

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

DINH THI HUONG GIANG

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL
HERITAGE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
IN CONTEMPORARY VIETNAM (CASE STUDY OF
HANOI OLD QUARTER, HANOI CITY AND HOI AN
ANCIENT TOWN, DA NANG CITY)**

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION SUMMARY

FIELD: CULTURAL STUDIES

HANOI - 2025

This dissertation was completed at
Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics

Supervisor: **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Duy Bac**

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Reviewer 1:

Reviewer 2:

Reviewer 3:

The dissertation will be defended before the Academy-level Dissertation
Evaluation Council at Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics

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INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale for the research

Vietnam boasts an exceptionally rich, diverse, and unique cultural heritage. This heritage not only embodies centuries of accumulated cultural values in history, science, education, and other fields, but can also be transformed into valuable “inputs” for production processes. When effectively harnessed, it serves as a resource for developing cultural industries that generate significant economic value and contribute increasingly to GDP.

However, recent developments in some localities reveal shortcomings. Comprehensive planning for heritage areas remains limited, leading to serious degradation, encroachment, and distortion of certain cultural sites, with their distinctive identities gradually fading. Moreover, the relationship between cultural heritage preservation and socio-economic development has often been poorly balanced. As a result, efforts to conserve and promote heritage values have achieved limited success, and the legitimate interests of local communities - the true owners of this heritage - have not been adequately protected. Resolving this relationship in a harmonious way has therefore become an urgent priority.

Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, stands as one of the country’s major cultural centers. It is home to a rich and distinctive heritage accumulated over thousands of years of history, most densely concentrated in the Hanoi Old Quarter. This represents a precious and unique resource that the city can leverage to develop cultural industries, thereby creating momentum for socio-economic growth and positioning Hoan Kiem District as the national center for artistic creation.

Similarly, Hoi An Ancient Town in Da Nang City is a highly attractive heritage destination for both domestic and international tourists. It serves as one of Vietnam’s most successful models for preserving “cultural capital” through its distinctive ancient architecture, traditional craft villages, festivals, folk arts, and indigenous knowledge. These elements have been effectively utilized to create engaging tours, sightseeing routes, and memorable visitor experiences.

Nevertheless, recent efforts to preserve and promote cultural heritage in both Hanoi and Hoi An have encountered certain limitations. These challenges arise amid rapid urbanization, deepening international integration, and emerging non-traditional security threats. Addressing them is now essential to achieve a balanced relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development - one that ensures both the preservation of heritage and its effective integration into contemporary life in the Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town.

In Vietnam, previous studies have highlighted the importance of cultural heritage and related preservation and promotion activities. They have proposed linking heritage with tourism development and various cultural industries, offering different perspectives on this connection. Some works have also examined the broader relationship between culture and economy, emphasizing the role of cultural resources, including heritage.

Building on these existing research achievements and responding to current practical needs, the doctoral candidate has selected the topic: “The Relationship between Cultural Heritage and Socio-Economic Development in Contemporary Vietnam: Case Studies of the Hanoi Old Quarter (Hanoi) and Hoi An Ancient Town (Da Nang)”. This Cultural Studies dissertation aims to synthesize relevant theoretical foundations, analyze the current state of this relationship in the two case-study sites, and conduct comparative discussions on key issues. The ultimate goal is to propose measures that ensure a harmonious balance, effectively promote heritage values, safeguard the legitimate interests of local communities, and support sustainable development.

2. Research Objectives and Tasks

2.1. Research Objectives and Tasks

The dissertation examines both theoretical and practical dimensions of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development through in-depth case studies of the Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town. It further explores key related issues and proposes ways to achieve a harmonious balance in this relationship. Ultimately, the study aims to enhance the effectiveness of heritage conservation and promotion efforts, while fostering sustainable socio-economic development in the two research sites and across Vietnam as a whole.

2.2. Research Tasks

The dissertation offers a comprehensive overview of existing research on cultural heritage, its conservation, the promotion of heritage values, and the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development. It clarifies key theoretical aspects of these topics, including the concepts of cultural heritage, conservation efforts, value promotion, and their interplay with socio-economic progress. Additionally, it examines the current state of this relationship in the Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town, while discussing related issues in the contemporary context. Through these contributions, the study supports the harmonious management of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in the two research sites and across Vietnam as a whole.

3. Research Object and Scope

3.1. Research Object

The research object of the dissertation is the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Vietnam today through two cases: Hanoi Old Quarter, Hanoi city and Hoi An Ancient Town, Da Nang city.

3.2. Research Scope

Scope of the problem: The dissertation chooses the research object as the system of cultural heritages, activities of preserving and promoting the value of cultural heritages, and socio-economic development activities of people in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town. These are issues and activities that are

linked and interact with each other (positively or negatively), creating a positive or negative relationship in the dialectical relationship between cultural heritages and socio-economic development in the two research areas.

Spatial scope: Focus on surveying and assessing the current status of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter in Hoan Kiem Ward, Hanoi City (before July 1, 2025, belonging to old Hoan Kiem District) and Hoi An Ancient Town in Hoi An Ward, Da Nang City (before July 1, 2025, belonging to Hoi An City, old Quang Nam Province).

Time scope: The dissertation surveys from 2019 to 2024 and has an overview of the issue in 10 years (2014-2024) with socio-economic changes of the whole country, many factors affecting activities related to cultural heritage in many localities across the country, including two research sites.

4. Research Questions and Hypotheses

Question 1: Is the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town a one-way or multi-way, dialectical relationship; is it a positive or negative relationship?

Hypothesis 1: The relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town is a dialectical relationship, both positive and negative, due to many factors.

Question 2: What are the similarities and differences in the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town and why?

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town has some similarities and differences. This is explained by the cultural characteristics, management and conservation mechanisms of cultural heritage, the interaction between cultural heritage and people, and the strategy of linking cultural heritage with socio-economic development in the two research areas.

Question 3: What issues are being raised in the current new context and what are the impacts on the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in the two research areas? How are those issues resolved?

Hypothesis 3: The relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town is currently being affected by many factors of the new context, such as the process of international integration, industrialization, modernization, digital transformation, two-level local government organization, etc, requiring synchronous and comprehensive coordination between the “State - market - society” triad with effective solutions to harmoniously handle the above relationship in the two research locations.

5. Methodology and Research Methods

5.1. Methodology

The methodological basis of the dissertation is the dialectical materialist methodology of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh thought, the guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam on culture, cultural heritage and socio-economic development, and related documents to survey, analyze and evaluate the research problem.

5.2. Research Methods

The dissertation uses research methods of cultural studies and related interdisciplinary approaches, such as analysis and synthesis methods; sociological survey methods; statistical and comparative methods.

6. New Contributions of the Dissertation

6.1. Theoretical Contributions

The dissertation further elucidates the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development. It also consolidates various research methods concerning cultural heritage, its conservation, and the promotion of its values in connection with broader human activities (including daily life, cultural practices, economic endeavors, and others). In doing so, it identifies key issues requiring attention and proposes practical solutions to achieve a harmonious balance between cultural heritage preservation and socio-economic development.

6.2. Practical Contributions

The dissertation contributes to assessing the current state of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in the Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town, while identifying key emerging issues. It also provides orientation and proposes practical solutions to address conflicts arising in the local development process.

The research findings enrich the body of literature on cultural heritage and clarify the dynamics of this relationship in the two study sites. They serve as valuable reference material for further studies and research on cultural heritage and cultural industries, as well as for formulating and disseminating policies related to culture and development. Ultimately, these contributions help raise societal awareness of the vital role of cultural heritage and the importance of maintaining a harmonious balance between heritage preservation and socio-economic progress.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

In addition to the Introduction, Conclusion, References, and Appendices, the main content of the dissertation consists of three chapters.

Chapter 1

LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH AREA

1.1. Literature review

1.1.1. Research on cultural heritage, the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development

1.1.1.1. Cultural heritage, preservation and promotion of the value of cultural heritage

To date, numerous studies worldwide and in Vietnam have explored cultural heritage, elucidating its definitions and roles. Prominent examples include

UNESCO's definitions and contributions from scholars such as Jukka Jokilehto, Luu Tran Tieu, Le Hong Ly, Dang Van Bai, Tu Thi Loan, Le Quy Duc, Nguyen Thi Phuong Cham, and Hoang Cam. Additionally, the concept of “heritageization” has been examined by authors including Robert Hewison, John Tunbridge, Rodney Harrison, and Oscar Salemink.

Many scholarly works on the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage values, both internationally and in Vietnam, have identified shared perspectives and emerging trends in heritage conservation practices. These studies provide managers and practitioners at heritage sites around the world with valuable reference frameworks, principles, and tools for adaptation and application.

1.1.1.2. Relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development

Numerous scholars, both internationally and in Vietnam, have directly or indirectly highlighted the multifaceted values, roles, and interactions between cultural heritage and the socio-economic development of communities, ethnic groups, and nations. These studies clearly illustrate the multidimensional and dialectical nature of this relationship, one that can be mutually beneficial at times, yet conflicting at others.

Research demonstrates that cultural heritage forms an integral part of cultural capital and social capital (as conceptualized by Pierre Bourdieu, Tran Huu Dung, Tran Dinh Huou, Tran Thi An, and others), serving as key “input” resources for the production of cultural industry goods. Many works also elucidate the economic functions of culture, showing how artistic values and cultural policies can profoundly influence economic factors, either promoting or impeding growth.

Certain studies have examined the impacts of cultural heritage resources within the heritage economy (David Throsby, Ha Huu Nga, and others). Others analyze the bidirectional effects of economic activities, particularly tourism, on cultural heritage: on the positive side, tourism generates employment opportunities, creates benefits for businesses and local residents, boosts budget revenue, supports infrastructure improvements, and enables reinvestment in the discovery, storage, and preservation of heritage. However, without effective management measures, it can also lead to negative consequences, such as damage to heritage sites, erosion of cultural identity, and environmental pollution.

1.1.2. Research on cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town

1.1.2.1. Cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter

Studies on cultural heritage as an important cultural resource of the capital Hanoi are quite rich, covering the characteristics and values of the diverse and unique cultural heritage system, including architecture, historical and cultural relics, customs, practices, beliefs, festivals, folk games, folk song treasures, proverbs, crafts...; typical examples are the works of Dinh Gia Khanh, Nguyen Chi Ben, Nguyen Vinh Phuc, Phung Huu Phu, Tong Trung Tin, Bui Minh Tri,... Basically, researchers all emphasize the values of Hanoi's cultural heritage, affirming the need to effectively promote resources in the capital's socio-

economic development, of which the most important resource and leading advantage is cultural resources, including cultural heritage.

1.1.2.2. Cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hoi An Ancient Town

Currently, research on Hoi An Ancient Town has a number of scientific works, seminars, doctoral theses... by typical authors such as Tran Anh, Nguyen Huu Minh, Ho Xuan Tinh, Nguyen Phuoc Tuong, Do Thi Ngoc Uyen, UNESCO documents...

The above documents have provided readers with a relatively complete view of the history of Hoi An - a bustling port city under the Nguyen Lords until it was recognized as a world cultural heritage (in 1999) with its cultural and historical characteristics and values; assessed the advantages and limitations in the management, conservation and exploitation of cultural heritage for tourism development...; thereby emphasizing the need to focus on heritage planning, building development strategies, and strengthening cooperation among relevant parties in planning and implementing policies related to the connection between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hoi An.

1.1.3. Reflections on the existing literature and issues that need further research in the dissertation

Previously published studies have initially examined and analyzed the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development, but mainly focused on clarifying issues such as: the organic connection between tourism and cultural heritage, positive and negative impacts of tourism on communities, heritage, and the environment; the potential of cultural heritage in tourism development and a number of cultural industries...

Regarding Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town, the research works mainly highlight the cultural, historical, scientific, geographical, architectural and artistic values of the heritage of the ancient town as well as the issue of exploiting the value of cultural heritage to serve tourism development, along with solutions to preserve and promote the value of cultural heritage. However, at present, Vietnam has no direct and systematic research works on the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in the two above areas. Therefore, this is a gap that needs to be researched.

With the desire to gradually fill the gaps in research on the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town, the dissertation focuses on researching the following issues in the dissertation:

- + Clarifying some theoretical issues on cultural heritage, socio-economic development, and the two-way interactive relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development.

- + Survey, present, analyze and evaluate the current status of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in two research locations; compare similarities and differences.

+ Discuss some related issues, recommend some solutions to harmoniously handle the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in the two research areas.

1.2. Theoretical basis of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development

1.2.1. Some basic concepts

1.2.1.1. Concept of cultural heritage

Currently, UNESCO's definitions of cultural heritage are most commonly used in many academic studies and national and international legal documents, reflected in the Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in Events of Armed Conflict (1954), the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)...

In Vietnam, the 2024 Law on Cultural Heritage affirms: cultural heritage includes intangible cultural heritage and tangible cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. Intangible cultural heritage is knowledge, skills, customs, cultural expressions, and related objects, artifacts, and spaces practiced and transmitted by communities, groups, and individuals through many generations, forming their cultural identity, constantly transmitted, protected, recreated, and created, with historical, cultural, and scientific value.

Tangible cultural heritage is a material product with one, some or all historical, cultural, scientific or aesthetic values, including historical-cultural relics, scenic spots, relics, antiquities and national treasures.

On the concept of “heritage”: Scientists such as Robert Hewison, Tunbridge, Ashworth, Harrison all have studies on “heritageization”. Scientist Oscar Salemink commented on the process of “heritageization” as “ascribing the title of heritage to cultural relics and practices”. The studies basically emphasize that cultural practices are transformed into cultural heritage through social impacts with many activities of the subject communities.

1.2.1.2. The values of cultural heritage

According to many studies and viewpoints of UNESCO, cultural heritage has many values, such as cultural value, economic value, social value... This multi-value nature makes cultural heritage play many important roles for each community, region, country, and ethnic group such as: being a resource and creating a driving force to promote socio-economic development, being the basis for creating new values, being a condition contributing to promoting world cultural exchange...

1.2.1.3. Preserving and promoting the value of cultural heritage

According to the Culture and Development Textbook, cultural heritage conservation is the way and measure to preserve and promote cultural heritage values in community life; promoting cultural heritage is targeted actions to bring cultural heritage values into social practice. To promote the value of cultural heritage, it is possible to carry out propaganda and education activities on the

value of cultural heritage, thereby fostering awareness of preserving and spreading the values of cultural heritage through generations; or carry out economic activities, especially tourism, and develop cultural industries to exploit cultural heritage in socio-economic development. Preserving and promoting cultural heritage values are two sides of a process, having a dialectical, mutual relationship and influencing each other.

Currently, there are several trends in preserving cultural heritage. Author Gregory J. Ashworth has summarized three viewpoints on preserving cultural heritage: The viewpoint of preserving intactness; The viewpoint of preserving inheritance; The viewpoint of preserving development. In Vietnam, author Duong Van Sau believes that there are approaches to preserving and promoting the value of cultural heritage, which are preserving the original state, preserving development and cultural innovation. Author Tu Thi Loan pointed out behavioral trends that need to change in the process of heritage conservation, and emphasized the need to change the rigid old way of thinking about heritage conservation such as “freezing”, which leads to a situation where it is very difficult to promote the multifaceted value of heritage, including economic value. In the current new context with the rapid development of science, technology and innovation, some researchers also emphasized the need to renew thinking about heritage conservation, to “revive” cultural heritage through new approaches, especially through technology and innovation.

1.2.1.4. On socio-economic development

Economic development is the process of improving and increasing the level of economic development in a country or region, including the development of production, trade, finance, services, etc. Social development is the effective resolution of social problems arising in the development process, aiming to create a safe, healthy, humane social environment, facilitate integration, ensure fairness and continuously improve the quality of life of each individual as well as the whole community and society.

In Vietnam, socio-economic development refers to the comprehensive and overall development of the socio-economic structure with the growth of key economic indicators and sectors and the reasonable and effective resolution of social issues to create a safe, healthy, humane social environment, ensuring fairness and quality of life for each individual as well as the whole community according to objective standards of social progress.

1.2.2. Relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development

The research has found that there is a mutual impact between cultural heritage and socio-economic development, both positive and negative. Through these impacts, the multi-dimensional, dialectical relationship, sometimes favorable (with positive impacts, promoting development), sometimes unfavorable (with negative impacts, hindering development) between cultural heritage and socio-economic development is clearly demonstrated.

1.2.2.1. Impacts of cultural heritage on socio-economic development activities

* *Positive impacts:* 1- Cultural heritage is an important resource contributing to promoting socio-economic development; 2- Cultural heritage contributes to promoting social security; preserving and developing craft villages; increasing community cohesion and improving people's quality of life; 3- Cultural heritage is the basis for enhancing cultural exchange, absorbing the quintessence of human culture and creating new values.

* *Negative impacts:* Some cultural heritages also have certain barriers to social development, the burning of votive paper at festivals is ostentatious, wasteful, and pollutes the environment; the serious ecological pollution in many craft villages and streets; regulations on cultural heritage conservation prevent people from building or renovating houses in the ancient town, affecting the quality of life... In some ethnic minority communities today, backward customs still exist in funerals, weddings, childbirth..., which leads to consequences in building a new cultural life.

1.2.2.2. Impact of socio-economic development activities on cultural heritage

* *Positive impacts:* 1- Socio-economic development activities, including cultural industries based on the exploitation of cultural heritage values, create many technical facilities, contributing effectively to investment in restoration, embellishment and conservation of cultural heritage; 2- Socio-economic development activities contribute to raising public awareness of cultural heritage, helping to promote and enhance cultural heritage; 3- Socio-economic development activities contribute to expanding opportunities for domestic and international exchange and cooperation in preserving and promoting the value of cultural heritage.

* *Negative impacts:* 1- Socio-economic activities have the potential to damage and threaten the sustainability of cultural heritage with poor management, lack of control, regardless of heritage protection requirements; 2- Socio-economic activities (especially tourism) cause environmental pollution, affect the cultural space of heritage destinations, and threaten sustainable development; 3- Tourism, service, and commercial activities... overexploit cultural heritage for economic purposes, causing cultural heritage to be transformed and its inherent good cultural values to fade; 4- Socio-economic activities can create social conflicts due to the lack of harmony of interests and responsibilities among entities.

1.2.3. Theories applied in the dissertation

1.2.3.1. Theory of cultural capital

The theory of cultural capital is presented through the studies of authors Pierre Bourdieu, Tran Huu Dung, Tran Dinh Huou, Tran Thi An, Pham Hong Tung... Basically, studies affirm that culture is a community asset and only becomes capital when the community distills them into values that can be used and promoted to bring certain benefits. A community with abundant cultural capital can transform cultural capital into economic capital through tourism activities and

cultural industries. Applying the theory of cultural capital helps to understand and analyze the impact of cultural heritage on the production, consumption and distribution of cultural industrial products, contributing to promoting the socio-economic development of localities, including the two research areas.

1.2.3.2. Heritage economics theory

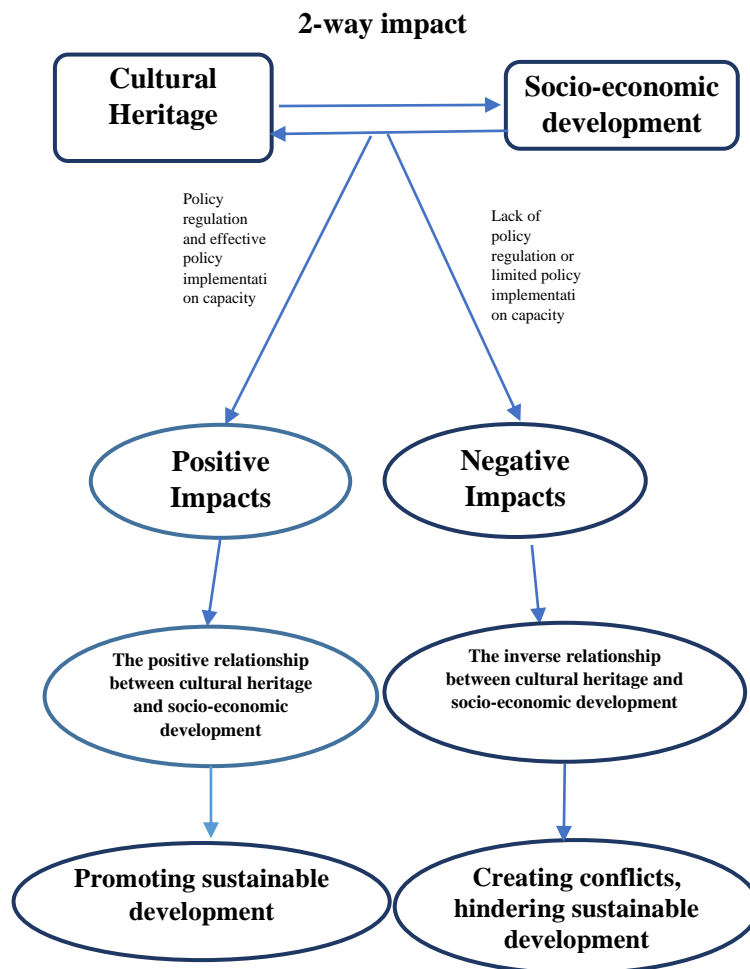
Cultural heritage is the subject of research and practice of heritage economics with some typical works by authors Throsby, Rypkema, Mourato, Ha Huu Nga..., in which the core contents of heritage economics are analyzed and clarified. Related to this theory, researchers also put forward the concept of heritage economics based on the combination of economics and heritage management and exploitation to create economic value, while preserving and promoting the unique cultural values of each country.

This is an interdisciplinary field of study in which heritages are not only considered as assets to be preserved but also as economic resources that can be exploited through tourism, services and other economic activities associated with heritage.

1.2.3.3. Dissertation analytical framework

The analytical framework can be summarized through the following diagram:

The relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development



1.3. Overview of the research area

1.3.1. Hanoi Old Quarter

Hanoi Old Quarter is the name used to refer to an urban area with a long history, concentrating the population of the ancient Thang Long citadel, trading and commerce activities, small-scale industry, now belonging to Hoan Kiem ward, Hanoi city (before July 1, 2025 belonging to the old Hoan Kiem district), natural area is 1,93km²; population size is 71,280 people (the highest density in the city). As of the time of the dissertation research (the end of 2024), Hoan Kiem district (old) has more than 190 diverse and rich tangible cultural heritages with unique architecture and community cultural activities with many typical and typical festivals. Over the past 20 years, Hoan Kiem district (old) and Hanoi city have always focused on preserving and promoting the value of cultural heritages in the old quarter, building many typical tourism products, organizing many cultural activities, including building a walking space in the old quarter, around Hoan Kiem lake and surrounding areas. However, the management and conservation of cultural heritage in Hanoi old quarter still has some shortcomings, raising many issues that need to be considered and resolved.

1.3.2. Hoi An Ancient Town

According to Project No. 16-DA/TU dated July 4, 2023 of Quang Nam Provincial Party Committee on “Building and developing Hoi An in the direction of an ecological - cultural - tourist city by 2030”, Hoi An Ancient Town “is a special national relic, recognized by UNESCO as a world cultural heritage; is an outstanding physical manifestation of the combination of cultures through the periods in an international commercial port and is a typical example of a perfectly preserved traditional Asian port”.

Currently, Hoi An Ancient Town (in Hoi An ward, Da Nang city) has an area of 0,3 km², is a complex including many types of heritage coexisting and preserved quite intact with the interweaving of architectural works, religious works and ancient living works along with intangible cultural heritages being preserved by the community and directly practiced in the old town environment, creating a unique cultural heritage ecosystem.

In recent times, the cultural heritage system in Hoi An Ancient Town has been managed and preserved according to specific regulations and guidelines of international documents on management and preservation of cultural heritage; at the same time, it must strictly comply with the provisions of the Law on Cultural Heritage and accompanying guidance documents as well as specific local regulations. Hoi An has made many efforts in exploiting its unique and distinctive values to build unique tourism products; making Hoi An a bright spot on the tourism map of Vietnam and the world. However, unpredictable climate change and people's needs are posing great challenges to the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage in Hoi An.

Chapter 1 Summary

Chapter 1 reviews the existing research on cultural heritage and its relationship with socio-economic development, including specific studies focused on the Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town. At the same time, it systematizes fundamental theoretical issues, summarizes relevant research theories applied in the dissertation, constructs the analytical framework, and provides an overview of the two research sites. These efforts establish a robust scientific and practical foundation for the analyses presented in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN HANOI OLD QUARTER AND HOI AN ANCIENT TOWN

2.1. Survey of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in two research locations

2.1.1. The promulgation and implementation of policies to preserve and promote cultural heritage values in conjunction with socio-economic development of the government and people in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town

In Hanoi Old Quarter:

Over the past 10 years, the District Party Committee, People's Council, and People's Committee of Hoan Kiem District (old) have proactively and actively built, issued, and implemented projects, plans, and programs on preserving and effectively promoting the value of cultural heritage, organizing traditional festivals, promoting culinary cultural heritage, developing tourism (including heritage tourism), and developing the night-time economy on the basis of exploiting the potentials and comparative advantages of cultural heritage...

By 2024, the key targets and tasks set out in the programs and projects have achieved quite comprehensive results. The cultural heritage values of Hanoi ancient town associated with tourism, performance activities, exhibitions, etc. are increasingly promoted to a large number of tourists. The awareness of the people and government representatives is basically in agreement that the conservation and preservation of cultural heritages has been focused on, especially those related to beliefs and religions, associated with the history of labor and cultural creativity of the people.

In Hoi An Ancient Town:

In recent times, the government and people of Hoi An have made great efforts to preserve and promote the value of cultural heritages - important resources for development - through practical and specific policies and actions. The policies and strategies of Quang Nam province (old) and Hoi An city (old) through the periods have focused on developing Hoi An in the direction

associated with preserving traditional cultural values crystallized in the system of tangible and intangible cultural heritage; developing Hoi An associated with efforts to protect the ecological environment, preserve cultural and natural values, especially emphasizing the need to harmoniously resolve the relationship between inheritance, preservation and development, common identity and specificity; taking ecology and culture as the foundation and driving force for socio-economic development according to the motto “conservation for development” and “development for conservation”.

2.1.2. Impacts of cultural heritage on socio-economic development in two research locations

Through sociological surveys using questionnaires and in-depth interviews conducted, together with the analysis of secondary documents, it is possible to see the impacts of cultural heritage on the socio-economic development process in the two research areas (both positive and negative).

Firstly, cultural heritage is “capitalized”, converted into economic capital, becoming an important resource contributing to promoting socio-economic development in the two research areas.

With Hanoi Old Quarter: Cultural heritage is preserved, its value is promoted and becomes the “input” to build a product system of cultural industries such as cultural tourism products, handicrafts, performing arts, culinary products... with a mix of ancient and modern, typically heritage tours; visiting famous historical sites and ancient towns with handicraft shops; participate in festivals and cultural events; enjoy many traditional arts and unique traditional culinary products of Hanoi; walking spaces (walking space in Hanoi ancient town; walking space in Hoan Kiem Lake area and vicinity); Thang Long and Hang Trong water puppetry; culinary tour of Tong Duy Tan - Ta Hien - Dong Xuan Night Market; tour “Hanoi Night - Touching Point of Emotions”...

Many attractive activities took place in the ancient town, applying many new technologies, creating the appeal of cultural products, expressing the beauty and richness of Hanoi night through the lens of art right in the heart of heritage; thereby contributing to shaping the cultural identity and brand of Hanoi - “Creative City” in the field of design, promoting the socio-economic development in general and the cultural industries of the Capital in particular (in 2019, the contribution of the Capital's cultural industries was 1,49 billion USD, accounting for 3,7% of the city's GRDP); making an important contribution to the total state budget revenue in Hoan Kiem district (old).

With Hoi An Ancient Town: The tourism/service industry accounts for nearly 64% of the total economic structure of Hoi An city (old), developed on the basis of effectively promoting the value of the unique tangible and intangible cultural heritage system. Many unique and attractive tourism products have been built on the basis of cultural heritage, such as the Lantern Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, Old Town Night Tour, Pedestrian Street, Hoai Giang Night, singing and

playing Bai Choi... Thanks to that, tourism revenue increasingly accounts for a high proportion of the total production value of Hoi An city (old) (67,8% in 2024), in which cultural tourism and heritage tourism have the leading important position.

Second, cultural heritage contributes to improving people's quality of life, ensuring social security, and promoting the preservation of traditional crafts in the two research areas.

In Hanoi Old Quarter: Cultural heritage contributes to creating many job opportunities for people in Hanoi Old Quarter as well as spreading to neighboring areas, from jobs in the tourism industry (tour guides, hotel staff, restaurants), to jobs such as sales, transportation, handicrafts, heritage management... In addition, some traditional craft streets in the ancient town are being restored and maintained with sophisticated products (based on the convergence of the quintessence of all directions) that have become popular items domestically and internationally, opening up opportunities to increase income for artisans and local people.

In Hoi An Ancient Town: Cultural heritage has been bringing many profits to businesses and business households in Hoi An, contributing to improving the material and spiritual life of the people. Tourism and trade and service sectors related to cultural heritage have created thousands of jobs for local people in a variety of industries and occupations, such as restaurant and hotel staff, tourist and cargo transport staff, tour guides, handicraft artisans, etc. With the attraction of its international cultural heritage, the number of domestic and foreign tourists to Hoi An has strongly recovered after the COVID-19 pandemic and is increasing, contributing to improving income for the local community.

Third, cultural heritage contributes to increasing community cohesion, creating a basis for international cultural exchange and cooperation and creating new cultural values in the two research areas.

In Hanoi Old Quarter: The cultural heritage system in Hanoi Old Quarter is a living witness of the past with stories and memories of generations of ancestors through the ups and downs of history, creating a solid foundation to connect the community over the centuries. Activities to preserve and promote cultural heritage over the past time have contributed to creating public spaces and cultural environments where people can practice cultural activities and participate in community activities, such as festivals and cultural events organized around historical heritages in the ancient town... Therefore, local people as well as tourists from all over the world can experience and connect in a common space, can share, learn and together honor traditional cultural values. Cultural heritage in Hanoi Old Quarter is one of the important factors contributing to promoting international cultural exchange and cooperation activities, promoting the creation of new cultural values.

In Hoi An Ancient Town: Hoi An is a place to preserve, conserve and effectively promote the value of cultural heritage. Many types of heritage that have been and are in danger of disappearing have been invested in to restore,

maintain well, preserve good customs and practices, thereby fostering love and attachment to the homeland and country in the community of Hoi An people.

Craft villages preserve landscapes, traditional crafts, rich folk art treasures, unique culinary culture, etc, which are then built into attractive tourism products; festivals and cultural events are regularly organized with the participation of the community and tourists, thereby contributing to increasing community cohesion, raising awareness, enhancing responsibility for protecting and promoting the value of cultural heritage in each Hoi An resident as well as the responsibility for cultural heritage in general of tourists when coming to each heritage destination.

With the characteristics of an early commercial port, Hoi An has been proactively establishing and expanding international cooperation in the field of cultural heritage, contributing to promoting Hoi An's cultural heritage and opening up many opportunities for international cooperation in preserving cultural heritage.

However, besides many positive impacts, cultural heritage also has some negative impacts, affecting socio-economic activities in the two research areas.

In Hanoi Old Quarter, some craft villages and streets still pollute the ecological environment by discharging solid and toxic waste, affecting the quality of life; the phenomenon of encroachment on sidewalks by craft households, causing traffic jams, affecting the urban aesthetic still exists; old town apartments have degraded, not ensuring safety for residents... *In Hoi An Ancient Town*, many households face the risk of losing their lives when living in seriously degraded old houses but cannot repair or restore them due to the huge cost of up to billions of dong, beyond the people's ability...

2.1.3. Impacts of socio-economic development activities on cultural heritage in two research locations

On the positive side:

Firstly, economic development activities contribute to increasing financial resources for cultural heritage conservation in Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town.

In Hanoi Old Quarter: The development of economic activities, including the development of cultural industries, especially cultural tourism based on the exploitation of the value of cultural heritages, not only brings profits to businesses, improves people's lives, but also contributes to increasing budget revenue; creates the basis for increasing financial resources for the protection, restoration and embellishment of heritage, improving infrastructure such as transportation systems, public spaces, and tourism facilities; developing heritage conservation projects, reinvesting part of them in searching, storing, planning and preserving, and sustainably promoting the value of cultural heritages.

Statistics of the People's Committee of Hoan Kiem district (old) show that in 2024, total revenue from the trade and service sector increased by 14,6% (reaching 100,3% compared to the 2024 plan); of which revenue from the trade sector increased by 14,3%; revenue from accommodation and food services increased by 66,2%; revenue from tourism increased by 48,5%; revenue from

other service sectors increased by 8,1%. Economic activities, especially trade, services and tourism, not only bring benefits to businesses, but also create more jobs, improve livelihoods, contribute to improving people's quality of life and have more financial resources for cultural heritage conservation.

In Hoi An Ancient Town: Hoi An is considered one of the models of preserving and promoting cultural heritage values through economic development, especially tourism, service and trade activities thanks to the consensus and cooperation of the community, businesses and local authorities. After being recognized as a world cultural heritage, many ancient houses were degraded. The government and people of Hoi An recognized the great value of cultural heritage and made efforts to preserve the heritage site structure, while developing heritage tourism to both improve people's lives and create funds to restore and renovate the relics.

Hoi An city (old) has mobilized and effectively used resources from economic activities, especially tourism, trade, food and beverage services, accommodation; central and local budget sources, social resources from people, businesses, domestic and international organizations to preserve and promote cultural heritages, improve infrastructure, renovate ancient works, and build cultural spaces to serve tourists and people. Revenue from entrance tickets is the main source of budget revenue for Hoi An and about 50% - 70% of this is used to renovate and embellish relics as well as to support the restoration of collective and private relics.

Second, economic development activities contribute to raising public awareness of cultural heritage, helping to promote, expand international cooperation opportunities and enhance the cultural heritage of Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town.

In Hanoi Old Quarter: The development of economic activities, especially tourism activities based on promoting the cultural heritage value of Hanoi Old Quarter helps raise community awareness, fostering pride in the cultural heritage of “Hanoi - 36 streets”; thereby promoting self-awareness, voluntariness, and responsibility to protect cultural heritage in each citizen. The development of cultural industries helps to elevate heritage, bringing cultural heritage closer to the international community.

In Hoi An Ancient Town: Through many activities such as restaurant business, food service, passenger transportation, production and trade of handicraft products, etc., Hoi An people have more opportunities to interact with domestic and foreign tourists. To meet the needs of tourists, each person must pay attention to the quality of products and services (such as dishes, traditional handicraft products such as to he, home decoration lamps, vases, ceramic paintings, wood carvings, wooden statues, wooden household items, Hoi An lanterns, etc.). At the same time, each person becomes a “cultural ambassador”, spreading the beauty of Hoi An culture. Thanks to tourism and cultural exchange activities, Hoi An's cultural heritages are known to many domestic and foreign tourists, widely spread and enhanced in value. Local people also raise their awareness of protecting, inheriting and promoting the values of cultural heritage.

Third, socio-economic activities in the ancient town contribute to preserving cultural heritage, strengthening community cohesion and promoting awareness of preserving local cultural heritage.

In Hanoi Old Quarter: Economic, commercial, service and cultural activities have positive impacts on the cultural heritage system in Hanoi Old Quarter, especially on intangible cultural heritage. Many customs, practices, festivals, folk performing arts... of the people of Hanoi - Ke Cho in the past associated with 36 bustling and bustling trading streets associated with craft streets and handicrafts from all regions are still preserved in the cultural activities of the people of Hoan Kiem. The traditional festivals of Hanoians, along with many cultural activities, rituals, customs, habits, etc, have become the characteristics of the people, preserved through generations; thereby continuing to connect each ancient Thang Long resident in a community of sympathy and shared destiny to this day. This creates a strong conservation environment, where people directly participate in maintaining the values of cultural heritage.

In Hoi An Ancient Town: Generations of Hoi An people have lived with the heritage, lived in the heritage, attached to and consciously preserved the heritage by maintaining customs, practices, rituals, festivals, folk arts, folk games, etc. over the centuries. These are indispensable activities in the lives of the people, and at the same time are important factors for tourists to understand and deeply feel the cultural heritage of Hoi An. Through that, the love and respect for cultural heritage and the spirit of community solidarity are constantly nurtured and enriched, contributing to creating the soul of Hoi An Ancient Town with a unique East-West cultural exchange. The crafts of making lanterns, weaving, ceramics, woodworking, etc are still maintained and developed in the daily life of Hoi An people, both as an economic activity and as a way to preserve techniques and folk knowledge through generations.

On the negative side:

In Hanoi Old Quarter: The strong urbanization process and rapid development of residential activities in Hanoi Old Quarter are causing environmental pollution, threatening the authenticity and sustainability of cultural heritages. *In Hoi An Ancient Town:* Mass tourism and residential activities are increasing pressure on cultural heritage and living environment in Hoi An. The rapid growth rate of mechanical population, the increasing number of tourists, leading to overload at famous tourist attractions; causing environmental pollution, affecting the landscape and aesthetic value of Hoi An Ancient Town; leading to the risk of losing the authenticity of cultural heritage, changing the lifestyle in the community, leading to the loss of traditional cultural values.

2.2. Comparison of cultural heritage and socio-economic development in two research locations

2.2.1. Similarities

The two research locations both play the role of cultural heritage centers and increasingly pay more attention to cultural heritage conservation, considering

cultural heritage as an important resource for socio-economic development, especially in tourism development, cultural industries and related service and commercial activities.

2.2.2. Differences

The Hanoi Old Quarter features a cultural heritage system situated at the heart of a modern urban area, where historic sites coexist and intertwine with dynamic administrative, commercial, and transportation activities. Consequently, efforts must emphasize the harmonious integration of ancient and modern elements within a large-scale urban environment, linked to a development model that combines services, trade, and culture.

In contrast, Hoi An Ancient Town preserves a cohesive architectural ensemble and an intact cultural space through rigorous conservation practices and sustainable tourism development. The defining challenge for the Hanoi Old Quarter lies in “preservation amid ongoing development,” while Hoi An exemplifies “preserving identity to foster sustainable tourism.” These differences, in urban scale, management approaches, and development strategies, have resulted in distinct characteristics in the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage values amid the socio-economic progress of each locality.

Chapter 2 Summary

Chapter 2 primarily examines the current state of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in the two research sites. This is achieved by analyzing the multidimensional impacts, both positive and negative, of cultural heritage on socio-economic development, and vice versa, thereby identifying the beneficial and challenging aspects of this relationship. Building on these findings, the chapter compares the Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town to highlight similarities and differences, while pinpointing key issues that warrant further attention. These insights provide a solid foundation for the broader discussions of related topics in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter 3

ISSUES IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN HANOI OLD QUARTER AND HOI AN ANCIENT TOWN

3.1. Impacts of international integration, industrialization and modernization on the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development

3.1.1. International integration - opportunities and challenges for the preservation, promotion of cultural heritage and maintenance of national identity

Nowadays, the process of international integration is taking place more and more strongly, becoming an inevitable trend, having a profound influence and impact on many fields, including cultural heritage. International integration helps

promote cultural heritage in Vietnam in general and the two research areas in particular to the world, enhancing the country's position in the international arena; creating conditions for access to financial resources, technology and international expertise in heritage conservation; contributing to promoting cultural exchange, cultural dialogue and diversifying approaches to heritage; promote countries to improve their legal systems and cultural policies in line with international standards; at the same time, help local communities have more opportunities to benefit from heritage, especially through cultural tourism when heritage becomes a resource to build unique cultural products and services, becoming attractive destinations for tourists from all over the world.

However, international integration also poses significant challenges to cultural heritage, the biggest of which is the loss of national cultural identity when culture is at risk of being “hybridized” and its identity fading in the face of the “fierce attack” of cultural products from developed countries with the strength and ability to expand culture globally.

Language - the most important element of culture, also a very important type of intangible cultural heritage has been facing many challenges in the process of international integration when English has become the international language of communication. In addition, the phenomenon of excessive commercialization of cultural heritage for profit has led to the violation of core values and threatened the sustainability of heritage. International integration, leading to an increase in international tourists at heritage destinations, also puts great pressure on infrastructure, pollutes the environment and affects heritage space.

Many counter-cultural aspects also easily cross national borders to infiltrate our country, creating a trend in society of turning back on traditional values. Therefore, to cope with the risks of international integration, promoting national cultural identity, preserving and promoting the value of cultural heritage, fighting against the tendency of cultural assimilation, and selectively absorbing the quintessence of human culture are becoming more urgent than ever.

3.1.2. Industrialization, modernization and the problem of ensuring the authenticity and value of cultural heritage

Industrialization and modernization are inevitable processes in the development of every country. This process has profoundly changed society in many aspects, including culture and especially cultural heritage - which is “sensitive and vulnerable” to changes in space, time, lifestyle, etc.

Industrialization and modernization have multifaceted impacts, which can promote the positive or negative relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development through positive and negative impacts on the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage values.

Regarding positive impacts, the industrialization and modernization process promotes scientific research, raises social awareness of the value and role of cultural heritage - an important resource and driving force of development, which

can be transformed into inputs of the production process to create valuable products of cultural industries.

Along with industrialization and modernization, many modern technologies have emerged, contributing significantly to the dissemination, communication, and promotion of cultural heritages with digital platforms such as virtual museums, documentary videos, 360-degree tours, AI restoration, etc, especially heritages that are being degraded, at risk of loss, or cannot be accessed regularly, or intangible cultural heritages that need to be recorded and preserved; thereby contributing to bringing heritage closer to the general public, especially the young generation.

The legal and institutional framework is strengthened by modernizing governance with the development of a rule-of-law state and a more transparent governance system, promoting the legalization of the right to protect and exploit cultural heritage. Modernized infrastructure makes access to cultural heritage easier, expands the space for cultural contact and dissemination, helps heritage become a tourist destination, creates jobs for local communities, contributes to increasing economic value, and further enhances the capacity for cultural heritage conservation.

Regarding negative impacts, the process of industrialization, modernization with urbanization and infrastructure development, if lacking direction, will cause damage, deterioration, encroachment and loss of authenticity of cultural heritage. The living space of some communities in craft villages is gradually being “concretized”; festivals and folk beliefs are commercialized, gradually losing their depth, context and sacredness, causing the original cultural values to fade away.

Industrialization profoundly changes lifestyles and community structures - the social foundations that preserve and reproduce heritage; creates inequalities in accessing, exploiting and enjoying heritage; and causes the degradation of the ecological environment - the natural foundation closely linked to many types of cultural heritage.

The two research areas are both urban areas with a long history of formation and development, converging the cultural quintessence from many regions, both diverse and unique with a very rich and distinctive cultural heritage system, which can become an important resource to promote the socio-economic development of the locality as well as the whole country.

However, these are also densely populated urban areas with rapid modernization and urbanization processes that have multi-dimensional impacts on cultural heritage.

3.2. Impacts of digital transformation on the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development

Currently, in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution taking place strongly, digital transformation has become an inevitable trend in all areas of social life, including cultural heritage, helping to reshape the way to approach, preserve, and promote cultural heritage more effectively, creatively and sustainably.

In terms of positive impacts, digital transformation opens up a large space for heritage to be preserved, to be “revived”, to spread and integrate, overcoming boundaries of space, time and language, so that people, especially the young generation, can easily and conveniently access it anytime, anywhere, enhancing national cohesion and pride.

Promoting digital transformation in the field of cultural heritage helps promote cultural creativity, contributes to transforming cultural values into economic values, promotes the development of cultural industries with many creative, attractive and valuable products and services through the application of AI, blockchain, AR/VR technology...; thereby, increasing income from cultural tourism, contributing to local economic development; forming new industries and professions such as digital content design, heritage application programming, cultural data management...; attracting young people to participate in creative start-up activities in the cultural field; creating economic, educational and social development opportunities in disadvantaged localities.

Regarding negative impacts, the reproduction of heritage through technology sometimes does not reflect the true nature of culture, easily causing widespread “heritage dramatization”, turning heritage into performance products, separated from the original cultural context; leading to the loss of originality and uniqueness. Copying, editing or adding digital effects, sometimes done arbitrarily in the digital environment, can change the content and form of heritage, causing distortion of heritage.

The situation of “digital inequality” tends to increase because people, especially in remote areas - where many unique cultural values are preserved - are often the group with less access to technology, leading to the risk of imbalance in the distribution and management of digital cultural knowledge, causing a digital divide.

In particular, cyber security risks and copyright infringement of cultural heritage are alarming issues when implementing digital transformation. Digitalizing heritage can easily lead to copying, illegal use, loss of control of cultural assets, and easily lead to disputes and infringement of cultural assets when in reality there are still many legal gaps regarding copyright and intellectual property rights for digital heritage today. From there, the problem with the two research areas is that it is necessary to carry out the digital transformation process selectively, scientifically and in association with community cultural practices, both protecting the value of cultural heritage, protecting the copyright of digital heritage, and meeting the needs of interaction, access and development of cultural industries in a sustainable direction.

3.3. “State - market - society” with the harmonious resolution of the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development

The trio “State - Market - Society” has a close relationship, interacting with each other in the process of linking cultural heritage and socio-economic development. The State manages and operates cultural heritage activities; businesses associated with the market contribute to turning heritage into a

valuable exploited resource; the community is the creator, directly practicing heritage, closely attached to heritage; research scientists provide the basis for policy consultation for the State in a direction suitable to reality. Therefore, there needs to be synchronous coordination between the “State - market - society” to harmoniously handle the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development to limit the negative impacts of the two subjects above.

The “State - Market - Society” triad plays an important role in regulating the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in the two research areas. Currently, both research areas are facing opportunities and challenges, difficulties in preserving and promoting the value of cultural heritage in the context of implementing the two-level local government model.

In Hanoi Old Quarter: The two-tier local government model creates opportunities for local governments to manage and adjust strategies for preserving and promoting cultural heritage according to the needs and characteristics of each specific area; thereby helping activities related to cultural heritage to be closer to the community, decisions on preservation can be made more quickly and flexibly; creating opportunities for the community to participate more in the work of protecting, restoring and exploiting cultural heritage; but can also lead to a lack of uniformity in heritage management strategies because each ward may have different priorities and strategies; difficulties in coordination between wards and functional agencies, and difficulties in resources for cultural heritage conservation.

In Hoi An Ancient Town:

After nearly 20 years of building a brand as a famous tourist city domestically and internationally, Hoi An no longer exists as a city - a district-level administrative unit. The merger is a major policy, creating a breakthrough in the apparatus and development space, bringing opportunities to increase resources, complement each other in the work of preserving cultural heritage in Hoi An, and at the same time helping cultural heritage-related activities become closer and be deployed more quickly to the community.

However, the division of Hoi An city into wards and the change in the above name have significant impacts on the established tourist destination brand and the unique cultural identity of Hoi An after centuries of formation and development, not only causing difficulties in international transactions, but also affecting the thoughts and feelings of the community of residents of Hoi An ancient town. Assigning the function of cultural heritage management to a ward may not ensure the necessary resources and expertise to preserve and promote the value of these cultural heritages.

While Hoi An has just been registered in the UCCN network, continuing to practice innovation within the scope of 3 wards, one commune or just one central ward also poses many difficulties. The fact that Hoi An is no longer a city under the province may affect the management of the old town (belonging to Hoi An

ward) when the infrastructure investment was previously carried out by the old Hoi An city, ensuring the connection between communes and wards; if each ward later implements its own way, it will easily lead to a lack of synchronization.

Chapter 3 Summary

In the current context, marked by a complex interplay of opportunities and challenges, new demands are emerging that call for targeted and appropriate measures to maintain balance and harmony between cultural heritage and socio-economic development. In Chapter 3, the dissertation examines several key issues related to this relationship: (1) the processes of international integration, industrialization, modernization, and urbanization, along with the challenge of preserving the authenticity and intrinsic value of cultural heritage; (2) digital transformation and the new issues it raises in the contemporary era; and (3) the interplay among the “State-Market-Society” triad in achieving harmonious management of the cultural heritage-socio-economic development relationship.

Building on these discussions, the chapter offers targeted policy recommendations for Hanoi City, Da Nang City, the new Hoan Kiem Ward, and the new Hoi An Ward. These proposals are framed within the context of Vietnam's two-tier local government model and aim to enhance the effectiveness of heritage conservation efforts while promoting heritage values in tandem with sustainable socio-economic development.

CONCLUSION

1. During Vietnam's ongoing process of national renewal (Đổi mới), the Party and State have consistently prioritized understanding and effectively managing the relationship between cultural construction and socio-economic development. This includes carefully balancing the preservation and promotion of traditional cultural and historical values, embodied in the nation's rich, diverse, and unique cultural heritage, with broader socio-economic progress. Cultural heritage itself represents a resource that can be strategically “capitalized” upon. It is not only a precious national asset but also a vital input for developing cultural industries, thereby helping to preserve and promote national cultural identity while driving socio-economic growth.

However, this relationship is not solely beneficial. Alongside the positive impacts outlined above, socio-economic activities can exert negative effects on cultural heritage, leading to certain limitations and challenges that must be addressed. Consequently, achieving balance and harmoniously managing the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development is both a matter of principle and an urgent contemporary requirement.

2. Drawing on the established scientific and practical foundations, the dissertation examines the relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development in the Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town

across three chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the existing research landscape, systematizes key theoretical issues, analyzes relevant theories applied in the study, constructs the dissertation's analytical framework, and offers a summary of the two research sites. In Chapter 2, through the analysis of secondary documents and sociological survey data collected in both localities, the dissertation assesses the current state of this relationship. It explores the multidimensional and reciprocal impacts, highlighting both positive aspects that foster mutual benefits and negative aspects that create tensions, and compares similarities and differences between the two sites. Chapter 3 engages in an in-depth discussion of broader related issues, including international integration, industrialization, modernization, urbanization, digital transformation, and the interplay among the “State-market-society” triad in achieving harmonious management of the cultural heritage–socio-economic development relationship.

The dissertation also identifies opportunities and challenges facing the two sites amid the implementation of Vietnam's two-tier local government model. It concludes by offering policy recommendations aimed at safeguarding the legitimate interests of communities and businesses, enhancing local branding and identity, and further enriching the cultural depth of the Hanoi Old Quarter and Hoi An Ancient Town.

3. The research findings of the dissertation have successfully addressed the posed questions and validated the research hypotheses. However, given the rapid and unpredictable changes in the global landscape, coupled with emerging non-traditional security challenges, further studies are warranted. These could focus on developing sustainable development strategies for areas rich in cultural heritage or exploring effective models for heritage management.

Ultimately, sustained collaboration among the government, local communities, and businesses is essential to build and maintain viable sustainable development models. In these models, cultural heritage serves not only as a core resource, making significant contributions to socio-economic progress and improving community well-being, but is also preserved, inherited, and leveraged to foster the creation of enduring cultural values for future generations. This approach ensures the continuous and dynamic evolution of cultural heritage, while helping to promote Vietnamese culture globally and strengthen the nation's cultural soft power in the new era./.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION

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