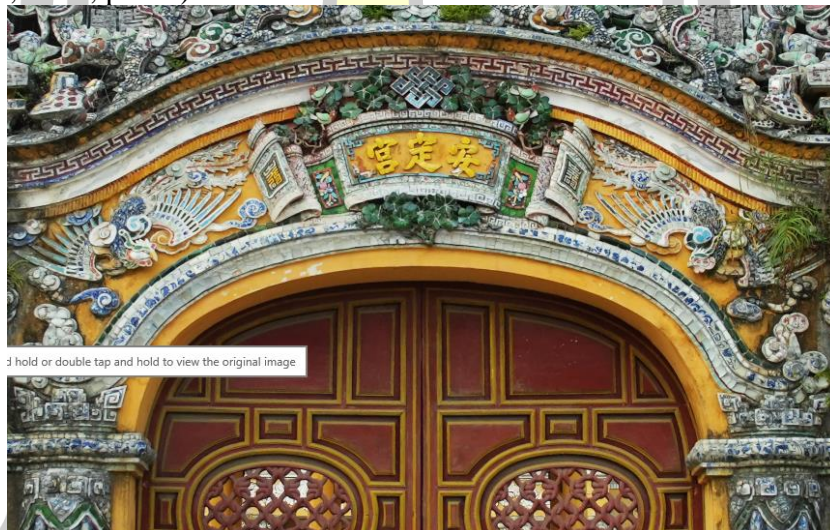


Figure 182 The subtle combination of the deep colors of ancient oriental ceramics and the brilliant colors of imported European glass in the art of porcelain mosaics created the splendid and noble beauty of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture.

Source: Researcher

พหุ ม ประทีป ชีวะ



Figure 183 The art of ceramic color coordination is also inspired by the Five Elements: Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth. Combining hot and cold, dark and light colors creates harmony and brilliance. Source: Researcher



Figure 184 The mural motifs were painted from Western materials
Source: Researcher

1.3 Unique Creativity

The themes in traditional Hue royal decoration are considered to lack diversity, even monotonous. However, the system of decorative designs at An Dinh Palace demonstrates the researcher's thesis about outstanding creativity. The motifs are designed with a unique and sophisticated spirit, reaching the highest level of sophistication.

In particular, the work shows the skillful arrangement of traditional motifs, creating clusters of motifs and unique background motifs in the Baroque style. Although the motifs have a solid European feel at first glance, when analyzed more deeply, people realize the harmonious combination of traditional spirit with the strict regulations of the Nguyen Dynasty royal decoration. (Figure 190, 191) As Tran Thanh Nam commented, "The constraints of the theme challenged the creative thinking of the artisans; the limitations of the content became a lever for the exploration of new forms of expression." (Nam T. T., *Decorative sculpture on Imperial Citadel architecture*, PhD thesis in Art, 2018, p.138).

In addition to creating diverse forms of expression of the same theme, the Decorative Arts here possess unique and distinct techniques.

Creativity is expressed in the arrangement of different architectural styles from East to West (Eastern-style pavilions, Western architecture), interspersed but still creating an overall space that is unified in architectural style. For example, the baluster on the Trung Lap Pavillon railing is a detail that connects with the European style of the Khai Tuong Building. This is considered a transitional buffer factor from traditional to modern. Along with that, in the interior, the large spaces of Western architecture are transformed into traditional decorative spaces suitable for the locality and status of the owner of the building. Hidden inside is a system of aesthetic concepts of the era. These works express the thinking about space and require the performer's creativity, headed by Emperor Khai Dinh.

Creativity is also expressed through the hybridization of new decorative styles, especially Western styles, and their "transformation" into familiar images of traditional decoration or the expression of different shapes of the same decorative style. (Figure 192)



Figure 185 The Lily of the Valley pattern has a French cultural influence combined with the traditional Vietnamese lotus petal pattern, creating an overall harmony of a decorative door frame.

Source: Researcher



Figure 186 Combining the pattern of Mugwort leaves, hieroglyphs "Tho (longevity)" of the traditional decoration of the Nguyen Dynasty royal court, and the Lily of the Valley of the West creates a unique pattern in the Baroque style.

Source: Researcher



Figure 187 Indigenous decorative details blend into Western-style Pillars.

Source: Researcher

Part 2 Cultural and artistic value

2.1. Cultural values

The An Dinh Palace was built in the context of the East-West cultural exchange in early 20th century Vietnam. It is a unique architectural work, symbolizing the Vietnamese people's spirit of ingenious adaptation. In the context of the country facing external challenges from political relations with France and internal fluctuations that determined the survival of the monarchy, Emperor Khai Dinh demonstrated the spirit of preserving identity and openness to new features through bold actions and a different vision that contributed to creating new aesthetic works, leaving a mark on the country's art history. It can be seen that creativity in aesthetic thinking always goes hand in hand with cultural thinking expressed through the decorative art of the Khai Dinh period. The selective and harmonious combination of traditional Vietnamese motifs such as the Eight Treasures, Seal script, lotus, apricot blossoms, and mugwort leaves with typical European motifs such as roses, grape leaves, angels, vases, and medals demonstrates the artist's unique talent and artistic thinking, and also reflects the aesthetic thinking of Emperor Khai Dinh. The idea of filtering, inheriting, creating, and developing on the foundation of traditional Vietnamese fine arts, especially Hue royal art, has formed a distinct and unique decorative style, bearing the mark of the times. Therefore, decorative art during the Khai Dinh period is a particular topic that needs to be carefully studied to understand visual arts development during this period. (Thong, Hue Fine Arts from the perspective of meaning and decorative symbols, 2001)

It can be seen that the decorative themes at An Dinh Palace are directly influenced by Eastern ideology, culture, and philosophy. The image of five pearls on the roof of the main gate symbolizes the five elements. According to ancient Eastern philosophy, the five essential elements of the universe are linked to mutual generation and mutual inhibition, creating balance and harmony. The convergence of the five elements is considered a manifestation of perfection and sustainability and, at the same time, shows harmony with the natural laws of the universe. (Huyen, 2024). The decoration of five pearls at An Dinh Palace with such meaning shows the desire for the palace to last forever, reflecting the thinking and cultural values of the ancients.

As an emperor's palace, the symbols of authority emanate from every detail, containing profound messages expressed through the image of majestic dragons in the most critical position of the An Dinh Palace architecture. Instead of the traditional posture, the dragons often face the sun, the moon, or the sacred vase; the dragons at An Dinh Palace fly in all four directions on the two roofs of the Trung Lap communal house. Is this a hidden meaning of the Emperor's wish to restore power and re-establish the country in the context of the country losing its territorial rights? Or is the image of the Dragon on the top of the main gate, not facing the pearl, a symbol of the dream of national renewal instead of passively waiting for the nation's longevity, happiness, and peace? Regardless, the dragons at An Dinh Palace are evidence of a complex mind, containing both the aspirations and worries of Emperor Khai Dinh.

With the system of character themes, the Eight Immortals are eight immortal gods in Chinese legends that originated from Taoism. According to legend, they are from the legendary fairyland of Mount Penglai, which has eight sacred stone caves. They are symbols of happiness and prosperity. The image of the Eight Immortals is

present in art, bringing luck and peace to every family. Each immortal's costumes and hand-held items are characteristic, showing their magic and power. Although rarely appearing in the Nguyen Dynasty's architecture, the Eight Immortals statue at An Dinh Palace is solemnly placed in a horizontal row in front of the Khai Tuong Building. (Figure 193) The Eight Immortals represent the noble aspiration for a life of dedication, enjoyment, leisure, and supernatural actions to help people, demonstrating noble qualities. In addition, the Eight Immortals are also guardian gods in feng shui. They are believed to be the guardian gods of the eight directions, so recreating them in the house in some form always brings good things. They are believed to bring longevity, fortune, health, money, and fame to those who display them.



Figure 188 The Eight Immortals statue on a pedestal about 160cm high is placed in front of the Khai Tuong pavilion facing the main gate. Source: *GCREP*

The main gate is the appearance of two gods. This unique image only appears at An Dinh Palace and is not found in other royal architectural works of the Nguyen Dynasty. They are Qin Shubao and Yuchi Gong. These are the two gate gods. The story takes place in China during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD). The story tells of a Tang emperor who, after a nightmare of being assassinated, asked two brave generals to take turns guarding the palace gate all night long. Their devotion helped the Emperor sleep peacefully, and his fear disappeared. To remember the merits of the two generals, the Emperor ordered their portraits to be painted and hung on both sides of the bedroom door. Since then, people have believed that hanging pictures of the gods will bring peaceful sleep, ward off evil spirits, and bring good luck.

This culture was introduced to Vietnam and applied to the gates of temples, pagodas, palaces, and private homes. The image of two gods guarding the door is transformed depending on the nature of each construction. For example, people often see the picture of Mr. "Thien" (friendly face) and Mr. "Ac" (fierce face) guarding the temple gate. At the same time, at private homes and mansions, this image is usually shown through two mandarins in court dress, the one on the right hand, the west side of the gate, holding a lingzhi mushroom, the one on the left hand, the east side of the gate, holding a Ruyi scepter. The two men have a page carrying a crane feather fan standing in attendance. (Figure 194) In addition, the reliefs realistically depict the

activities of ancient Confucian scholars, which also reflect the multidimensional aspirations of feudal society in East Asia.

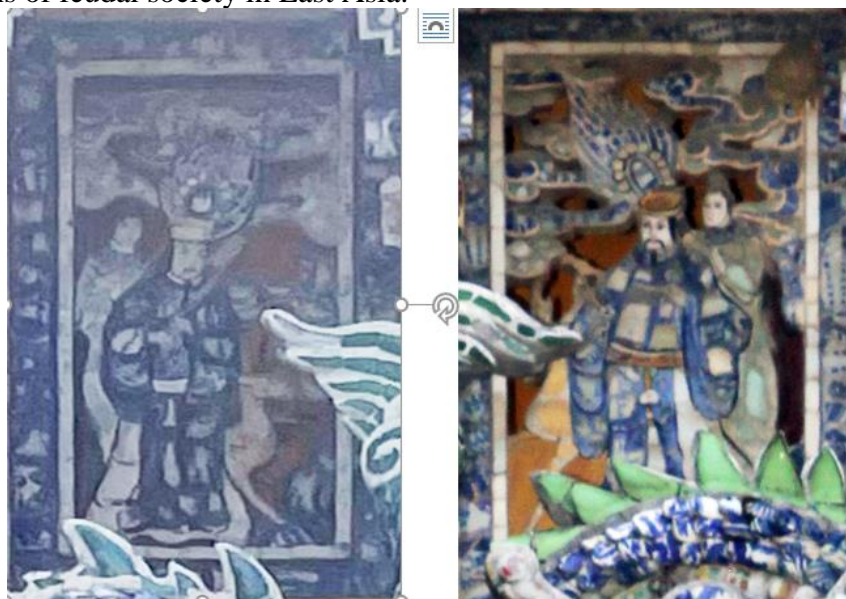


Figure 189 The god keeps the door on the west and the east side of the main gate.

Source: Researcher

In the botanical theme system, the familiar themes of the Hue Royal Court, such as the Four Seasons - Mai, Lan, Cuc, Truc - represent elegance and nobility, the eight types of fruit symbolize longevity, luck, warmth, and prosperity, each detail is like an affirmation of the balance between humans and nature. These motifs are like a symphony of human life blending with the vast universe, containing practical aspirations for a peaceful and prosperous life. The decorative plant symbols at An Dinh Palace are art and include people's aspirations about human life. Flowers, branches, leaves, and fruits are not simply decorative details but symbols containing subtle meanings about the culture and philosophy of each land. The architecture of An Dinh Palace is decorated with a colorful world of plants as an encouragement, urging people to strive for material desires to conquer more transcendent spiritual values. For example, the lotus, the elegant flower symbol of Vietnam - contains noble moral and spiritual values. In Buddhism, the lotus symbolizes the journey of enlightenment, cultivating the soul toward enlightenment and liberation. But in folklore, the lotus represents summer, fertility, nurturing hope, and abundant vitality. The chrysanthemum, with its graceful and elegant beauty, represents elegance and nobility; in Vietnamese culture, the chrysanthemum is also a symbol of the sun and an image representing the Emperor, so the chrysanthemum often appears in a solemn position in ancient architecture. In general, plants occupy an essential position in the material and spiritual life of the Vietnamese people. They accompany people through every step, every ups and downs. Humans are born from the earth, grow up thanks to plants, and finally return to the earth. The ancient belief in tree worship demonstrates the close relationship between humans and nature. Plants are considered a bridge between heaven and earth, where sacred souls are hidden.

Decorative plants at An Dinh Palace have their message, like stories told in the language of nature. From the Bodhi leaf, a symbol of enlightenment and wisdom, leading to enlightenment, to lemon flowers and asterisks - symbolizing light, elegance, and closeness. Lotus flowers and buds symbolize purity, strength, and honesty associated with noble human qualities. Meanwhile, the elegant peony, representing nobility and beauty, glorifies architecture's beauty. Mugwort leaves symbolize peace, laurel wreaths symbolize glory, and acanthus leaves mean nobility. Each type of grass chosen as a decorative motif carries its message. They are not only knowledge and art but also profound messages, expressing the aspirations and understanding of nature of ancient people. Or they are images of climbing plants and flowers skillfully combined, creating an elegant beauty containing something in life. The winding leaves symbolize longevity, bringing happiness. Flowers and grass are tied into bundles, entwined as if describing the binding rope and sacred feelings between family members.

It can be seen that most of the symbols of plants, trees, and decorative flowers that are popular in the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture can be found in the An Dinh Palace architectural complex. All these species are present in An Dinh Palace, representing a fulfilling life for the Emperor.

A unique feature of An Dinh Palace is the appearance of the sacred vase. This familiar image only appears in Hue's royal architecture, which differs from other countries with the same culture. At An Dinh Palace, on the rooftop, the column top, the sacred vase is present with high density; rarely are any royal works decorated so much. (Figure 195)

During this period, Vietnamese culture was deeply influenced by the Three Teachings of the Same Origin. Therefore, the image of the sacred vase has multidimensional meanings. According to the Taoist perspective, the vase symbolizes the attraction of the spiritual energy of heaven and earth, bringing blessings to the land where it is present. According to Confucianism, because Vietnam has an agricultural economic foundation, valuing the harmony of nature, the sacred vase combined with the image of the Dragon is considered a symbol of the people's desire for favorable weather and wind. In Buddhist beliefs, the vase symbolizes the nectar of Bodhisattva Guanyin, meaning to save the suffering and purify the impurities of people immersed in ignorance, greed, and lust. For each decorative motif in An Dinh Palace, in addition to the researcher understanding the original meaning, when analyzing, it is necessary to put it about the specific decorative space, in the case of the sacred vase appearing on top of the pillars of the main gate of An Dinh Palace to receive the spirit of heaven and earth, so it is called the Tai Chi vase, meaning to pray for a long life, luck and full of blessings.

The images of stupas decorated in the highest position in the architectural complex of An Dinh Palace are completely consistent with the long-standing Buddhist cultural tradition of the Vietnamese people. (Figure 196) According to researcher Phan Cam Thuong, the stupa is a noble symbol of Buddhism, not only expressing the respect of a Buddhist nation but also demonstrating the aspiration for upward mobility, affirming the authoritative position of the Buddha King. There, the idea of ultimate enlightenment is depicted, comparable to the vastness of heaven, earth, and the universe. Therefore, the stupa is likened to a miniature universe containing the essence of Buddhist philosophy. In addition, enlightenment is also the

core meaning of stupa. Like humans, high or low stupa is a manifestation of consciousness. When a person's mind is upward, the stupa is soaring; conversely, when the soul is low, the stupa also becomes humble. However, whether high or low, stupa still exists among the five elements, not entangled in the cycle of life. Those with spiritual aspirations can reach high to the sky, but if not, they will only drag on in the vortex of ordinary life, wasting their lives, as the poet Tran Thai Ton once warned. (Thuong, 2024). This is consistent with the observation of researcher Nguyen Huu Thong: "Objects in Nguyen Dynasty decoration are not simply static objects, not motionless to the user's perception, not silent in unconsciously expressing the meaning of fate." It has gone through a silent attachment and dialogue with the creator and the owner's aspirations." (Thong, Nguyen Fine Arts, 2019)



Figure 190 There are nine sacred vases in the architecture of An Dinh Palace, which are associated with the number 9, symbolizing the Emperor. Source: Researcher

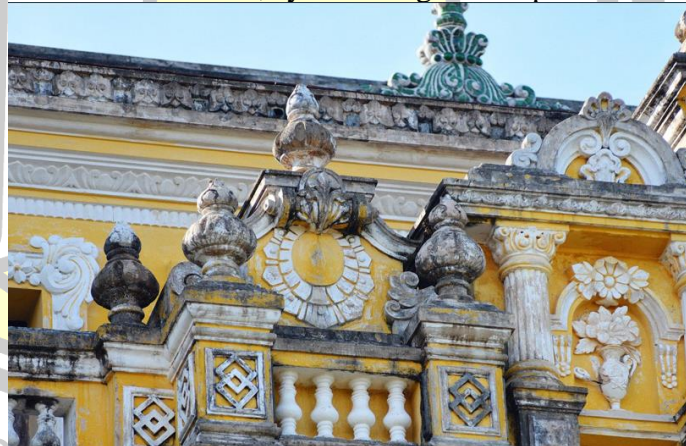


Figure 191 Mootip of Stupas at the highest position in the Khai Tuong building.

Source: Researcher

A type of epigraphic theme was applied in the decoration at the Khai Tuong Building, which also carries hidden values with profound meanings. Going from the inside out, on the majestic board in front of the gate, the two words "Cuu Nhu" are delicately carved, containing a profound blessing. (Figure 197) The origin of this blessing comes from the "Kinh Thi" (an anonymous anthology of Chinese poetry, one of the five Confucian classics), which has an exceptional meaning. Accordingly, heaven blesses the person (king); everything is prosperous, eternal like a mountain, like a hill, like a mountainside, like a large pile, like a vast river, increasingly prosperous, like the

moon shining forever, like the radiant sun, like the sturdy, unchanging Nam Son mountain, like the evergreen pine and cypress trees, eternal forever.



Figure 192 The two Chinese characters, "Cuu Nhu," are inlaid with prominent porcelain on the main gate. Source: Researcher

The Swastika symbol is familiar throughout the Asian and European world and is used in decoration and expressing cultural exchange. From religious meanings to national spirit, the Swastika bears a distinct mark in each civilization. In Indochina architecture, the Swastika is a clear affirmation of the profound influence of Vietnamese Buddhism. It can be seen that the traditional decorative motifs of the Hue royal court account for the majority, mixed with some Western motifs, creating diversity and uniqueness for the architecture here.

In the Emperor's palace, the appearance of the four sacred animals: Dragon, unicorn, turtle, and phoenix became the central motif with many different ways of expression. Typically, the dragon image at the main gate appears in many different styles, such as Two dragons worshipping "Longevity," two dragons playing with a pearl, and a Cloud dragon. The unique thing that is easy to recognize is that only An Dinh Palace has the motif of Two dragons worshipping Tho. This pair of dragons does not worship the sun but the moon. The explanation for this argument is based on the Book of Changes: the Dragon belongs to Yang, and the moon belongs to Yin. The combination of Yin and Yang in the image of Two dragons worshipping Tho (circle-moon) manifests the Ly trigram, symbolizing convenience, stability, and achieving wishes. This profound meaning coincides with the idea of naming the Palace "An Dinh" by Emperor Khai Dinh. This is like a dream of a peaceful and prosperous life for the royal family living here. In particular, the word "Tho" is placed in the center of the moon, emphasizing the desire for longevity, a significant prayer for the palace's owner.

With the same meaning, the image of a turtle is also arranged in front of the Dragon's tail. Two phoenixes spread their wings, looking down at the arched door, according to Eastern legend, symbolizing the beauty and virtue of women. Still, in this position, they have a more noble meaning: the desire for a peaceful life, a peaceful dynasty, and the wisdom of the Emperor. Similar to the meaning of the unicorn symbol, symbolizing a peaceful country, signaling the birth of a saint.

The royal culture is clearly shown on the 3rd floor of Khai Tuong, the place of worship and residence of Queen Mother Tu Cung, with frescoes decorated with hieroglyphic Chinese motifs with the content of the wish reserved only for the royal

family "Van Tho Vo Cuong" (Long life of a hundred years) and interspersed with the image of Bat Bao implying the wish for a fulfilling and happy life.

Inside the sophisticated interior of the Cuu Tu Dai theater are hidden profound metaphorical messages about life through familiar motifs often appearing in ancient relics with the spiritual concept of feudal dynasties in Vietnam. Here, on the large panels, the Four Seasons motif (Mai, Lan, Cuc, Truc) - the symbol of the four seasons, is decorated, expressing the rotation of time and the hope and dream of a prosperous life, while the Eight Treasures, with its meaning gradually spreading to all things related to wisdom and happiness in life.

At An Dinh Palace, Western motifs such as bunches of grapes, flowers, vases, and winged angels are also cleverly interspersed with traditional Eastern motifs, blending perfectly as if they belonged together. Viewers cannot detect where the connection is between tradition and modernity, between the East and the West.

The decorative art at An Dinh Palace reflects upward thinking, wishing for a comprehensive human life in terms of material and spiritual. (Table 7) This is like a small wish of Emperor Khai Dinh when "waiting for the right time" day by day" in a turbulent historical context.

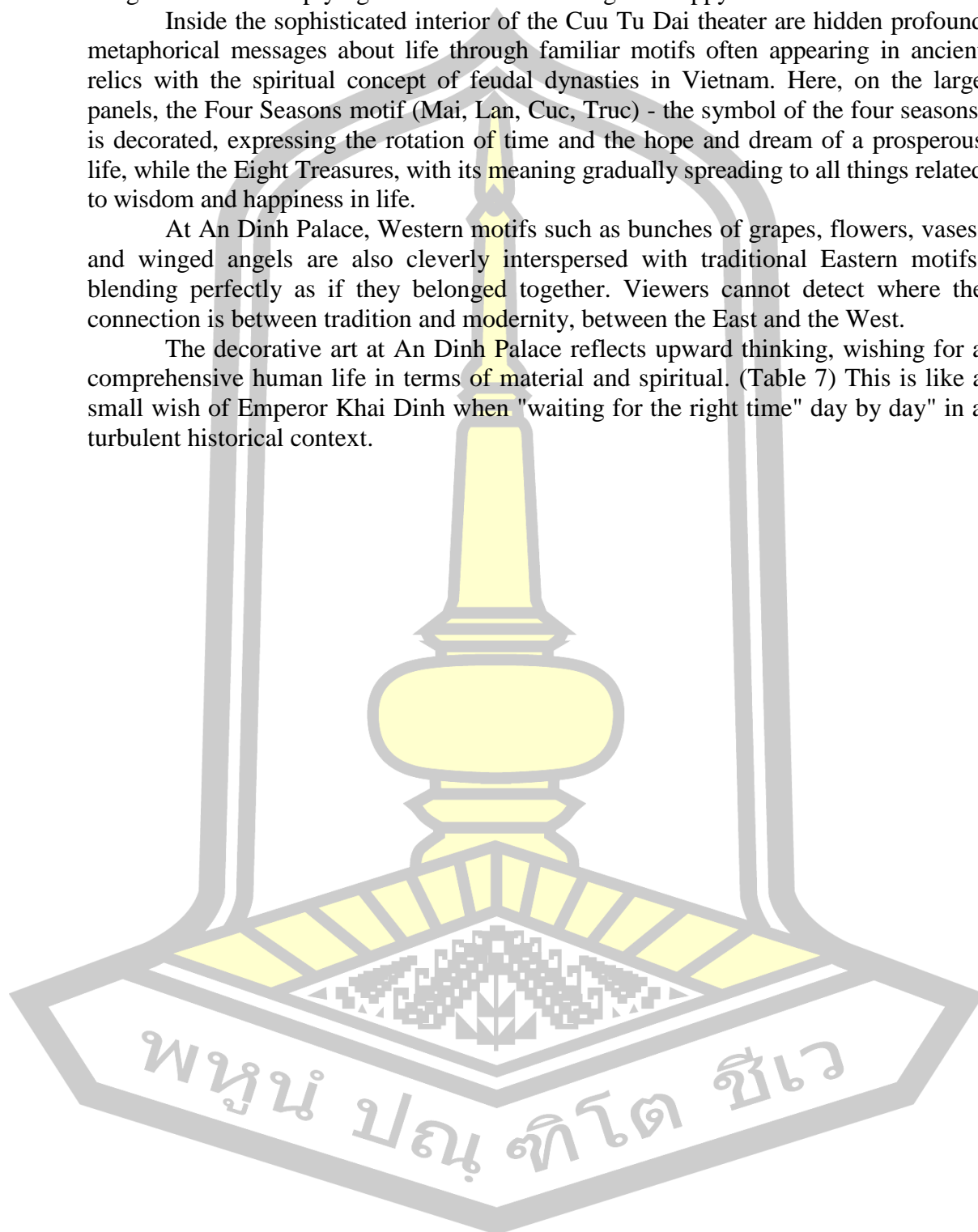















Table 9 Table of decorative motifs and their cultural manifestations in the An Dinh Palace architectural complex. Source: Researcher

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
1	Universe - nature	Pearl	Symbol of the universe	Main gate
	 			
2	Animal (Four sacred animals)	Dragon	The symbol for the Emperor	Main Gate Trung Lap Pavillon Cuu Tu Dai Theater
	    			
2	Animal (Four sacred animals)	Two dragons facing the moon	Harmony of heaven and earth, Yin and Yang, symbol of the Son of Heaven, royal power	Main Gate

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
2	Animal (Four sacred animals)	Tiger Talisman (Horizontal Dragon)	Power, dynasty longevity, eternity	Main Gate Cuu Tu Dai Theater
				
2	Animal (Four sacred animals)	Unicorn	Peaceful and lasting dynasty with a wise Emperor Lynn playing with a ball, Luck, peace	Main Gate Cuu Tu Dai Theater
				

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
2	Animal (Four sacred animals)	Turtle	The harmony of yin and yang, sustainability, longevity. The turtle carrying the Eight Trigrams means a prosperous and happy life.	Main Gate Trung Lap Pavillon Cuu Tu Dai Theater
				
2	Animal (Four sacred animals)	Phoenix	Desire for a peaceful life, a peaceful dynasty	Main Gate
				

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No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
2	Animal (Eight sacred animals)	Lion	Guardian of the Palace	Main Gate
				
2	Animal (Eight sacred animals)	Fish	Wealth and fulfillment	Cuu Tu Dai Theater
				
2	Animal (Eight sacred animals)	Crane	Longevity is a good omen	Cuu Tu Dai Theater
				

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
2	Animal (Eight sacred animals)	Bat	Happiness and Longevity	Main Gate
				
2	Animal	Kingfisher	Beauty	Main gate
				
2	Animal	Butterfly	Longevity, joy	Khai Tuong Building
				



No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
3	Plants	Four seasons (Apricot blossom; Orchid, Chrysanthemum, Pine tree)	The desire for a noble, elegant life, the integration between people, nature, and the universe	Cuu Tu Dai Theater
				
3	Plants	Apricot blossom	longevity, symbolizing a new beginning	Khai Tuong Building

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
3	Plants	Chrysanthemum	The symbol of the sun - the Emperor Represents the wish for longevity, endurance, joy, fulfillment, and well-being	Khai Tuong Building
				
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	Orange	Fertility, vigor	Main Gate Trung Lap Pavillon

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	Buddha's hand	Rich, prosperous, and wealthy	Trung Lap Pavillon
				
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	Custard apple	Crowded, well-fed, with many children	Main Gate Trung Lap Pavillon
				




No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	Pomegranate	Crowded, well-fed, with many children	Main Gate Trung Lap Pavillon
				
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	Plum	Luck	Trung Lap Pavillon
				
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	Peach	Longevity, immortality	Main Gate
				

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No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	Gourd	Fullness, Fertility	Trung Lap Pavillon
				
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	Pear	Success, advancement	Main Gate
				
3	Plants (Eight auspicious fruits)	The lotus flower, lotus leaf	Morality: pure, unstained, unpolluted by worldly dust; steadfastness, prosperity, many children	Main Gate Trung Lap Pavillon Khai Tuong Building



No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
3	Plants	Bodhi leaves	Enlightenment	Trung Lap Pavillon Khai Tuong Building
				




No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
3	Plants	Artemisia leaves	Happy, peaceful, prosperous	Khai Tuong Building
				
				
3	Plants	Lemon blossom	Elegance, intimacy	Khai Tuong Building
				



No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
3	Plants	Pear Flower	The Transience of Life	Khai Tuong Building
				
3	Plants	Orchid	Orchids form a chain, symbolizing reunion and many children.	Khai Tuong Building
				
3	Plants	Hoa Đào	The Transience of Life	Khai Tuong Building Trung Lap Pavillon
				


No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
3	Plants (European origin)	Acanthus leaves	Nobility	Khai Tuong Building
				
3	Plants (European origin)	Lily of valley	Happiness	Khai Tuong Building Main gate
				



No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
3	Plants (European origin)	Rose	Happiness	Khai Tuong Building
3	Plants (European origin)	Grape Bunch, Grape Leaves	Crowdedness Gathering	Khai Tuong Building




No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
3	Plants (European origin)	Purple Hibiscus	Royal	Khai Tuong Building
				
3	Plants (European origin)	Bay Leaf	Luck Prosperity	Khai Tuong Building

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
3	Plants (European origin)	Protea cynaroides	Royal	Khai Tuong Building
				
3	Plants (European origin)	Four leaf clover	Luck, Happiness	Main gate Khai Tuong Building
				

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
3	Plants	Peony	Wealthy	Khai Tuong Building
				
3	Plants	Persimmon Flower	Decorative pattern	Khai Tuong Building
				
4	Objects (Eight Treasures)	Pipa or Zither; Fan, Book; Brush; Flower basket; Rhinoceros horn; Gourds	Happy life, full life	Trung Lap Pavillon Khai Tuong Building

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
4	Objects	Stupa	Enlightenment and Peace	Khai Tuong Building
				



No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
4	Objects	Gourds	Sacred Vase Fertility Survival	Main gate Trung Lap Pavillon
				
4	Objects	Double circle	Fulfillment	Main gate
				
4	Objects	Flower vase	Peace and lasting harmony	Khai Tuong Building

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
4	Objects	Order of The Dragon of Annam “Khai Dinh emperor”	Symbol of royalty	Khai Tuong Building
				
4	Objects	Bell chime	Reward Item Luck, Great Fortune	Khai Tuong Building
				

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No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
5	Figures (Eight Immortals)	Eight Immortals	Luck and prosperity, bringing peace and happiness	Khai Tuong Building
				
5	Figures	Door Guardian	Keep evil forces from entering the home	Main gate
				

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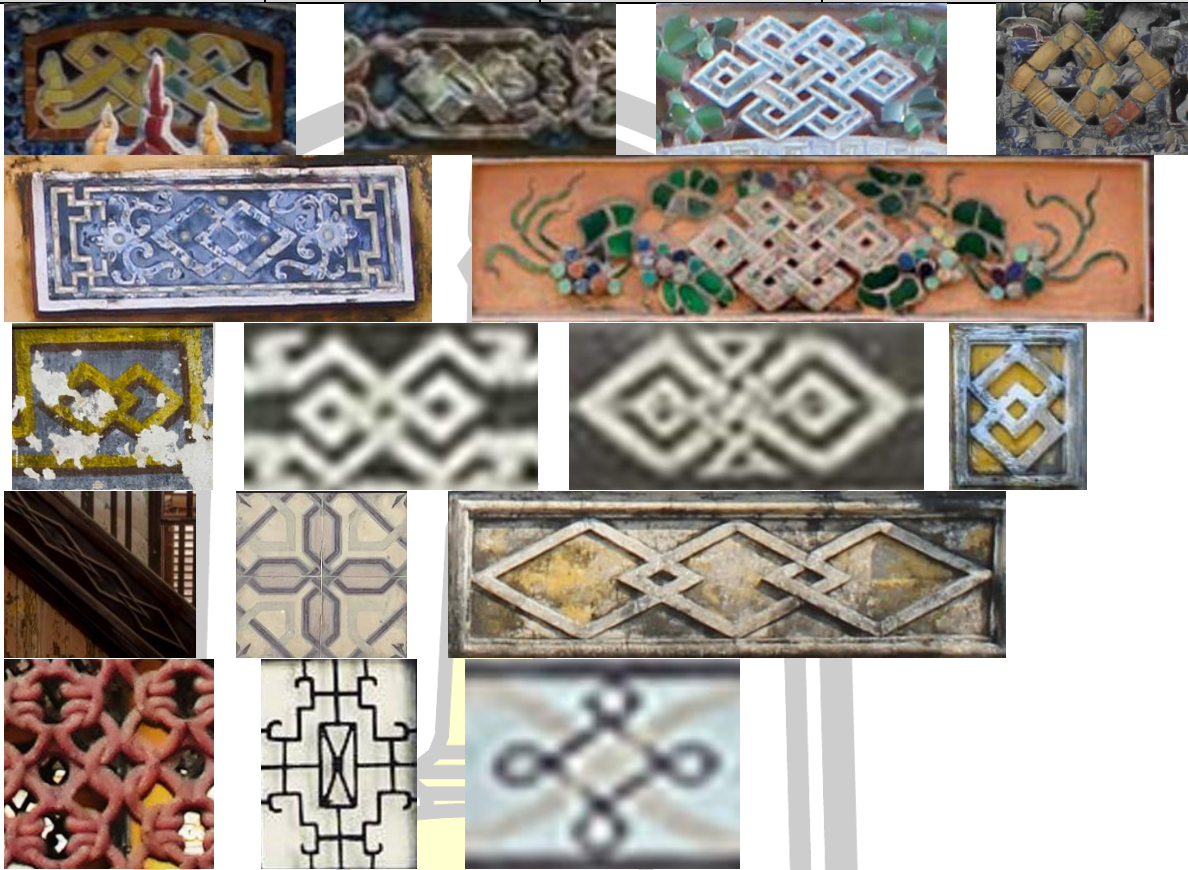
No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
5	Figures	Confucian scholar	Life of Confucian scholars in the past	Main gate
				
5	Figures (European origin)	Angel	Purity and nobility	Khai Tuong Building
				



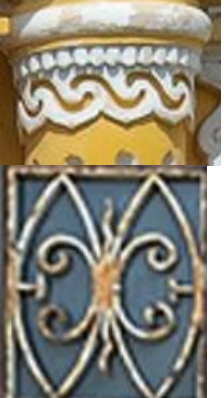
No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
6	Hieroglyphics	Swastika 萬	Goodness	Khai Tuong Building Cuu Tu Dai Theather
	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>			
6	Hieroglyphics	Longevity	Long life wishes	Main Gate Trung Lap Pavilion, Khai Tuong Building Cuu Tu Dai Theatre
	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>			

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
6	Hieroglyphics	“Van Tho Vo Cuong”	Live long	Khai Tuong Building
	<div>     </div> <div> <p>疆 疆 無 無 壽 壽 萬 萬</p> </div>			
6	Hieroglyphics	Chữ Hỷ	Luck, joy	Khai Tuong Building
	<div>   </div>			
6	Hieroglyphics	“Tinh”	Clear mind	Khai Tuong Building
	<div>  </div>			

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
6	Hieroglyphics	“Phuc”	Blessing	Khai Tuong Building
				
6	Hieroglyphics	“Hy Tho”	Happy and long life	Cuu Tu Dai Theatre
				
6	Hieroglyphics	“Van Tho”	Long life wishes	Cuu Tu Dai Theatre
	 			

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
6	Hieroglyphics	Chinese characters	Names of works, parallel sentences	Main gate Khai Tuong Building Trung Lap Pavilion
				
7	Auspicious symbol	Lucky knot	Longevity	Main Gate, Trung Lap Pavilion, Khai Tuong Building, Cuu Tu Dai Theatre

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
8	Geometric patterns	Mesh patterns with many different shapes, such as straight or slightly curved diamonds, hexagons, triangles, and rectangles	Decorative pattern	Main Gate, Trung Lap Pavilion, Khai Tuong Building Cuu Tu Dai Theatre

No.	TOPIC	MOTIF	MEANING	LOCATION APPEARANCE
				
				

2.2. Artistic value

According to Hegel (1770 - 1831), artistic beauty is the harmony between content and form. Content is the idea, and form is the easily perceived appearance, full of imagination. Sharing the same view with Hegel, Samuel Alexander, in his work "Beauty and Illusion," introduced the concept of "ephemeral" of artistic beauty. He believes that artistic beauty is the ability to convey things that do not exist or describe clearly. For example, a poem is not simply a description but reveals deep emotions and meanings. Therefore, a purely scientific description will lack this element.

Similarly, architecture, in addition to its function, is also a means of conveying information and telling stories about history and culture through the language of form and space. (Douglass, 2008). Based on the analytical views on aesthetics of Hegel and Samuel Alexander as a basis for evaluating the artistic value of An Dinh Palace. The above views have many similarities with the approach according to Semiology theory, including the expression (aesthetic structure) and the expressed (consciousness form). The artistic value of An Dinh Palace is affirmed through the following factors:

The An Dinh Palace strictly adheres to the characteristics of plastic arts. Each structure in the An Dinh Palace architectural complex adheres to the golden ratio principle - a characteristic of modern aesthetics. This is reflected in the harmony in the overall layout of each construction item. The structure's aesthetics are also

expressed through the sophistication in each detail and decorative material, which exudes splendid beauty. The choice of color scheme to express the delicate decorative details at the main gate is not only due to the natural color of the porcelain material but also the result of the skillful combination of porcelain pieces through the deft hands of the artisans.

In the color of porcelain mosaic, the material's natural beauty is combined by the artisan to create unique and creative color combinations. Similarly, the change of color tones from tasteful to warm and cool in each room of the Khai Tuong building is also carefully calculated, suitable for each space's function and the user's psychology, creating separate emotional levels for each room.

He An Dinh Palace cleverly utilizes Western architectural elements as a background for traditional art, especially ceramic mosaic art, to increase the aesthetic value of the architecture. By skillfully combining elements, An Dinh Palace has created an artistic space with a hidden Eastern character despite wearing a new architectural coat.

(1) Traditional techniques: Decorative art at An Dinh Palace forms a unique identity for the project. A project not only has cultural value but also meets the art standard. This shows the harmony between humanistic and aesthetic factors. These are two sides of an inseparable issue. At An Dinh Palace, in addition to choosing the appropriate decorative theme and language, the factor contributing to the sophisticated beauty cannot be mentioned without mentioning the skillful techniques of the artisans. Thanks to the skillful hands of the royal artisans, the appearance of An Dinh Palace is perfect. According to researcher Phan Thanh Binh at An Dinh Palace, the ceramic inlay technique creates unique, expressive characteristics, creating the impression of the royal style.

(2) Solutions suitable for natural conditions: Harmony with the landscape and overcoming the disadvantages of European architecture are easily seen here through the flexible application of architectural solutions of An Dinh Palace, such as the roof style changing according to the traditional roof, thick and load-bearing walls to help keep warm in winter, cool in summer, double-layer door system, glass door, and louvered doors to help circulate air and get natural light for the building, corridors are arranged inside for convenient movement on rainy days, etc. Demonstrating the sensitivity of adapting to the hot and humid climate and heavy rain of Hue, establishing the harmony between traditional architectural identity and modern architecture with its unique features. In addition, the building is built based on traditional feng shui principles, profoundly reflecting local people's spiritual life and cultural concepts.

(3) Ideological form: The architecture of An Dinh Palace, with its royal features, reflects the spirit and ideology of the Nguyen Dynasty aristocracy. Not simply a personal preference, Emperor Khai Dinh's absorption and transformation of the palace architecture demonstrates the Emperor's profound vision. He "understood that the absorption of French culture was a condition for the development of Annam" (M.R., 2012). The An Dinh Palace has demonstrated a spirit of harmony with the times while maintaining its traditional identity through decorative themes with highly expressive meaning, fully meeting the characteristics of the form and meaning of a royal palace. This shows that An Dinh Palace contributes to affirming traditional

cultural values and demonstrates the development process of Vietnamese architectural art in the cultural exchange period.

It can be seen that the architecture of An Dinh Palace converges all artistic elements. It is built based on solid principles of shaping. The palace's unique shape directly impacts the viewer's aesthetics, evoking profound meanings about traditional space, cosmic philosophy, social ideology, and Indigenous community culture. The An Dinh Palace is an architectural work and a work of art that synthesizes its beauty and ideological expressive value.

Hue art during Western cultural exchange from the late 19th century to the early 20th century was a hybrid between tradition and modernity. The An Dinh Palace reached the pinnacle of art, clearly depicting the imprint of the quintessence of indigenous culture that was preserved and promoted, creating a new and everlasting identity. The work is the starting brick to build an important milestone in modern Vietnamese architecture and fine arts history.

2.2.1. The An Dinh Palace - typical of the royal architecture of the Khai Dinh period

The An Dinh Palace, one of the monumental architectural works built under Khai Dinh's reign, clearly demonstrates the cultural exchange between East and West. Completed earlier than other works, An Dinh Palace marked the beginning of a new period in the history of Hue fine arts when Western influence began infiltrating traditional art's flow.

Emperor Khai Dinh skillfully received the quintessence of Western architecture creatively, not copying the original but selecting, transforming, and adapting to natural conditions and local culture, especially the dominant factors of the court regulations. He formed a new type of royal architecture, combining and exchanging Vietnamese architecture and Western architecture, expressed through his architectural work right after ascending the throne, An Dinh Palace. An Dinh Palace represents a unique spirit of cultural exchange. The subtle blend of the new and the old creates an impressive and unique architectural complex through techniques and decorative forms. This idea is similar to the article "Modern Vietnamese Painting" by Dr. Lam Vinh when analyzing the absorption of foreign quintessence in modern Vietnamese painting, which has similarities with the fine arts culture of the Nguyen Dynasty. He said: "The tradition of 'taking the past for the present, taking the outside for the inside' of the nation has been clearly demonstrated. Chinese and French paintings have been creatively absorbed, based on the foundation of Vietnamese plastic thinking." (Vinh, 2001)

Considered a "neo-classique" architectural work by French researcher L. Bezaci, An Dinh Palace is a harmonious combination of the traditional artistic values of the Nguyen Dynasty and the quintessence of Western art. This unique feature is clearly shown not only in the overall architecture but also in each decorative detail. The An Dinh Palace is a typical heritage of the development of Nguyen fine arts in Hue in the early 20th century. Each carving, decorative motif, and sophisticated porcelain inlay technique is a testament to the talent of contemporary Vietnamese artisans. The An Dinh Palace is an artistic masterpiece, the crystallization of the quintessence of Vietnamese architecture, decoration, painting, sculpture, and porcelain inlay art.

2.2.2. The Indigenous character of An Dinh Palace through visual arts

The An Dinh Palace, with its harmonious combination of Western architectural style and the quintessence of traditional Vietnamese architecture, has become a unique symbol of the construction art of the Khai Dinh period. The application of indigenous elements, delicately stylized, has created an architectural ensemble that is both modern and traditional, contributing to embellishing the architecture of the Nguyen Dynasty. One of the factors that make up the indigenous character of the project is the visual art expressed through the architectural appearance and the techniques of shaping the architecture. Architecture is a field of visual art. (Collier, 2022, p.93). The combination of beauty and practicality is the goal of elevating human life. Creating living space, architecture affirms itself through shapes, proportions, lines, rhythms, and styles. The diversity of architecture is clearly shown through each region and area, containing historical, cultural, natural, and religious imprints. From ancient times to the present, world architecture has undergone rich changes, creating unique architectural schools such as European architecture, which is different from Asian architecture, or the distinct difference between Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist architecture.

The architecture of An Dinh Palace is a subtle hybrid of French and Vietnamese architecture. The main gates and Trung Lap Pavillon are two projects that use traditional, solid royal architecture mixed with European architecture. However, the indigenous architectural elements are still prominent and easily recognizable. Khai Tuong building has the appearance of a European castle from the outside but has been transformed to suit the climate and culture of Vietnam. The highlight is the roof in the "Trung Thiem Diep Oc" style - the traditional roof style of Nguyen Dynasty royal architecture; this is the point that clearly shows the Indigenous character because, according to architect Nguyen Dinh Toan, "the roof is the primary representative of traditional Vietnamese architecture." (Toan, Natural factors and Indigenous cultural traditions in French colonial architecture in Vietnam, PhD thesis in engineering, 1998) With the shaping techniques in architecture, it is impossible not to mention the concepts related to painting because they are one of the factors that create the uniqueness of architectural decorative art. Based on the flat space of the walls, use the painting language, including lines, blocks, colors, and materials for decoration. Effectively utilize the light of the space to combine the flexibility of lines, along with the illusion of decorative details. The shaping power of painting contributes to expressing the rich and diverse thoughts and feelings of the owner of the architectural work.

The art of ceramic mosaic decoration has created an aesthetic mark for the architectural complex of An Dinh Palace. This is a consistent identifying feature in the architectural works of the Nguyen Dynasty. Viewers can find it applied in the decoration of traditional wooden architecture in the early stages until modern architecture was influenced by the West later. It can be said that the art of ceramic mosaic is like a special glue connecting tradition and modernity. During the Khai Dinh period, ceramic mosaic art peaked and became a mainstream trend in architectural decoration.

The works that Emperor Khai Dinh advocated and had the idea of renovating and building new ones all used this decorative technique, as a typical case is An Dinh Palace. This form of decoration has been named "Khai Dinh style" by Vietnamese art history researchers. The An Dinh Palace became even more special because of the

smooth blend of three elements: royal court, Western, and folk. This unique combination has formed a distinct architectural style quite different from the royal works built by the Nguyen Dynasty. At the main gate, Trung Lap Pavilion, and the interior of Cuu Tu Dai Theater, porcelain inlays stand out against the background of decorative motifs on traditional themes, strongly affirming the royal identity despite the influence of Western architecture. These characteristics are similar to the conclusion about the plastic arts of the Nguyen Dynasty by researcher Phan Thanh Binh. He believes that the plastic arts of the Nguyen Dynasty demonstrated the ability to absorb, transform, and preserve traditional artistic values. It is not only the inheritance of the quintessence of the past, but the art of this time also can create new values, contributing to preserving and developing the nation's cultural heritage, making it shine brightly to this day. (Binh, Plastic arts in the Nguyen Dynasty, values formed from regional cultural factors, 2020, p.67-73)

Part 3 The Importance and creative Spirit of An Dinh Palace to Vietnamese

Culture

3.1 The Importance of An Dinh Palace in the History of Vietnamese Fine Art

The presence of the French in Vietnam in the late 19th and early 20th centuries left a deep mark on the country's urbanization and architecture. The unique blend of Eastern and Western cultures, from their differences, created a new aesthetic style and a unique architectural appearance, meeting all artistic standards. In that architectural flow, An Dinh Palace emerged as a unique work of art. This is one of the important architectural and artistic works in the history of Vietnamese fine arts, especially in the late Nguyen Dynasty. Firstly, An Dinh Palace is a symbol of the combination of traditional Vietnamese architecture and modern Western elements in the early 20th century. The work has the classic features of the Nguyen Dynasty with sophisticated layout and decoration while also featuring European architectural elements such as Corinthian columns, domes, and decorative motifs in the Baroque and Rococo styles. Second, the decorative art of this building bears unique marks, standing out with the choice of novel decorative themes that are different from the decorative motifs on other architectural works built at the same time. In particular, the frescoes and reliefs at An Dinh Palace are typical works of royal decorative art. They demonstrate the skillful craftsmanship of the Nguyen Dynasty artisans. The images of dragons, phoenixes, and traditional patterns are embossed in a sophisticated manner, demonstrating the solemnity and authority of the dynasty. Third, An Dinh Palace has historical and cultural significance and is associated with historical figures of the Nguyen Dynasty. This was once the residence of Emperor Khai Dinh and his family and then Emperor Bao Dai. This is also the place associated with many important historical events in the final years of the Nguyen Dynasty and the early period of the transition between the feudal regime and the French colonial rule. This creates a profound historical value for the palace. Despite many historical and temporal events, An Dinh Palace is still well preserved, becoming an important cultural heritage of Vietnam. The palace is not only an architectural work but also a valuable artistic heritage, helping future generations better understand the culture and art of the era.

The fusion of architecture and decorative arts at An Dinh Palace is a vivid demonstration of the transformation and development of Vietnamese culture, especially under the influence of the West. While still retaining the core values of Hue

royal architecture, An Dinh Palace has welcomed and absorbed new elements, creating a masterpiece of unique artistic and historical value.

In short, An Dinh Palace is not only an architectural work but also an important part of Vietnam's artistic heritage, demonstrating the cultural and artistic exchange between East and West, as well as marking a special historical period of the country. It not only bears the characteristics of regional Indigenous architecture and the quintessence of royal architecture but also sketches a historical picture rich in cultural, ethnic, artistic, and human values of Vietnam. From there, An Dinh Palace contributed to creating the unique artistic identity of the ancient capital, which was recognized by researchers with the simple name "Hue Art."

3.2 An Dinh Palace represents the spirit of creation and promotion of national culture

German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder introduced the concept of "national spirit" academically. From analyzing the shared spirit of humanity, he expanded to the "spirit of the times" and "national spirit." Herder believed that this spirit was the driving force behind the development of each country and nation. It is the crystallization of the soul, forged through many generations, nurtured by language, education, culture, and art - the community's shared values. In other words, the national spirit is shaped by its identity, geographical environment, and historical flow. It is the soul of culture, created from the interaction between people and the surrounding world.

Following Herder's thought, the great German philosopher Hegel asserted that national identity is expressed through cultural heritage and customs. He gave examples of the moral spirit of China, represented by Confucius and Mencius; the rational spirit of ancient Greece, represented by Socrates and Aristotle; the religious spirit of the Middle Ages through Thomas Aquinas; and the speculative spirit of modern Germany initiated by Kant and Hegel J.P.

There is a close connection between national spirit and culture, mainly traditional cultural spirit. The national spirit is considered the soul of national culture and the spiritual driving force for the development and progress of the country. On this issue, researchers agree that national spirit is considered the soul of national culture, the spiritual driving force for the development and progress of the country. National spirit is regarded as the soul of national culture because it is the mainstream in the cultural history of a nation, inherited and promoted by the majority of people through many generations. Generally, national culture is a country's creative product in a specific environment, reflecting its economic and political system. National spirit includes wealthy contents and elements, in which culture in the narrow sense (or spiritual culture) reflects national psychology, way of thinking, aesthetics, ethics, ideals, beliefs, values, science and technology, literature, and art. This is the embodiment of the national spirit, both a means of preservation and a testament to the existence of the national spirit.

Vietnamese culture is the crystallization of many generations of Vietnamese people to form an everlasting spiritual heritage. The cultural beauty of the Vietnamese people has been forged through the heroic history of the nation, spanning thousands of years. With a strong will, the Vietnamese have firmly defended their independence while constantly cultivating and developing their cultural identity. Vietnamese architecture and art are indispensable elements contributing to the formation of

cultural identity and are also factors identifying the long-standing civilizational heritage traditions of the nation.

However, the imprint of time has made the number of ancient architectural works remaining in Vietnam. Historical fluctuations, assimilation wars, and the devastation of nature have caused many works to be erased. The old features now only appear in ancient temples and pagodas as evidence of the daily life of village communities in the past.

Under the last feudal dynasty, the Nguyen Dynasty architectural complex was a typical example of Vietnamese cultural identity. During the colonial period, the spirit of national self-reliance was expressed in preserving architecture with its unique identity, steadfastly resisting the influence of foreign cultures.

In that context, the Nguyen Dynasty changed and innovated to adapt and integrate with modern life. Emperor Khai Dinh was a pioneer in combining the quintessence of French architecture with indigenous culture, creating a unique style that later Architect Ernest Hébrard initiated the movement following this trend and named the Indochina style with the birth of the first project designed by him, the main building of the Indochina University, which began construction in 1924 in Hanoi. Seven years earlier, An Dinh Palace had been built according to similar design principles. This idea of Emperor Khai Dinh showed that he was a person with an understanding of architecture and culture. Through An Dinh Palace, it showed the creativity and national spirit of the Vietnamese people. However, in terms of popularity to become an architectural trend in Vietnam, it has not been achieved because it only served the royal family, the Nguyen Dynasty. It was not until the Indochinese style of architect Hébrard was initiated and popularized with the principle that "these craftsmen can bring great help by decorating new buildings with traditional patterns that they execute very skillfully; the decorative motifs will always harmonize very well with the knowledge of a country..." (Son I. M., 2013) Vietnamese architecture was accepted and developed in the context of cultural exchange, contributing to preserving precious traditional values amid modernization. The works bearing this mark became a testament to the country's unique architectural heritage. The academic concept of "National Spirit" is the basis for analyzing and demonstrating the architectural work of An Dinh Palace, not only expressing unique creativity but also demonstrating the promotion of national culture. That spirit is expressed through the following factors:

(1) Emperor Khai Dinh breathed new life into Hue's royal architecture. Although the number of these "new style" works was modest compared to the scale of traditionally built palaces, they were still typical examples of the transformation in royal architecture during the Khai Dinh period. This change in appearance contributed to creating a distinct architecture for the final period of the Nguyen Dynasty. Vietnamese art researchers affirmed that this was an essential milestone in the history of Hue architecture and art, marking a meaningful turning point in the flow of Vietnamese art.

(2) The An Dinh Palace is a royal product, so it bears a unique, different, and distinctive mark compared to all other Indochinese architectural works in Vietnam. That difference comes from the system of decorative symbols bearing the royal mark, following the strict regulations of the royal court. Although mixed with folk motifs, An Dinh Palace retains its distinct identity and cannot arbitrarily copy the decorative

form of other folk architectural works. In addition, the creativity in arranging traditional motifs to create a new pattern or the harmonious combination between traditional royal decorative motifs and European motifs to create a unique pattern for decorative purposes is a unique factor. Along with that, the art of porcelain inlay and other unique decorative techniques at An Dinh Palace requires the high skills of royal artisans and, at the same time, consumes vast financial resources. Only the Emperor can create such magnificent palaces.

However, An Dinh Palace is not strange or unusual in modern architectural form. It still maintains the harmony and unity in the traditional royal architectural complex. Thereby demonstrating the inheritance and creative development of typical royal cultural values. The An Dinh Palace results from a smooth conventional quintessence combination and modern beauty, creating an architectural style rich in the identity of the Nguyen Dynasty.

Conclusion

The An Dinh Palace represents the exchange process between the quintessence of traditional Vietnamese art and Western architecture. The decorative art here shows the subtle combination of royal cultural elements and foreign fine arts, creating a new architectural style. This architectural work creates an emotional, artistic symphony by interweaving royal decorative motifs with folk and French-inspired motifs. This highlight is the basis for evaluating An Dinh Palace's cultural and creative values.

The traditional decorative motifs on the architecture of An Dinh Palace are expressions of Eastern cultural values. These decorative motifs clearly show the royal identity. Although bearing the mark of Chinese culture, they have been deeply Vietnamized. Each motif contains a meaningful cultural message, reflecting the spiritual and cultural life of the Nguyen Dynasty aristocracy. The harmonious combination of form and content in the architecture of An Dinh Palace has contributed to the complete aesthetic value of the architectural work.

The architecture of the Khai Dinh period left a strong mark on the history of architecture and decorative arts of the Nguyen Dynasty. This Emperor pioneered receiving new winds from the West, expressed through the restoration works with a strong modern breath. However, the mark of the transformation exploded when An Dinh Palace was built. Following the style of An Dinh Palace, magnificent works, such as Khai Dinh's tomb and Kien Trung Palace, etc., were born one after another. Standing out with the art of sophisticated porcelain inlay decoration, reaching the pinnacle of art. Besides the aesthetic beauty expressed through the shapes, layouts, and sophisticated manufacturing techniques. The themes and decorative motifs in these works also contain profound cultural values. These hidden cultural values have raised the value of the heritage of An Dinh Palace, contributing to spreading the message of creativity and preserving and promoting the national cultural heritage.

In the context of being influenced by foreign cultural policies during the colonial period, Emperor Khai Dinh used traditional art as an effective weapon against assimilation. The An Dinh Palace is a proud symbol of the spirit of self-reliance and independent cultural identity of the Vietnamese people. The unique features of An Dinh Palace have affirmed the latent strength of Vietnamese culture while making a significant mark in the country's architecture and art history, demonstrating the strong vitality of the national spirit.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, SUGGESTION

Conclusions

The An Dinh Palace, part of the Hue Monuments Complex, Vietnam, was built in 1917, the early 20th century, when French culture and art deeply penetrated Vietnam's cultural and social life, especially the fine arts of the Nguyen Dynasty. During the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh (1916 - 1925), Hue royal architecture took on a new look, clearly showing the era's characteristics. The An Dinh Palace was the first work marking a big change. The An Dinh Palace's architectural and artistic style bears the talented Emperor's mark. As a creative person in thinking and action, Khai Dinh left behind for posterity unique architectural works, including the mark of An Dinh Palace, contributing to embellishing the diverse beauty of the Nguyen Dynasty architectural complex. Organizations, individuals, researchers, and archaeologists have researched An Dinh Palace, but only to understand historical and cultural values. There have been no in-depth studies on the artistic values, especially the hybrid art and modernity of the An Dinh Palace architectural work. This issue has not been studied in depth. Therefore, studying cultural and historical values and the expression of hybrid art and modernity is a necessary research direction. It meets the international research trend through the primary research concepts: "Hybrid Art" and "Modernity." In addition to the primary research concepts, the thesis also has additional research concepts to help explain the research problem more deeply: "Art aesthetics," "symbolology," "cultural identity, multicultural identity expressed through architecture and decoration on works belonging to the An Dinh Palace relic complex," and "National spirit." The hybridization of art, cultural identity, and national spirit of An Dinh Palace is a long historical process, the accumulation and transformation of natural conditions and the process of assimilation, cultural exchange, and acculturation. The thesis has clarified the following research issues:

(1) To study Vietnam's political, socio-economic, and cultural context before and after Khai Dinh became Emperor.

The research object of the topic focuses on explaining and making the historical, economic, political, cultural, and artistic context of Vietnam before and after Khai Dinh ascended the throne. This research topic clarifies the following issues: Studying the economic, political, cultural, and artistic development during the independent Nguyen Dynasty. When the French invaded, how did these areas change? Until Vietnam became a French colony, as the head of state, what policies did Emperor Khai Dinh have during this period to develop the country and maintain the political position of the dynasty? At the same time, study the historical context of the birth of An Dinh Palace, especially the architecture and fine arts of the Nguyen

Dynasty in the context of interaction with European culture and art, here directly with France.

From the dynasty's founding in 1802 to 1858, the Nguyen Dynasty spent more than 50 years building and consolidating, creating an independent, unified country with a strong economy in the Southeast Asian region. The period from Minh Mang to Tu Duc is considered prosperous and peaceful. From 1861 onwards, the Tu Duc Dynasty began implementing many reform policies, but they were ineffective due to their reliance on Confucianism and conservatism. The economy and society declined, leading to many peasant uprisings. The policy of isolation reduced the level of diplomatic relations with Western countries. The Nguyen Dynasty's policy of absolutely banning Catholicism led to conflicts with the West. Taking advantage of this, they plotted to invade Vietnam for the underlying cause of Vietnam's important political and military strategic geographical position in Southeast Asia, close to China, the gateway to the large Asian market.

Therefore, France had to take control of Vietnam to consolidate its position in this strategic area. In August 1858, France and its allies attacked Da Nang and invaded Vietnam. During this time, the Nguyen Dynasty was forced to sign many concession treaties. The Nguyen Dynasty was under pressure from the people because it could not organize an effective resistance. After the invasion, France established a colonial government and carried out colonial exploitation, which changed the social and economic structure of Vietnam. In particular, French culture deeply influenced Vietnamese education, language, and art. The education system was also reformed according to the French model.

In the field of architecture, in the early stages of Hue, there was a strong influence from French architecture; in the next stage, there was a blend of traditional and Western architecture. In the royal court, the cultural exchange between Vietnam and France created unique architectural works, typically An Dinh Palace, bearing the solid Indochinese architectural style of the Royal Court. Hue fine arts during this period marked the development by selectively absorbing Western art styles. Thereby reflecting the creativity of Hue people.

(2) To study the architectural style and Art decoration of Hue royal architecture in the period before and after Khai Dinh became Emperor.

The research object of the topic focuses on pointing out the changing characteristics and differences in architecture and decorative arts in the period before Khai Dinh ascended the throne and when he became emperor. Vietnam has developed a unique architectural identity due to its long feudal history and rich Indigenous culture. Hue royal architecture in this period was influenced by Chinese style but retained Vietnamese identity. Hundreds of large and small works and palaces were built in traditional architecture with precious materials such as wood, stone, and brick, creating a unique beauty for the royal architecture. The decorative arts distinguish the majestic and splendid temples, palaces, and mausoleums through the hands of talented artisans from all over the country. Hue Palaces are notable for their many sophisticated decorative forms, including reliefs on wood, stone, terracotta, and bronze, and various techniques of inlaying porcelain, mother-of-pearl, bone, and mother-of-pearl. Frescoes also contribute to creating vivid works of art, enriching the beauty of the architecture here. Since the French invasion of Vietnam, colonial architecture began to appear in Hue, and many works bearing the European mark

demonstrated the authority of the colonial government. Architectural styles in Hue became richer but still preserved indigenous elements.

This period was notable because the French gave the throne to Prince Buu Dao, officially making him the 12th emperor of the Nguyen Dynasty, taking the name Khai Dinh. He was the first emperor of the Nguyen Dynasty to be strongly influenced and actively absorb Western civilization. During his reign, he restored and rebuilt many buildings with a hybrid architectural style between the East and the West, notably An Dinh Palace, Kien Trung Palace, and Khai Dinh Tomb, reflected in the change to modern materials and new construction techniques. The design trend was eclectic, blending Eastern and Western classical styles. The unique feature of this period is the use of modern Western motifs in architectural decoration, an unprecedented form of decoration, along with the development of porcelain mosaic art, reaching a high level of sophistication. Hue royal architecture under Khai Dinh reflected the integration of culture and art, creating a unique new style and greatly influencing the following stages in the history of Vietnamese architecture.

(3) To study and analyze Hybrid art and modernity at An Dinh Palace

The research object of the topic focuses on pointing out the characteristics of hybridity in architecture and decorative arts of An Dinh Palace and, at the same time, proving that this is a work that shows modernity in this period. The hybridity in architectural form is analyzed through basic elements such as Spatial layout, Architectural form, Structure, and construction materials. The An Dinh Palace was built among Western works, demonstrating the power of French colonialism through the harmonious arrangement of architectural styles such as Beaux-Arts, Art Nouveau, and Art Deco. The palace grounds are planned according to traditional Eastern feng shui principles. The architectural complex of An Dinh Palace includes many works, of which three main works still exist: Main Gate, Trung Lap Pavillon, highlighted by the central work Khai Tuong Building, combining European Neoclassical architecture with Asian architectural elements, creating uniqueness through a symmetrical layout, roof, and sophisticated decorative motifs. Modern construction techniques use imported materials such as cement and steel but still retain indigenous elements through the use of traditional tiled roofs.

Hybridity through Decorative Art in Architecture is analyzed based on factors such as Themes used in decoration, Techniques, and decorative materials. Decorative art at An Dinh Palace not only beautifies but also conveys the representative philosophical thoughts of the dynasty and Emperor Khai Dinh himself. Decorative themes are strongly influenced by Eastern culture and some Western elements, showing a harmonious combination of tradition and modernity. The themes are mainly related to nature, flora and fauna, and royal symbols. Cultural exchange is also demonstrated through a rich system of motifs, from flowers and herbs to images of mascots. The work uses many porcelain inlay, masonry, and fresco techniques, along with precious materials, to create diversity and sophistication in decorative art. The modernity of An Dinh Palace is reflected through the modernization process of Vietnamese society under the influence of Western culture. Specifically, modernity is most clearly expressed through the architecture and art of the royal court. Emperor Khai Dinh combined traditional and modern elements, creating a unique royal architectural style. The An Dinh Palace is a testament to the cultural exchange between East and West, demonstrating the vision and talent of Emperor Khai Dinh in building a royal

architectural space that blends traditional cultural heritage and the quintessence of Western architecture. The modern project preserves the Nguyen Dynasty's and Vietnam's cultural values.

(4) To study and analyze An Dinh Palace's Characteristics and cultural and artistic value in Vietnamese art history.

The research object of the topic focuses on understanding the hidden meaning behind the decorative motifs, thereby evaluating the cultural and artistic values that An Dinh Palace has achieved. At the same time, it proves that the work is a manifestation of the creativity and spirit of promoting the national solid culture of the Vietnamese people. It can be seen that An Dinh Palace has cultural and artistic values. This outstanding architectural work shows the exchange between Eastern and Western cultures in the early 20th century. Under the reign of Khai Dinh, An Dinh Palace was built as a symbol of the combination of traditional Vietnamese elements and Western influences, creating a unique architectural style. The innovation of the work is based on inheriting tradition through inheriting the decorative art heritage of the Nguyen Dynasty while demonstrating innovation in construction techniques and materials. In addition, the work has used Western elements in expression, such as materials and decorative forms, all of which have clear Western influences, especially in decorative space and motifs. Works such as Khai Tuong Lau in Baroque style and the interior of Cuu Tu Dai theater show the perfect combination of tradition and modernity. In addition, it also shows unique creativity in using decorative pattern systems, novels with sophisticated designs, and the skillful arrangement of traditional motifs with modern motifs creates uniqueness. Through the above analysis, it can be seen that An Dinh Palace has achieved cultural and artistic values. It is not only an architectural masterpiece but also reflects the creative adaptation of Vietnamese people to historical changes. It shows the social and cultural situation of Vietnam at that time.

The An Dinh Palace has high aesthetic value through architectural details, colors, and materials that all reach a level of sophistication, contributing to the work's artistic value. With the above values, An Dinh Palace demonstrates its importance in the history of Vietnamese art. Firstly, An Dinh Palace has left its mark on Hue's royal architecture. At the same time, it is a work that clearly shows the Vietnamese cultural identity in the context of modernization and Western influence. Secondly, An Dinh Palace clearly shows the national spirit through the preservation and promotion of cultural values, representing the strong vitality and independence in the culture of the Vietnamese people. The An Dinh Palace also symbolizes the exchange between cultures, demonstrating the unique creativity in Vietnamese architecture and decorative arts. This work not only brings aesthetic value but also deeply reflects the history, culture, and spirit of the Vietnamese people, typically Emperor Khai Dinh, because, in terms of art, he was one of the Emperors with unique and robust thoughts, leaving profound influences on many architectural and artistic works that genuinely reflect the creative spirit of the era in a historical period.

Research Discussion

The An Dinh Palace represents the efforts to "renovate the country" and the modern thinking of Emperor Khai Dinh.

The ghost of the decline of the Nguyen Dynasty cast a shadow over Vietnam after it became a French colony. Emperor Khai Dinh, who succeeded to the throne in a turbulent context, seemed immersed in a nightmare of trying to hold on to the old glory. Later generations saw him as a weak monarch, a puppet of the French colonialists, incompetent and useless, and only knew how to enjoy life. But was history fair to him?

The book *Dong Khanh, Khai Dinh*, the main book of the National History Institute of the Nguyen Dynasty, records the policies that Emperor Khai Dinh issued during his reign, in which there were modern ideas to reform the country. Typically, He innovated the form of selecting talents instead of the traditional Confucian path. He enlightened the people by opening schools for women, an important step in the era of gender inequality; awarded military ranks to merchants to encourage trade; developed handicrafts and reformed the medical industry. He also proposed a national day for the country so that people could rest and enjoy themselves. Emperor Khai Dinh also innovated many forms of activities and ceremonies of the court. In the context of a slave country, these actions, though small, were still a glimmer of light, an effort to escape the shackles of slavery.

Emperor Khai Dinh faced the challenge of the times; he was forced to cooperate temporarily with France to keep the country stable and developed. Although criticized for this choice, we need to fully understand the complex context and the role of the emperor during the period of national turmoil. The country's position and strength were insufficient to stand up and drive out the French colonialists. Instead of plunging into the vortex of war, pushing the people into misery, he chose the middle path, opening the way for the country to rise. He chose peaceful innovation because he believed that "absorbing French culture is a condition for the development of Annam."

The An Dinh Palace is a work of outstanding artistic value, representing the creative talent of the Vietnamese people. It not only shows its external beauty but also contains profound humanistic values. It is a symbol of modernity and progress. It arouses national pride. It can be said that An Dinh Palace is a bright spot in the historical picture of Vietnamese art.

The An Dinh Palace, built in the early 20th century, is the most apparent evidence of innovation in royal fine arts. This palace is not only a modern architectural work but also a symbol of the country's reform efforts. Its historical significance lies not only in its architectural beauty but also in its profound cultural values. The An Dinh Palace has become a symbol of modernity and progress, and at the same time, it represents national pride. This is a bright spot in the historical picture of Vietnamese art.

As a person standing in the middle of the complicated flow of history, according to the researcher, Emperor Khai Dinh was a man full of contradictions. He was a puppet of the French colonialists but also a person who made silent efforts to reform the country. He was criticized for his cowardice and weakness. However, he must also be honored for his contributions to culture and art. History is not only about victory or defeat but also about efforts and sacrifices for eternal values. Emperor Khai Dinh's glimmers of light in the darkness represent those values. The researcher's assessments are the basis for researchers to discuss through future research projects.

Suggestion

The An Dinh Palace is part of the Complex of Hue Monuments. It is not only a historical heritage but also a living work of art. It preserves and reflects the cultural and artistic quintessence of the Nguyen Dynasty while marking the cultural exchange in the early 20th century. The An Dinh Palace has left a deep mark on the flow of Vietnamese art history, especially its unique artistic contributions, which have contributed to creating a colorful picture of Vietnamese culture.

The unique cultural and artistic values are the highlights of the project. The An Dinh Palace preserves the precious cultural heritage of the dynasty, demonstrating the talent and vision of Emperor Khai Dinh. However, the number of studies on An Dinh Palace is still limited. There are still conflicting and inconsistent views among a group of historical and cultural researchers when evaluating the role of the Nguyen Dynasty in Vietnamese history in general and Emperor Khai Dinh in particular. This is also understandable when considering the historical context and the events that this dynasty, as well as Emperor Khai Dinh, personally had to face.

The author's research topic has deeply exploited the cultural and artistic values of the work, bringing about remarkable results. This research will be the premise for subsequent researchers to continue to conduct in-depth research, explaining the role of ceramic mosaic decoration art and new materials at An Dinh Palace at that time in creating the unique features of other works built under the reign of Khai Dinh.

In addition, research on the role of new materials, modern construction techniques, and aesthetic elements that express the aesthetic views of Emperor Khai Dinh promises to bring interesting discoveries. In addition, decoding the political and cultural symbolic meanings in the architecture of An Dinh Palace mentioned in the thesis will be further researched to explain from another perspective.

For example, future researchers may consider An Dinh Palace not only as a cultural message but also as a political message. The research direction focuses on analyzing how Emperor Khai Dinh used architecture as a tool to express power in his relationship with French colonialism and to glorify Vietnamese culture. This research direction will provide a deeper and more objective view of the role of Emperor Khai Dinh as well as this historical period. This contribution will partly clarify the complex and turbulent historical picture of the country in the twilight period of the Vietnamese monarchy.

The artistic exchange of An Dinh Palace promises to be a rich source of inspiration for modern architects, evoking the idea of exploiting the quintessence of indigenous culture to create a unique mark for the project. Modern design trends today pay special attention to this factor. To create an architectural work with

multidimensional value, the architect must deeply understand traditional and indigenous architectural heritage.

Benefits of Academic

The typical case of An Dinh Palace hybrid art is the basis for researchers to explore history and cultural and artistic values. The thesis has added helpful knowledge to the history of art in the Nguyen Dynasty, especially the period of cultural exchange with France, marking a new turning point in the flow of Vietnamese fine arts.

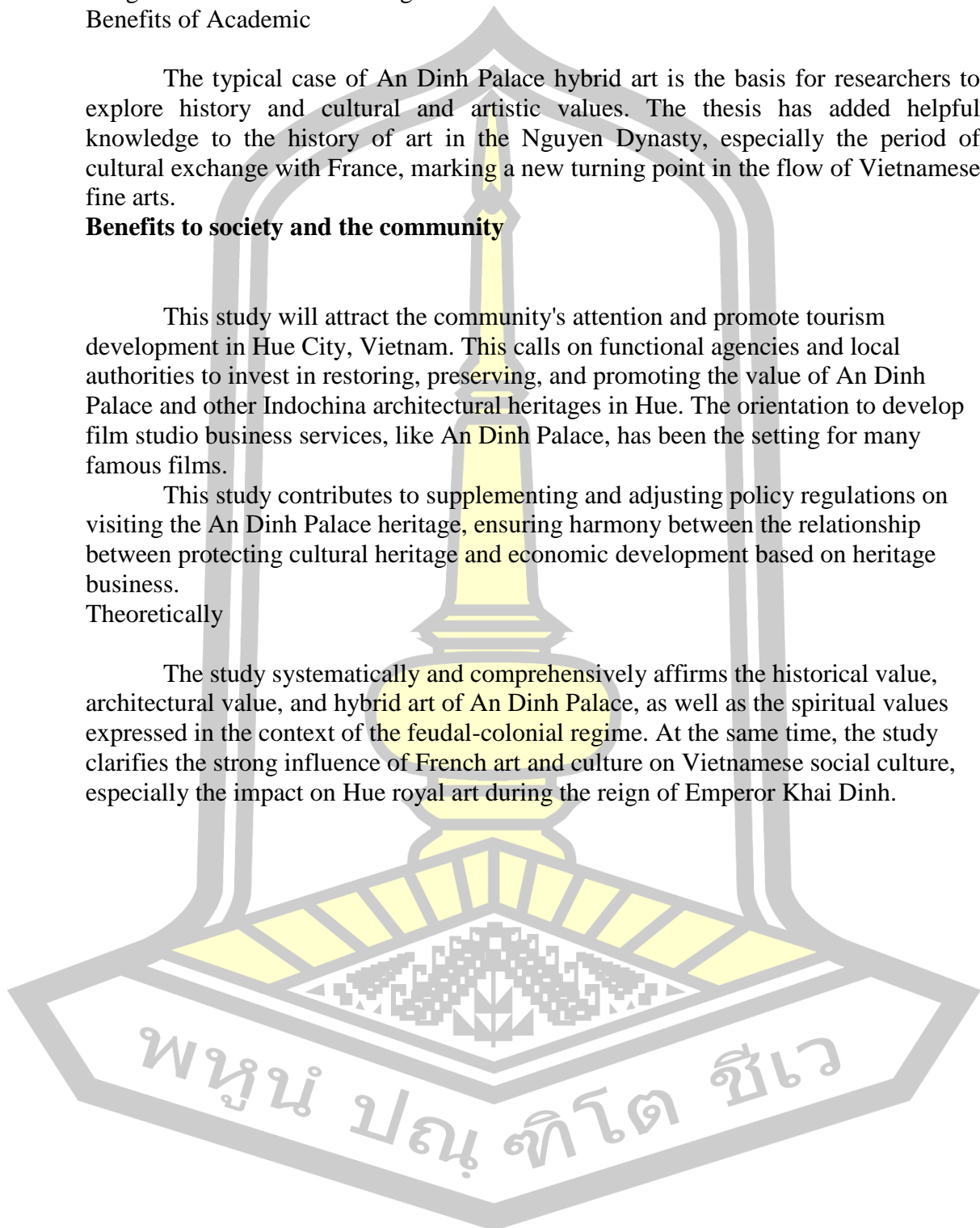
Benefits to society and the community

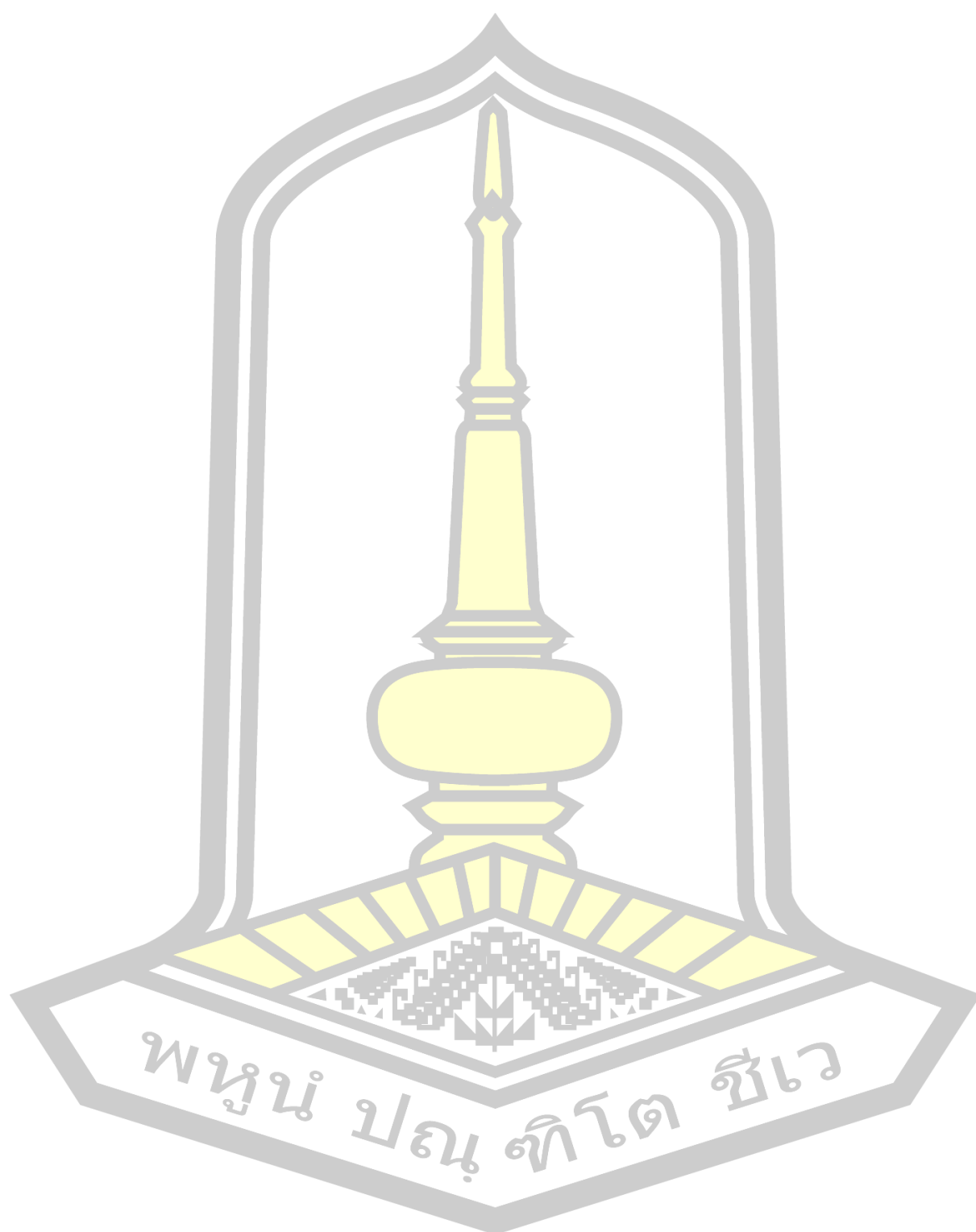
This study will attract the community's attention and promote tourism development in Hue City, Vietnam. This calls on functional agencies and local authorities to invest in restoring, preserving, and promoting the value of An Dinh Palace and other Indochina architectural heritages in Hue. The orientation to develop film studio business services, like An Dinh Palace, has been the setting for many famous films.

This study contributes to supplementing and adjusting policy regulations on visiting the An Dinh Palace heritage, ensuring harmony between the relationship between protecting cultural heritage and economic development based on heritage business.

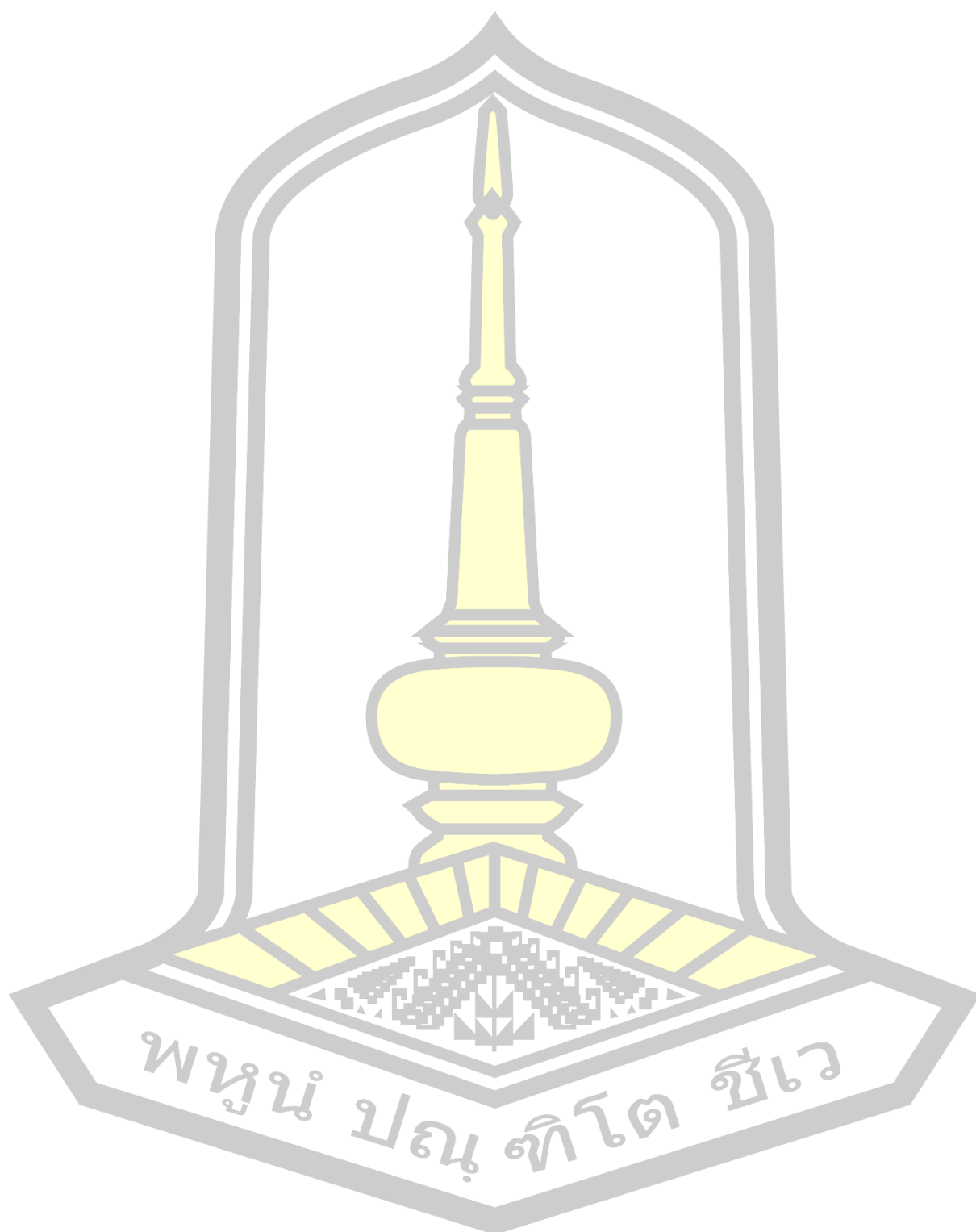
Theoretically

The study systematically and comprehensively affirms the historical value, architectural value, and hybrid art of An Dinh Palace, as well as the spiritual values expressed in the context of the feudal-colonial regime. At the same time, the study clarifies the strong influence of French art and culture on Vietnamese social culture, especially the impact on Hue royal art during the reign of Emperor Khai Dinh.





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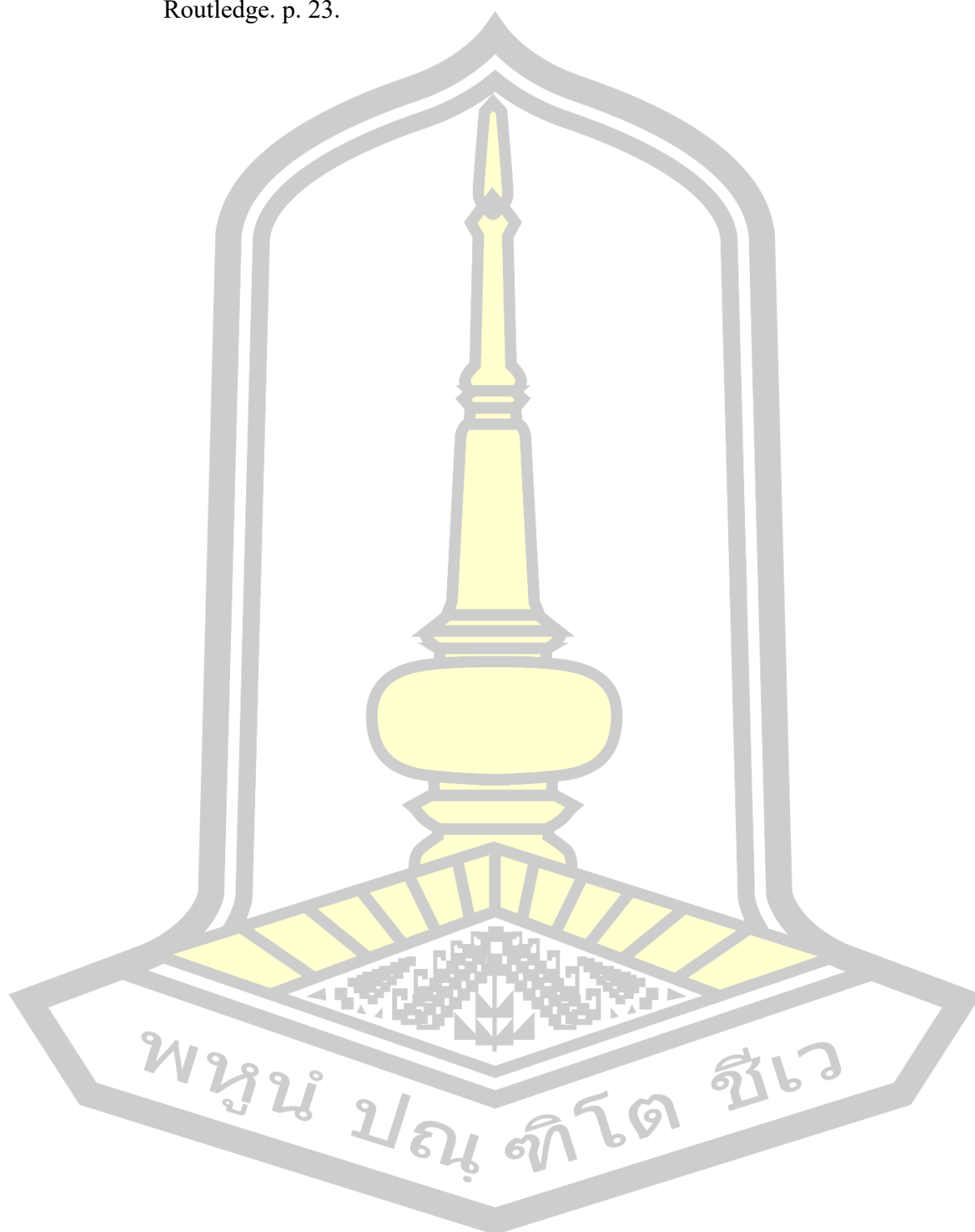
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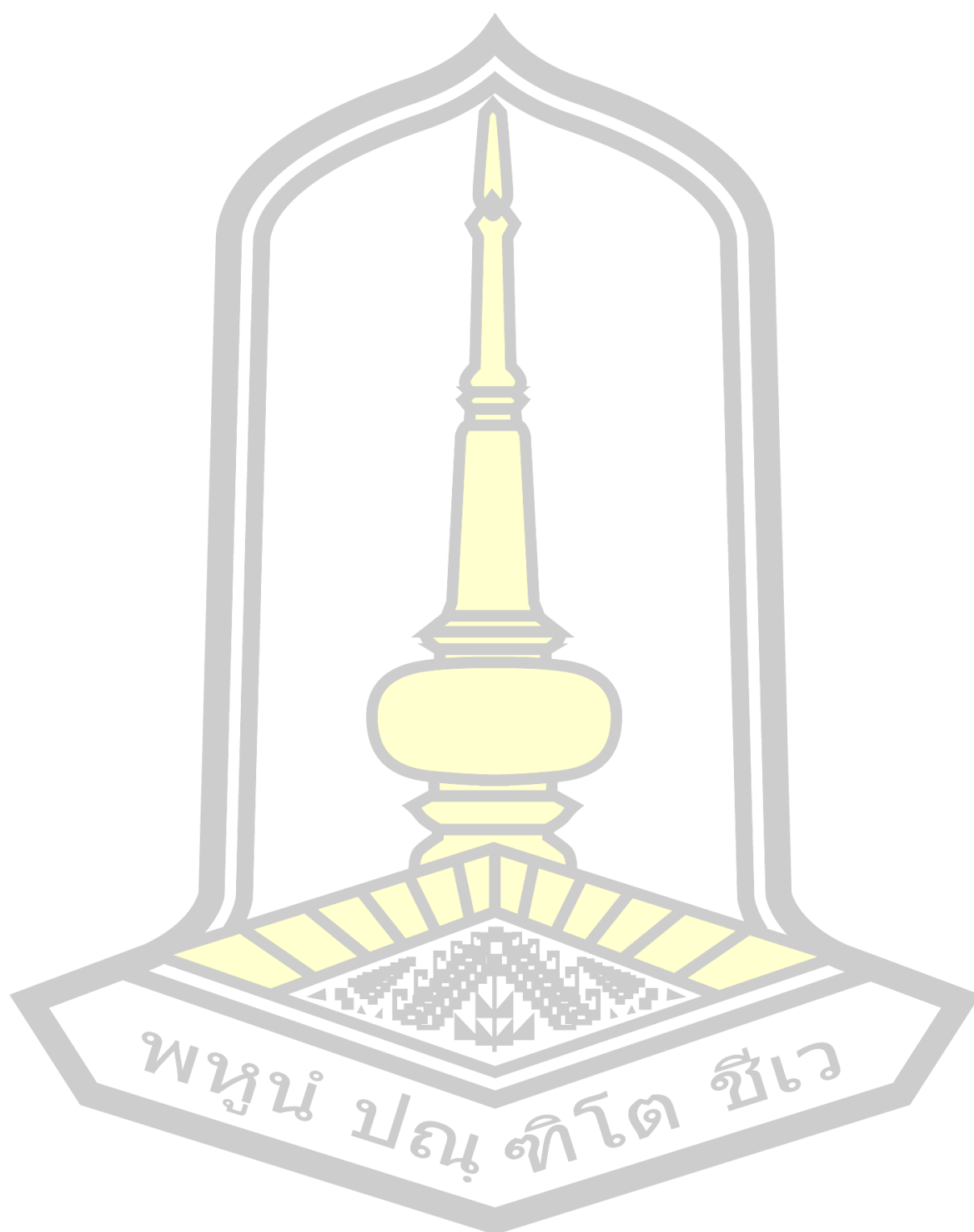
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APPENDIX



INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Interview with the relic management agency (Hue Monuments Conservation Center)

1. General information:

Interview date:

Position + name of interviewee:

Address:

2. Interview content

1. History and circumstances of the birth of An Dinh Palace?

.....
.....

2. Design drawings, construction process, and materials used for An Dinh Palace?

.....
.....

3. Has An Dinh Palace changed in terms of architecture, form, and function? Why?

.....
.....

4. When was An Dinh Palace restored, and what difficulties were encountered during the restoration process?

.....
.....

5. Functional blocks and components of the An Dinh Palace complex?

.....
.....

6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of An Dinh Palace during its use?

.....
.....

7. After 1975, the new government issued a list of Nguyen Dynasty heritages that needed to be preserved. Why was An Dinh Palace absent?

.....
.....

8. Why was An Dinh Palace first proposed by the German government for funding and not the management unit?

.....
.....

9. Why has the second floor of An Dinh Palace not been restored? Does the relic management agency have a plan to restore the second floor?

.....
.....

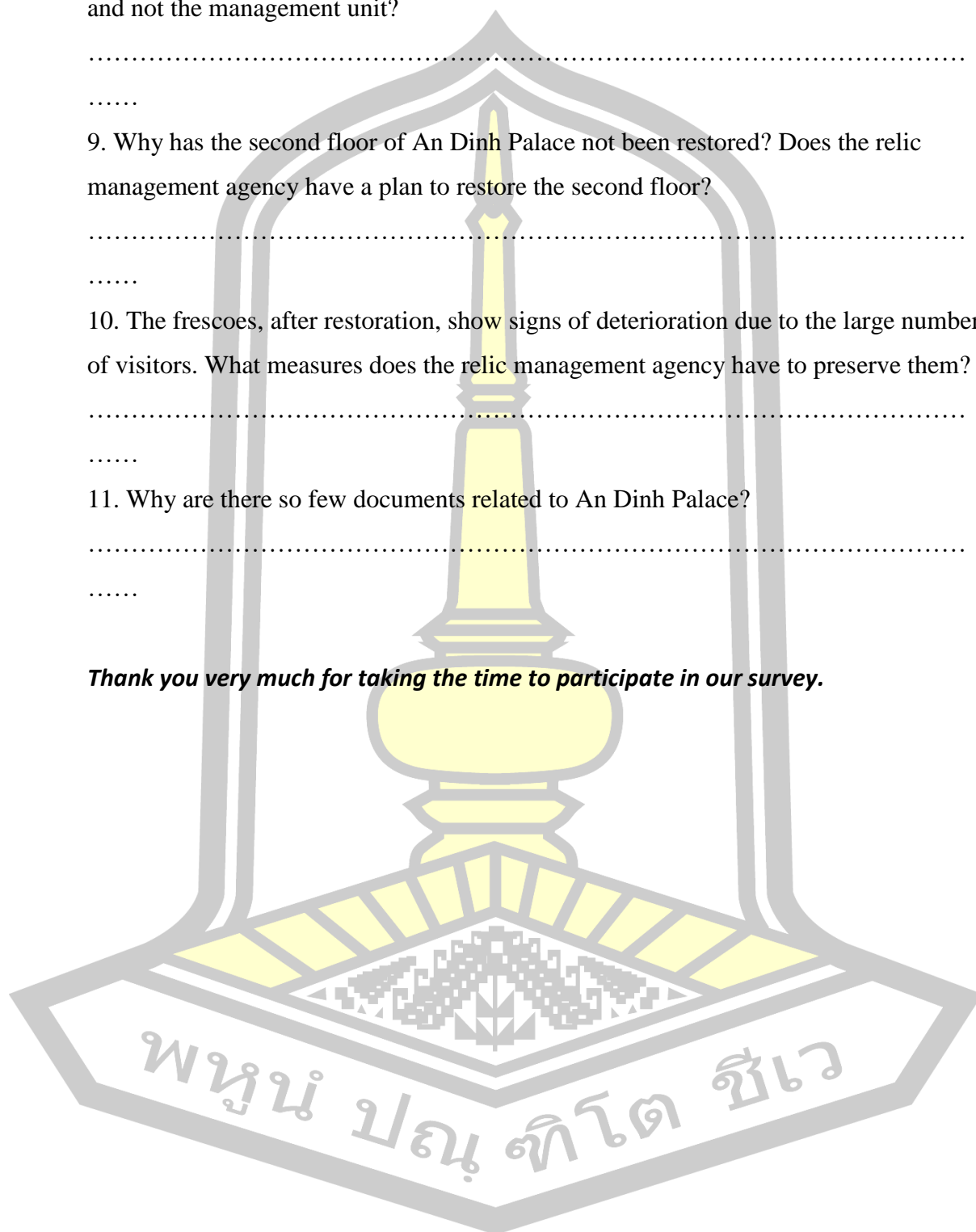
10. The frescoes, after restoration, show signs of deterioration due to the large number of visitors. What measures does the relic management agency have to preserve them?

.....
.....

11. Why are there so few documents related to An Dinh Palace?

.....
.....

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in our survey.



INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Interview with Experts

1. General information:

Interview date:

Position + name of interviewee:

Address:

2. Interview content

1. In your opinion, what architectural styles does An Dinh Palace have? Why?

.....
.....

2. In your opinion, is An Dinh Palace's architectural form and function suitable for the climate and weather of Hue?

.....
.....

3. what are the values of the Nguyen Dynasty's royal architecture in general and the royal architecture built under the Khai Dinh Dynasty in particular, including An Dinh Palace?

.....
.....

4. what are the outstanding features of An Dinh Palace compared to other Indochinese architectural works of the same style in Hue City? And does the Palace's combination of Eastern and Western elements have high architectural value? In what factors?

.....
.....

5. In your opinion, is An Dinh Palace a model for reference in terms of decoration in the restoration of architectural works of the Khai Dinh Dynasty that were destroyed in the war, typically the Kien Trung Palace that has just been restored?

.....
.....

6. what are the risks and challenges of restoring and preserving the architecture of the An Dinh Palace relic, which has been ranked as a national relic?

.....

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in our survey.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Interviewing people living near the relic and the Nguyen Dynasty royal family.

1. General information:

Interview date:

Position + name of interviewee:

Address:

2. Interview content

1. Who lived in An Dinh Palace?

.....

2. What activities took place in An Dinh Palace?

.....

3. Why are nearly 90% of frescoes covered with colored lime?

.....

4. Why did Queen Mother Tu Cung donate the palace to the new government after 1975?

.....

5. Can you share your memories related to An Dinh Palace?

.....

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in our survey.

BIOGRAPHY

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