
The Art of Decorating Traditional Ceramic Tiles in Contemporary Vietnamese Architecture and Interior



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ABSTRACT: Terracotta ceramic brick is a material with a long history in the life of the Vietnamese people, often used to build and decorate ancient architectural works with special techniques, visual arts, and decoration sharp. Over hundreds of years, although at present, the artifacts made from terracotta pottery are no longer intact on the ancient architectural works, they have still been kept as precious heritages, contributing to the formation of the imaging system. Unique statues and symbols in traditional Vietnamese architectural decoration art. Many designers have used traditional ceramic tiles to decorate contemporary architectural, interior, and exterior spaces to create a unique feature for each project. From the perspective of Fine Arts, Design, and a practical approach, the article aims to identify the characteristics, inheritance, and continuation of the artistic heritage of traditional ceramic tile decoration in architectural and interior design contemporary furniture in Vietnam, thereby proposing and suggesting some solutions to this problem.

KEYWORDS: Decorative arts, Ceramic/Terracotta tiles, Architecture, Interior, Traditional, Contemporary.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage is an important part of the landscape and identity of each country, including the cultural, historical, and artistic values that are inherited from the previous generation and passed on to the next generation. Terracotta bricks in traditional Vietnamese architecture, it is not only a heritage in the form of material products, but also a system of knowledge, skills, and production methods passed down from generation to generation, carrying within them traditional symbols, images, and patterns, expressing the thinking and soul of the Vietnamese people, contributing to the construction and preservation of the national cultural identity.

In contemporary Vietnamese architectural and interior design, the use of traditional materials such as ceramic bricks in the works is one of the choices of designers because of its preeminent features such as the availability of raw materials from nature, sustainability, suitability with climatic and environmental conditions, especially can create a sensory effect, increase the closeness, friendliness, and the deep connection between living space and environment human. Therefore, studying the application and continuation of the heritage of ceramic tile decoration in contemporary interior architecture design is necessary, contributing to creating uniqueness and multi-dimensionality in design and keeping pace with the trend of design in the world today.

From the perspective of Fine Arts, Design, and practical approach, the content of this research aims to: 1-Identify the characteristics of traditional and contemporary Vietnamese ceramic tile decoration art, 2- Assess the inheritance and continuation of the artistic heritage of traditional ceramic tile decoration in contemporary architectural and interior design, 3- Suggest some trends and solutions to this problem in the present and future. The article restricts the survey to works using ceramic brick materials that have won national and international awards, built in the period from 2000 to the present: This is the timeline of the design field. The interior architecture has many changes and significant innovations. After joining the WTO in 1997, Vietnam became an emerging economy, undergoing rapid urbanization and updated technical technology.

RESEARCH METHODS

The art of decorating traditional ceramic tiles in Vietnamese architecture and interiors from traditional to contemporary

Features of decorative art of ceramic tiles in traditional Vietnamese architecture and interior. Ceramic bricks (terracotta bricks) are materials with a long history in Vietnamese life, often used to build and decorate ancient architectural works, creating valuable cultural heritages. Natural clay, through the process of filtering, kneading, molding, and firing at high temperatures to another form, the birth of ceramic bricks marks a long step forward in production technology, using materials. the construction material of ancestors. It makes the construction of ancient architecture more flexible and convenient with many advantages: easy material

The Art of Decorating Traditional Ceramic Tiles in Contemporary Vietnamese Architecture and Interior

exploitation and transportation, the ability to form and various sizes, durability, bearing strength, and age-long life, allowing the building to rise higher than wood and stone materials and create a feeling of warmth and closeness.

- Diversity of types: In traditional Vietnamese architecture, terracotta ceramic bricks and tiles are widely used in constructions such as citadels, palaces, pavilions, communal houses, pagodas, temples, shrines, etc. houses, and tombs. There are many different types of bricks and tiles, which are used depending on the project and construction requirements and are mass-produced from the factory, or specially crafted at the construction site. Building bricks are usually divided into two main forms: 1- Thick rectangular block bricks are used to build walls, thin and flat ones are used for exterior cladding; 2- Tiles are used for flooring. There are also several other forms of terracotta such as floating flower tiles for floor and wall tiles, relief bricks, perforated bricks - ventilation bricks, tiles, and other decorative terracotta ceramic forms...

Applications in architectural and interior space: The bricks are packed into square blocks, or slabs to form the overall architectural block, architectural components such as walls, columns, and floors... as well, can be arranged to form "brick decorations", screens, facades, or other decorative details of terracotta... Decorative symbols on bricks and tiles are placed on the tiles in different positions in large architectural works depending on the function and the concept of feng shui of the ancients (H.1, 2). Floor tiles may or may not have a pattern depending on the location where the tiles are laid. Decorative patterns and symbols on the bricks are also a way to create accents, and differences, and increase the value of the work. For example, the rows of lemon-flower bricks in the Tran Dynasty (TK13) in front of the gate of Doan Mon Imperial Citadel of Thang Long or on the atheist road before the collapse of the Temple of King Dinh and King Le in Hoa Lu Ninh Binh... are unique features of the works.



Fig.1



Fig.2

Fig. 1: Ceramic tiles decorated with lemon flowers, chrysanthemums, and dragons during the Ly-Tran dynasties

Fig. 2: Decorative ceramic tiles with lemon flowers on the body of the Tran Dynasty Tower - XIII-XIV centuries (Tay Thien National Monument, Dai Dinh Commune, Tam Dao District)

About art, technique, and shaping materials

- Shaping techniques: Textures, patterns, and shapes on ceramic tiles are usually shaped by hand or mold with techniques such as embossing, molding, carving, pressing, bending, chiseling, sawing, bending, casting/templating... to create shapes and textures following design requirements.

- Decorative motifs: Terracotta ceramic tiles in Vietnamese traditional architecture are often decorated with motifs of traditional patterns and symbols such as lotus flowers, leaves, lovebirds, cranes, carp, plants, etc. mountain clouds, water waves, four spirits (dragon, glass, turtle, phoenix) and other spiritual symbols. These motifs often carry the meaning of luck, prosperity, sustainability, and protection.

- Color, surface material: Ceramic tiles have the inherent orange and red color of rustic bricks when fired, or the dark brown color of old fire bricks, in some cases, using additives to create different colors. In addition to rustic bricks, there are also glazed ceramic tiles,

The Art of Decorating Traditional Ceramic Tiles in Contemporary Vietnamese Architecture and Interior

which are ceramic tiles that are covered with a layer of colored glaze (glass materials) to protect the bottom ceramic bone layer, both increasing its waterproofing ability and diversifying colors color and creating surface material for the product. Glazed ceramic tiles were used very early in traditional Vietnamese architectural art. Typically, in the architecture of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long during the Ly - Tran dynasties, or the enamel tower of Tro pagoda in Vinh Phuc in the Tran Dynasty (XIV century), there are many architectural decorative details with bricks and tiles covered with a layer of colored glaze monochrome like white, blue, blue, yellow. These colors have symbolic meanings according to the concept of feng shui or social class, such as only "kings and kings are roofed with yellow tiles, mandarins, and people are covered with grass" (Anh, Tue & Quang, 2018)



Fig.3



Fig.4

Fig. 3: The glazed ceramic tower of Tro Pagoda - Vinh Phuc (Tran Dynasty, XIV century)

Fig. 4: Royal lapis lazuli ceramic tiles, lapis lazuli - Knife head of Ngo Mon Gate, Hue Ancient Capital

Combination with other materials: In traditional architecture, terracotta ceramic tiles are often combined with wood and stone. The combination of ceramic bricks with some other adhesive materials such as honey, mortar, and lime ... has made it possible to build buildings with a height beyond that of wooden and stone structures, which can also be built according to the requirements of removable walls or embossed brick wall. In some special projects (such as in Dau An Tower in Tien Lu, Hung Yen, and Then tower - Binh Son Tower, Lap Thach, Vinh Phuc), ceramic bricks are used as an independent building material. The works are like being built entirely of terracotta bricks and uniquely shaped with embossed, carved, and stereotyped details, influenced by Cham material techniques.

The above characteristics have created the value and specialty of terracotta ceramic tiles in traditional Vietnamese architecture and art, worthy of inheritance and promotion in the present and the future.

The art of decorating ceramic tiles in Vietnamese architecture and interior from 2000 to present

In the field of contemporary Vietnamese architectural and interior design, the use of traditional materials such as ceramic tiles is one of the available options for designers because it not only contributes to creating a unique character, locality, increasing the feeling of warmth, closeness to nature for the project, as an interesting contrast with the contemporary, but also a trend of the world contemporary design. The return of traditional ceramic brick material is reflected in a series of works that are highly appreciated by international experts and won many valuable awards. The art of decorating ceramic tiles in Vietnamese architecture and interior from 2000 to now can be generalized with the following outstanding features:

The expansion of form structure, applicability, and function: The big difference of this period is in the maximization of the modern decorative form structure, expanding and diversifying the application and function. If in traditional architecture, the main decorative language is in the use of patterns and symbols to decorate and shape the bricks, while in contemporary interior architecture is the application of language. Modern decoration, visual principle with modular form in arranging the structure of bricks according to the system of vertical and horizontal rows, creating visual effects for the surface of the architectural block, an array of interior walls, surfaces money, floors, ceilings, and other surfaces of the building... The arrangement and organization of the interconnected structure of the bricks create a "skin, cover" aesthetic for the building with wall panels ceramic tiles with hollow, solid, convex, and concave blocks, dramatic shaping lines, creating visual attraction. They both have the function of ventilation partitions, creating an open, airy, close-to-nature space and a lot of light for the building, while creating a virtual shimmering effect with light effects, shadows cast through the building's voids between bricks. The applicability of ceramic brick materials is also increasingly expanding. Ceramic tiles are used as bookshelves, dining tables, bars, room dividers, display shelves, and retaining walls ..., and can also be used as frames to display flowers and ornamental plants... The designs are increasingly diverse in color, texture, and size. (Fig. 5)



Fig.5



Fig.6

Fig. 5.6: Architectural and interior design of Cheering Beer Restaurant in Hanoi (the project won 2 international awards from H&P Company for architectural design and Hexagon for interior design)



Fig.7



Fig.8



Fig.9

Fig. 7, 8, 9: Some brick houses of the architect. Tran Thi Ngu Ngon follows the trend of traditional combined with contemporary - Tropical House design office has won many major international awards.



Fig.10



Fig.11

Fig. 10, 11: The design of Cha Ca Ngon restaurant in Hanoi follows the traditional trend, using windflower tiles covered with green glazed folklore, suitable for the space of a culinary elite restaurant. The tradition of Hanoians has a history of more than 100 years.

RUSULTS AND DISCUSSION

Inheritance and development of decorative art of terracotta ceramic tiles in contemporary architecture and interior design in Vietnam

The art of terracotta tile decoration has been inherited from ancient times and continuously developed through the historical periods of Vietnam. In contemporary architectural and interior design, terracotta ceramic tile art is still considered an important and widely used source of inspiration. The legacy lies in maintaining the art deco characteristics, using traditional ceramic tiles, but also constantly introducing new ideas and styles, combined with modern and innovative elements. Some main trends such as the style of decoration of terracotta tiles follow the classical trend, boldly imbued with the identity by using traditional patterns, images, and symbols; Modern style, minimalism, organization of ceramic brick structure with simple shapes, minimalist colors, unlimited shapes; The style of ceramic tile decoration is neoclassical, that is, combining classical and modern elements, creating a unique and multi-

The Art of Decorating Traditional Ceramic Tiles in Contemporary Vietnamese Architecture and Interior

dimensional combination. These design trends have created living and working spaces that reflect the modern look and personality of users and designers.

Trends of Application and Exploitation of traditional ceramic brick materials in contemporary architectural and interior design

One of the trends of global solutions to future living environment problems is the trend of "greening" architectural works and human living spaces. The concept of environmental sustainability here includes the use of ecologically sourced materials, the exploitation of cultural sustainability, heritage, territoriality, and the interoperability of many different fields in project design. Ceramic tile is one of the few traditional Vietnamese materials capable of meeting those criteria. Therefore, using ceramic brick materials to seek closeness and connection with spiritual values from tradition, while simultaneously exploiting uniqueness, difference, and modernity will be the trend of design future architecture and interior space.

Suggest some orientations and solutions preserve, continue and promote the traditional artistic heritage of ceramic tile decoration in contemporary Vietnamese architectural and interior design.

The preservation, continuation, and promotion of the artistic heritage of traditional ceramic tile decoration in contemporary Vietnamese architectural and interior design plays an important role in maintaining and developing the culture and national identity contributing to the diversity and sustainability of the architecture and interior industry in Vietnam. Therefore, this is not only the effort of each architect, designer, artisan, and ceramic tile maker, but it is necessary to have policies and support from the perspective of state management to achieve this goal. Overall orientation, can refer to a few suggestions below:

To develop the continuation of tradition in contemporary architectural and interior design, first of all, it is necessary to focus on preserving and restoring architectural works using traditional ceramic brick materials. Besides, it is promoting the understanding and honoring of the value of the artistic heritage of ceramic tile decoration through the organization of exhibitions, promotional events, and educational activities. Provide information and materials to increase the knowledge of designers, architects, and the public about the variety and potential of ceramic tile materials.

It is necessary to train and create conditions for designers, architects, and artisans to master techniques and creative thinking in the use of traditional ceramic tiles. Encourage the research and application of new techniques to innovate in the design and production of ceramic tiles. Encourage the use of traditional terracotta ceramic tiles in green buildings because of the outstanding properties of this material: aesthetics, identity, sustainability, and environmental friendliness.

Promote the exchange, cooperation, and sharing between traditional designers and artisans with those working in the field of contemporary architecture and interior. The exchange of experience and knowledge between these two environments will create unique and creative ideas, helping to continue the tradition in contemporary architectural and interior design harmoniously and appropriately.

Industry collaboration: Create a partnership between ceramic tile designers, manufacturers, and experts in the fields of art and architecture to accelerate the development of the traditional ceramic tile industry and create high-quality ceramic tile decoration products. At the same time, applying advanced technology and techniques such as 3D printing, CNC machining, and other modern production methods to create diverse and exquisite ceramic tile decoration products.

Create policies to support and encourage to promote the development and use of traditional ceramic tiles in architectural and interior design. This may include financial policies, recommendations, and regulatory frameworks to promote the creation and application of traditional ceramic tiles.

CONCLUSION

The content, results, and discussions of the article clearly show us that the use and exploitation of the values of traditional ceramic tile decoration art in contemporary architectural and interior design is not only a matter of preserving and recreating cultural heritage but also the continuation and development of new creations. This not only brings multi-dimensionality and individual style to the work of designers but also keeps Vietnam's cultural heritage - the spiritual values from tradition come "alive" in the context of Vietnamese culture's contemporary life scene while showing respect and a sense of preserving the nation's cultural heritage.

Contemporary architecture and interior are always changing with the development of mankind, building materials also become more and more diverse and rich, but traditional materials of which ceramic bricks are one of the typical examples still hold an irreplaceable position by aesthetic and functional values suitable to the spirit of the Vietnamese people. Using terracotta bricks can continue to be considered a useful method and material in meeting the future trend of design in general, sustainable design, green design involves the use of materials natural and renewable, reducing the impact on the environment, optimizing resource use, and creating a healthy living environment.

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