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Research paper

Development and Cultural Adaptation of Residential Architecture Chiang Khan Community

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Abstract

The study titled "Development and Cultural Adaptation of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan Community" examines the development of residential architecture within the Chiang Khan community and studies the cultural adaptation of residential architecture in the area. The research employs a qualitative methodology, gathering data from documents and fieldwork conducted in the Chiang Khan community. The target population includes local experts, practitioners, and related individuals in the Chiang Khan community. The research tools consist of surveys, observations, and interviews. The collected data is analyzed using concepts of cultural change, nostalgia, values from oral traditions, structural-functional theory, cultural diffusion theory, and postmodern theory. The findings are presented through narrative analysis.

The study found that the development of residential architecture in the Chiang Khan community can be divided into four periods: 1) From 1909 to 1975, 2) From 1975 to 2007, 3) From 2007 to 2010, and 4) From 2010 to the present. Researchers observed that changes occurred in response to social conditions, cultural assimilation, economic development, and prevailing values. These factors resulted in the development and transformation of residential architecture in three aspects: 1) Architectural structural patterns, 2) Types of construction materials, and 3) Functional utilization. Each of these aspects includes traditional designs, a mixture of traditional and modern designs, and modern designs. Regarding the cultural adaptation of residential architecture, it was found that the cultural adaptation within the Chiang Khan community consists of: 1) Economic cultural adaptation, 2) Value-based cultural adaptation, and 3) Cultural adaptation in architectural styles.

Keywords: *Development; Adaptation; Residential Architecture Chiang Khan Community.*

1. Introduction

Chiang Khan is a district in Loei Province, located along the Mekong River. It was once the capital of the Lao People's Democratic Republic or the Kingdom of Laos. The old Chiang Khan city, or Sannakham (Victory of War), held strategic importance in the history of the Lan Xang Kingdom. It was built by Khun Kham, the son of Khun Khua of the Lan Xang Kingdom, around the year 1400 AD. Around the year 1707 AD (2250 B.E.), Vientiane established the former Chiang Khan, located on the left bank of the Mekong River, as a frontier city. Chiang Khan district is considered a renowned area of Loei Province with unique characteristics. It is a city with historical significance, particularly in the strategic military aspects of the Lan Xang Kingdom. With its geographical features and cultural traditions inherited along both sides of the Mekong River, the way of life of Chiang Khan residents has become diverse and distinctive, forming an integral part of the district's local identity. (Natthaphon Tanming, 2010: 7)

Due to Chiang Khan's location on the lowlands along the Mekong River, the river was its most crucial transportation route. This made Chiang Khan an important trading community with goods transported by boats. The convenience of trading with both the Lao People's Democratic Republic and nearby provinces made Chiang Khan a hub of commerce. It also served as a port connecting to Nong Khai, where goods could be further transported by train to Bangkok. In the past, Chiang Khan was a center for trade and business in the region. During the time before Laos transitioned to its current political system, trade between Thai merchants in Chiang Khan and Lao merchants flourished. As a result, Chiang Khan became a prosperous and densely populated community. (Sirisak Khumraksa, 1996: 175). Historically, Chiang Khan also played a role as a stopover and distribution point for goods. The challenging routes filled with islands and rapids made transporting goods between cities such as Luang Prabang, Vientiane, and other towns along the Mekong River in Thailand both difficult and time-consuming. As a result, areas along the Mekong River, particularly Chai Kong Road (lower riverfront side) from Soi (alley) 9 to Soi 21, became significant trading zones in the town. The busiest areas were from Soi 9 to Soi 13, with Soi 10 at its heart. This included a major port and a small market that acted as an exchange point for goods and a rest stop for shipping boats. The bustling trade in Chiang Khan attracted migrants from other places, creating a diverse population. Among the newcomers were Chinese and Vietnamese immigrants who settled alongside the existing Lao communities. The Chinese population outnumbered the Vietnamese, and both groups migrated to Chiang Khan in waves, using both land and river routes. During the Indochina War, a significant number of people settled in Chiang Khan.

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Most of the Chinese and Vietnamese engaged in trade, while the original Chiang Khan residents primarily relied on agriculture. (Interview with Suban Suwansingh, 2013, cited in Warinat Pitakwongwan, 2014). This led to the establishment of residential areas along the Mekong River, forming a community that stretched along Chai Kong Road, parallel to the river. Notably, the residential areas were built as part of the old wooden community, influenced by the architectural style of the Chinese settlers. This old town of Chinese traders has long been an integral part of Chiang Khan along Chai Kong Road. (Chaowalit Sriwutiphun, 2022, interview).

The establishment of the Ban Vinai Refugee Center in Pak Chom District was a result of political changes in Laos during 1975. The opening of this refugee camp in Pak Chom also led to the arrival of foreigners who visited and stayed in Chiang Khan. Initially, the area around Chai Kong Road became known among foreigners working at the Ban Vinai Refugee Center. Over time, this recognition expanded to other groups of international tourists, especially those seeking adventure tourism. Tourists utilized the area along Chai Kong Road as accommodation. By 1986, Chiang Khan had gained recognition among both Thai and international visitors as a tourist destination, particularly the Kaeng Khut Khu area. (Suwaree Sripana, 2008: 18). From 1994 onward, guesthouse operators from outside began establishing their businesses, aligning with the growing influx of foreign tourists at the time. As tourism gradually gained momentum, the demand for accommodations, coffee shops, and souvenir shops increased. Various groups began entering the tourism business in Chiang Khan, including Chiang Khan locals who had left for work and returned to start businesses in their hometown, as well as outsiders attracted to the area. As tourism activities grew, some residents of Chiang Khan sold their land and moved outside the town. This dynamic created a constant flow of people coming and going, reshaping the community over time. (Warinat Pitakwongwan, 2014: 36).

In 2009, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Loei Office, in collaboration with public and private sector agencies in Chiang Khan District, organized the "100th Anniversary of Chiang Khan: An Ancient Town by the Mekong River" celebration. This event marked the 100th anniversary of Chiang Khan District's establishment and became a key factor in making Chiang Khan a well-known tourist destination to this day. The once quiet Chai Kong Road regained its vibrancy, with tourism activities turning areas of the town, particularly from Soi 5 to Soi 21—and densely concentrated between Soi 9 and Soi 21—into spaces designated for tourism services. Old wooden houses were renovated into businesses, and some buildings were demolished and replaced with new constructions. Tourism activities also led to a continuous rise in land prices in Chiang Khan. This caused the expansion of tourist-focused businesses and the changing ownership of these establishments. A common sentiment often heard is that nowadays, Chiang Khan is no different from other tourist destinations, offering similar products and services to visitors. However, it is not to say that Chiang Khan lacks its distinct identity and unique context altogether. (Warinat Pitakwongwan, 2018: 36-37). As the popularity of Chiang Khan grew, a wave of modern development and tourism began spreading throughout the district, visibly impacting the community. These changes influenced the lifestyle, attitudes, values, thinking processes, and beliefs of the local people, leading to further transformations in the town's wooden-architecture houses. These traditional old wooden row houses, which had long served simply as residences, were adapted to meet the demands of an evolving society brought about by tourism. Influences from the shifting social context prompted alterations to the architectural styles, incorporating new elements while blending them with traditional aesthetics for functionality and appeal. (Nampachai Siwattana, 2022, interview).

Based on the background and significance, this study focuses on the development and Cultural Adaptation of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community. The purpose is to understand the evolution of residential housing and the cultural adaptations within Chiang Khan. This research serves to gather knowledge as a resource for studying residential architecture, recognizing Chiang Khan as a cultural Residential Architecture community that has undergone significant changes. Residential Architecture in Chiang Khan reflects adaptations to different eras while maintaining its identity as cultural heritage. These architectural changes highlight the influence of time and societal shifts. As such, these residences should be preserved as a form of cultural inheritance, enabling them to coexist within a diverse social and cultural context in the ever-changing modern era.

The management of architectural transformation in historic urban areas has long been a subject of interest. Earlier works also emphasized that balancing heritage conservation with tourism and economic development requires strategic planning (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Tiesdell et al., 1996).

2. Objectives of the research

1) To study the development of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community.
2) To study the cultural adaptation of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community.

3. Research methodology

The study on the development and cultural adaptation of housing in the Chiang Khan community aims to examine the development of housing within the community and explore the cultural adaptations that have occurred. The research area is focused on the Chiang Khan community, which holds historical and cultural connections to the Lan Xang culture. It possesses distinctive characteristics and has developed and changed due to by social conditions. Located on the left bank of the Mekong River, Chiang Khan is rich in natural and cultural resources, such as traditional wooden houses and various unique festivals, which are well-recognized and serve as defining features of Chiang Khan. These cultural treasures have been preserved and passed down as a heritage of the ancestors to the present day.

The target population for the study consists of the following groups:

Experts: Selected purposively, including scholars knowledgeable in the historical background of Chiang Khan, architectural experts with an understanding of ancient, modern, and contemporary architecture, as well as those who are aware of the cultural adaptations and changes in housing within the Chiang Khan community.

Practitioners: Comprising housing owners, both those residing in their properties and absentee landlords, renters of residential properties, and individuals engaged in business activities within the housing areas in Chiang Khan.

Local Academics: Those involved in managing residential housing within the Chiang Khan community.

Relevant Stakeholders: Tourists visiting Chiang Khan, individuals traveling to the community, and those who are interested or have obtained information or news about Chiang Khan from various media sources.

The research employs tools such as surveys, observation forms, and interview forms to gather data. The collected information is then analyzed according to the research framework, which includes concepts related to cultural change, nostalgia, values derived from narratives, the structural-functional theory, the diffusion of cultural theory, and postmodern theory. The findings are presented through a descriptive analysis.

Table 1: Transformation of Residential Architecture in Chiang Khan (1975–Present)

Period	Total Houses (Est.)	% Traditional Houses	% Hybrid Houses	% Modern Houses	Primary Construction Materials Used	Functional Use Trend
1975–2007	~200	80%	15%	5%	Wood, clay tiles, bamboo	Residential/agricultural
2007–2010	~230	60%	30%	10%	Mixed (wood + cement, brick, zinc)	Residential + guesthouses emerging
2010–Present	~280	40%	40%	20%	Cement, steel, glass, synthetic materials	Guesthouses, cafés, souvenir shops, homestays

As shown in Table 1, the proportion of traditional houses has steadily declined since 1975, while hybrid and modern houses have increased, reflecting both material changes and shifts in usage aligned with tourism expansion.
This research employed qualitative methods including semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and document analysis to explore the evolution and cultural adaptation of residential architecture in Chiang Khan. Participants included residents, business owners, scholars, and tourism officials selected through purposive sampling. Field data were supported by photographic documentation and historical records. These qualitative approaches enabled a deep understanding of community experiences, value shifts, and architectural transformations, aligning with interpretive research suitable for socio-cultural and architectural studies.

4. Research findings

From the study of the development of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community and the cultural adaptation of Residential Architecture within the community, the researcher obtained findings as detailed according to the research objectives as follows:
1) Development of Residential Architecture Chiang Khan Community
In studying the development of housing in the Chiang Khan community, the researcher conducted a document-based and historical evidence study combined with fieldwork. This included surveys, observations, interviews, and conversations with individuals knowledgeable about the Chiang Khan community, both inside and outside the area, as well as academics. The research involved gathering information about the housing in the Chiang Khan community by combining insights from local leaders, community experts, and scholars with knowledge of the area's housing. Using data from documents, historical records, and accounts from Chiang Khan locals, the study revealed the development of housing in the Chiang Khan community from the past to the present. The timeline of this housing development is divided into the following periods.

4.1. Development of residential architecture in the Chiang Khan community from 1909 to 1975

During the years 1909 to 1975, the Chiang Khan community was a traditional community comprised of various ethnic groups that settled and lived there. These groups can be categorized into four main ethnicities: Thai, Lao, Chinese, and Vietnamese (referred to locally as "Kaew" or "Yuan"). The Residential Architecture… showed signs of the Thai people in the Chiang Khan community during this period primarily consisted of traditional homes of those engaged in agriculture, farming, fishing, and trade as their main occupations. Traditional houses featured elevated wooden structures with gable roofs, tiled or shingled roofing, and wooden plank walls. The Lao community, related to the Thai people by kinship, had its housing within the area as well. The Chinese community, which migrated to engage in trade, introduced row houses based on Chinese architectural concepts. These houses could be found as standalone or row houses. The area gradually grew into a commercial district, with settlements concentrated mainly in the central part of the community, from Soi 9 to Soi 14. As for the Vietnamese community, many had already resided in the area before this period. However, evidence of traditional Vietnamese housing is now rare. Most Vietnamese homes were integrated into Thai neighborhoods, particularly in the Ban Tai area. The housing during this time is classified as traditional housing, which can be divided into two types: Single Houses and Row Houses.

Fig. 1: Chiang Khan City in the Past.

Fig. 2: Characteristics of Single Houses and Row Houses.

Source: Author's fieldwork, based on community interviews and site visits (1998–2000).

4.2. Development of residential architecture in the Chiang Khan community from 1975 to 2007

The development of Residential Architecture from 1975 to 2007 was influenced by political changes in Laos. In late 1975, merchants, particularly the Chinese population trading in the area near Chai Khong Road, began migrating to a newly constructed street, Si Chiang

Khan Road. As a result, the original Residential Architecture along Chai Khong Road was largely abandoned, with only the original Chiang Khan community members, mostly farmers and fishermen, remaining. During this period, many of the houses were unoccupied and left for rent or were minimally used by residents without much renovation or maintenance. The housing style reflected a simple rural lifestyle typical of villagers, farmers, and fishers. The overall condition of Chiang Khan's Residential Architecture during this time became old and deteriorated due to neglect, giving the area a general atmosphere of historical and traditional living. However, starting in 1986, tourists began visiting the area, and by 1994, groups of entrepreneurs rented houses to engage in tourism-related businesses. This led to the Residential Architecture in Chiang Khan being gradually adapted and renovated to cater to tourism demands. The Residential Architecture during this period largely retained its traditional appearance, although it continued to show signs of aging and deterioration over time. Furthermore, a mixed style of Residential Architecture began to appear, incorporating both structural and material combinations. These changes reflected the evolving needs of the community and the impact of tourism on the architectural development of Chiang Khan.

Fig. 3: The Living Atmosphere of the Chiang Khan Community After 1975.

Source: Author's fieldwork and community observation (1998–2000).

4.3. Development of residential architecture in the Chiang Khan community from 2007 to 2010

The development of Residential Architecture from 2007 to 2010 marked a period when the Chiang Khan community began attracting more tourists and became increasingly recognized as a tourist destination. Tourism entrepreneurs from outside the area started renting residential properties, while many of the original Chiang Khan residents began relocating to other areas. New entrepreneurs arrived and began renovating the deteriorated and aging homes in Chiang Khan to improve their condition and make them suitable for tourism-related businesses. Although the houses retained their traditional appearance, there were significant changes in the materials used for renovation and adjustments made to the Residential Architecture structures. Additionally, the way the houses were used began to shift, reflecting their integration into the growing tourism industry.

Fig. 4: The Modified and Transformed Residences of the Chiang Khan Community, along with the Living Atmosphere of the Community After 2007.

Source: Author's field documentation and visual survey of residential transformations in Chiang Khan (1998–2000, contextualized through community accounts up to 2007)

4.4. The development of residential architecture in the Chiang Khan community from 2010 to the present

The development of Residential Architecture from 2010 to the present has seen a significant transformation in many directions within the Chiang Khan community. This change has been driven by a diverse population and the evolution of Residential Architecture styles, materials, and other influencing factors. During this period, the Residential Architecture in Chiang Khan includes traditional homes that remain in the community, blended styles that mix traditional and modern forms and construction materials, as well as entirely modern structures influenced by designs from other areas. Additionally, the functionality and usage of the houses have shifted from their original purposes, reflecting the community's adaptation to modern needs and external influences.

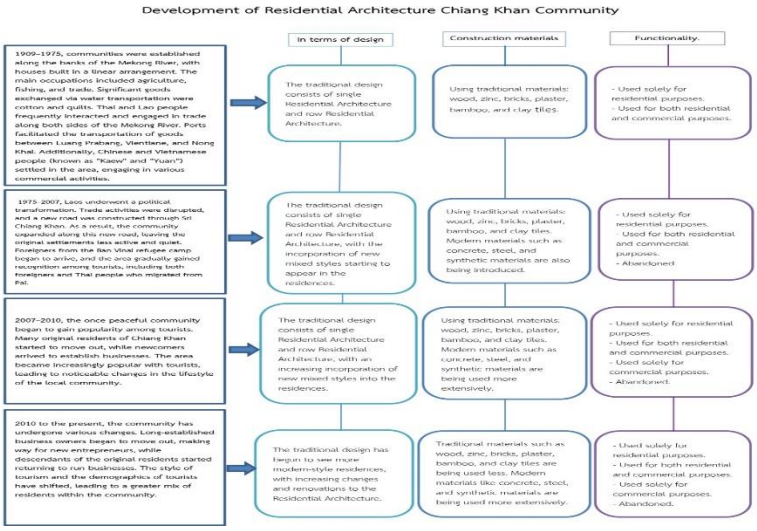
Fig. 5: The Chiang Khan Community, with A Significant Influx of Tourists, Has Adapted and Transformed Its Way of Life According to New Values.

Source: Author's field observation and interviews reflecting changes in lifestyle due to tourism (1998–2010).

Fig. 6: The Renovation and Transformation of Residences in the Chiang Khan Community from 2010 to the Present.

Source: Author's field survey and photo documentation (2010–present).

A Framework Chart Showing the Development of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan Community.



5. Cultural adaptation of residential architecture Chiang Khan community

5.1. Economic-cultural adaptation of residential architecture Chiang Khan community

Since 2009, the Chiang Khan community has been developed into a tourist destination through collaboration among various agencies, organizations, and residents, with a focus on lifestyle tourism. This has made Chiang Khan a renowned tourist attraction and an essential contributor to the local economy. The residents of Chiang Khan have adapted their lifestyles and participated in the economic system to meet the growing demands of tourism. Chiang Khan is a traditional community comprised of ethnic groups such as Thai, Lao, Chinese, and Vietnamese. In the past, its housing was characterized by elevated wooden houses and Chinese-style shophouses designed for commercial purposes. However, as tourism has grown, cultural and economic transformations have taken place. Community members have begun to adapt by embracing new occupations to cater to a diverse range of tourists. This has resulted in a more diverse economy in Chiang Khan, along with changes in lifestyles, planning, and housing management within the community to align with the continuously developing tourism economy.

Fig. 7: Residential Spaces Have Been Renovated and Decorated for Various Forms of Business Operations.

Source: Author's field documentation and visual survey of commercial adaptations (1998–2010).

5.2. Value-based cultural adaptation of residential architecture Chiang Khan community

Currently, the Chiang Khan community is experiencing cultural adaptation in terms of values related to housing and lifestyle, resulting from the growth of tourism in the area. New entrepreneurs are replacing the old ones, while the younger generations of original Chiang Khan families are returning to run businesses in the community. Meanwhile, the community's way of life and activities are evolving to accommodate the increasingly diverse groups of tourists. This has led to cultural blending among entrepreneurs, tourists, and people from various backgrounds. Such changes have brought about transformations in the community's social structure, beliefs, and traditional values. People have started adopting new values and behaviors through interactions with those from different societies, as well as being influenced

by advancements in science, technology, education, and modern communication. This has resulted in a hybrid of beliefs, values, and practices, creating a culture that adapts to the changing social landscape. Most residents of Chiang Khan have adjusted to the tourism system by changing their mindset and way of life while embracing new ideas alongside preserving their traditional culture. These new values are passed down from generation to generation, forming a process of cultural adjustment that simultaneously preserves the community's identity and evolves its values to align with present-day societal changes.

Fig. 8: Residential Spaces Have Been Renovated and Decorated According to the Preferences of Incoming Tourists.

Source: Community interviews on tourism-driven renovations (1998–2010)

5.3. Cultural adaptation in the architectural styles of residential architecture Chiang Khan community

Cultural adaptation in Residential Architecture within the Chiang Khan community has changed in terms of structural design, construction materials, and functional use, all of which cater to the continuously growing tourism industry. These changes can be summarized as follows:

1) Structural Design: Residential Architecture styles encompass traditional, traditional-modern blends, and modern designs. Traditional structures, such as elevated wooden houses and row houses, have gradually transformed into commercial buildings or hotels with mixed and innovative designs. This shift has largely been driven by investors aiming to accommodate tourism-related businesses. These new structures replace the original residential forms, which primarily served agricultural and fishing purposes. The remaining traditional houses, many of which have deteriorated and become dilapidated, are being renovated and adapted for use in the tourism-driven economy.

Fig. 9: The Structural Design of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan Community.

Source: Created by authors based on architectural surveys and structural analysis (1998–2000).

2) Construction Materials: Traditional materials, such as wood, clay tiles, and zinc sheets, are being blended with modern materials like concrete, cement, steel, glass, and synthetic materials for construction, renovations, and decorations. The choice of materials often depends on the preferences of property owners, the majority of whom are tourism entrepreneurs aiming to cater to the demands of the growing tourism industry.

Using traditional materials, Using traditional materials and synthetic materials Using synthetic materials

Fig. 10: The Materials Used in Residential Architecture Construction.

Source: Created by authors based on architectural surveys and structural analysis (1998–2000).

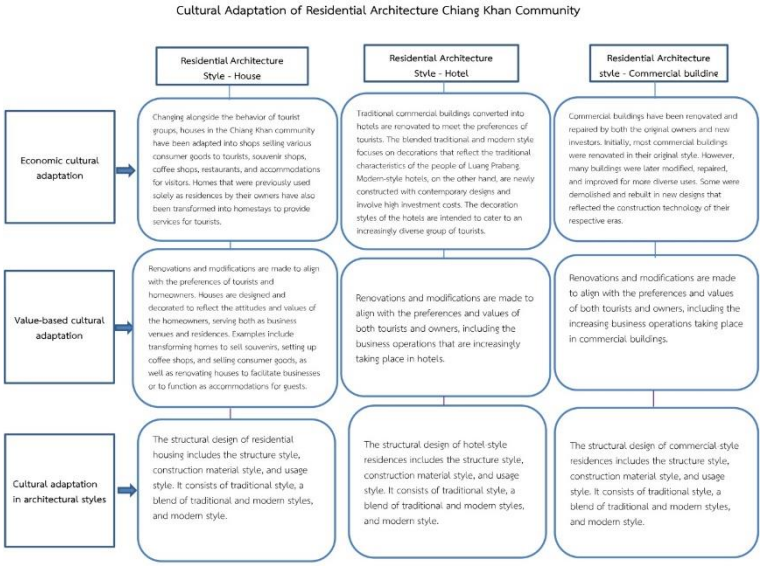
3) Functional Usage: The use of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community has shifted to include various purposes: solely for residential living, a combination of residence and business, purely for business purposes, or left abandoned. These changes have been driven by tourism and new values influencing activities in the area. Investors and entrepreneurs from outside the community have increasingly rented or purchased properties to operate businesses, while many original residents have moved to other areas. Overall, Chiang Khan has fully adapted to becoming a tourism-driven community, integrating cultural and economic influences from external sources. The area has transformed into a hub of both residence and business, catering to visitors from diverse locations. At the same time, the number of original Chiang Khan residents living in the community has gradually declined.

Used solely for residential purposes. Used for both residential and commercial purposes commercial purposes

Fig. 11: The Functional Design and Usage of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan Community.

Source: Created by authors based on architectural surveys and structural analysis (1998–2000)

A Framework Chart Showing the Cultural Adaptations of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan Community.



6. Summary

From the study of the development and cultural adaptation of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community, the findings can be summarized as follows

The development of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community reveals that during 1909–1975, Chiang Khan was a traditional community composed of four ethnic groups: Thai, Lao, Chinese, and Vietnamese (Yuan and Kaeo). Thai Community: Traditional elevated wooden houses with gabled roofs, with Thai people primarily engaged in agriculture, fishing, and trade. Lao Community: Resided in traditional houses like those of the Thai community. Chinese Community: Built row houses and stand-alone houses in traditional Chinese styles, developing areas into commercial hubs within the community, especially from Soi 9 to Soi 14. Vietnamese Community: Settled in scattered areas, mainly around Ban Tai. Currently, very few Vietnamese houses remain. The Residential Architecture during this period is referred to as "traditional" and can be categorized into two types: stand-alone houses and row houses.

From 1975 to 2007, significant changes occurred due to political events in Laos in 1975, which led to the migration of Chinese residents and merchants living along Chai Khong Road to Sri Chiang Khan Road. As a result, the houses along Chai Khong Road were abandoned and fell into disrepair, with only local villagers engaged in agriculture and fishing remaining in the area. Many houses were left vacant, rented out, or neglected for maintenance. In 1986, tourists began to visit the area, and starting in 1994, entrepreneurs began renting houses to convert them into accommodations or businesses related to tourism. This led to adjustments in Residential Architecture, which retained traditional styles but incorporated changes in structure and materials to support new uses. For example, houses were repaired and renovated to suit tourism-related operations. During this period, the Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community began to show signs of deterioration over time, yet retained some aspects of their original traditional design. Simultaneously, these houses started to adapt more to accommodate the growing tourism industry.

From 2007 to 2010, the Chiang Khan community began gaining increased popularity among tourists, becoming a well-known destination for visitors. Tourism entrepreneurs from outside the community started renting houses in the area, while some of the original residents of Chiang Khan began relocating to other places. The once-decaying and deteriorated houses were renovated by entrepreneurs for tourism-related businesses. Although the traditional characteristics of the housing design were partially preserved, there were changes in the materials used, as well as improvements to the structures to make them more visually appealing. Additionally, the functional use of these houses shifted to better support tourism-related businesses.

From 2010 to the present, housing in the Chiang Khan community has undergone significant changes in various directions, driven by the diversity of the resident population and other factors. The evolution of housing during this period can be categorized as follows:

Traditional: Original houses that remain within the community. Hybrid: A combination of traditional and modern styles, incorporating changes in both structure and materials. Modern: Structures influenced by external architectural trends. Additionally, the functional use of housing has shifted, with many private residences transformed into tourism-related businesses. Chiang Khan's Residential Architecture development during this time reflects its adaptation to the changing times, meeting new demands, and being influenced by external factors.

Table 2: Functional Use of Residential Buildings in Chiang Khan Over Time

Time Period	% Residential Only	% Mixed-Use (Home + Business)	% Business Only	% Vacant/Abandoned	Notable Trends
1975–2007	85%	10%	2%	3%	Agriculture-based, minimal tourism
2007–2010	60%	25%	10%	5%	Start of guesthouse and café conversions; rentals increased
2010–Present	30%	45%	20%	5%	Business dominance; significant investment from outside entrepreneurs

Cultural Adaptation of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan Community includes: 1) Economic Aspect: Since 2009, the Chiang Khan community has developed into a lifestyle-based tourist destination through collaboration between various organizations, agencies, and locals. This transformation has made Chiang Khan a well-known tourist site and a key driver of the local economy. The original community, consisting of elevated wooden houses and Chinese-style row houses serving trade purposes, has adapted to the growth of tourism by embracing new occupations to accommodate visitors. This shift has diversified Chiang Khan's economy while also bringing changes to the way of life and housing management, aligning with the ever-growing tourism economy. 2) Cultural Values Aspect: The Chiang Khan community has evolved in multiple directions, influenced by the influx of new tourism entrepreneurs, the return of community descendants to start businesses, and the adjustments made by traditional residents to keep pace with tourism trends. Tourism and the community's lifestyle have changed in line with the diversity of visitors and business operators. This transformation has led to social adaptation among Chiang Khan's residents, affecting values, beliefs, interactions with people from different backgrounds, and the adoption of new concepts and behaviors. These elements have been blended with traditional culture to form a hybrid set of values and practices, passed down through generations to adapt to the rapidly changing societal trends while preserving the community's cultural identity. 3) Architectural Aspect: The architectural design of Chiang Khan's housing has changed significantly over time. Historically, housing consisted mainly of wooden houses, row houses for trade, and commercial buildings with traditional styles that met the basic needs of agricultural and fishing lifestyles. Over time, as some residents abandoned houses, deteriorated or were left unmaintained, the architectural styles began to diversify. Today, new commercial buildings, hybrid-style hotels, and modern structures built by investors have emerged to support businesses and investments in the area. This change has resulted in a mix of traditional and modern styles in renovations and constructions. Some residents strive to preserve the original character of houses, row houses, and commercial buildings to maintain harmony with the community, even as structural diversity becomes more evident. Regarding construction materials, traditional materials such as wood, bamboo, zinc sheets, clay tiles, bricks, and plaster are now combined with modern materials like cement, steel, tiles, glass, and synthetic materials. This adaptation mostly occurs during renovations to suit the needs of tourism businesses. While some houses retain their traditional look, many have fallen into disrepair over time, leading to more extensive material and structural renovations to cater to the demands of tourism and new preferences for interior design and decoration within the Chiang Khan community. 4) Functional Use Aspect: Changes in the functional use of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community have been driven by tourism and evolving values. Residential Architecture now serves multiple purposes, including exclusive residential use, combined residential and business use, sole business purposes, or being left abandoned. This shift began with homeowners or tenants repurposing spaces for business to accommodate increasing tourist flows, spurring the emergence of new ventures in the community. Original Chiang Khan residents began relocating, selling, or renting their properties to external investors for business operations. Incoming entrepreneurs have focused on optimizing spaces to suit the activities and consumer behaviors of tourists. A prominent example is the conversion of residences into a wide variety of shops catering to tourist demands, along with reconfigurations of spaces to facilitate new activities aligned with ideas and ways of life specific to each generation. Consequently, Chiang Khan has transformed into a tourism-driven community where old and new cultural elements blend distinctively and visibly.

7. Discussion

From the study of the development and cultural adaptation of Residential Architecture in the Chiang Khan community, the study found that the development of housing can be divided into the following phases

During the period 1909–1975, the Chiang Khan community built its houses in a linear pattern along the banks of the Mekong River. The residents mainly engaged in agriculture, fishing, and trade, with goods being exchanged via boats across the river, such as cotton and quilts, as well as transportation of goods through ports linking Luang Prabang, Vientiane, and Nong Khai. The population of the community consisted of Thai, Lao, Chinese, and Vietnamese people, who coexisted and conducted trade in the area. Most of the houses were elevated wooden houses with gabled roofs. The Chinese built detached houses and row houses based on traditional Chinese design, while the Vietnamese settled among the Thai population in the Ban Tai area. The Residential Architecture in Chiang Khan during this era was referred to as traditional housing, divided into two main types: detached houses and row houses, which aligns with the research of Srisak Vallibhotama (1994: 10). According to his study, the formation of Thai residential areas in the past showcased a clear distinction between two levels of communities: rural homes and urban centers. While urban areas had markets serving as hubs for social, economic, and cultural activities, rural residential clusters were situated near water sources such as rivers, canals, or ponds. Housing located near rivers or canals often formed long settlements along the waterway, known as river linear settlements.

During the period 1975–2007, the political changes in Laos significantly impacted trade along the Mekong River. However, this period also marked the beginning of adaptive reuse of traditional housing, as tourism gradually emerged as a new economic driver. Residents and external entrepreneurs began converting traditional homes into homestays and shops, contributing to the revitalization of the historic riverside area. However, the community began to recover with the influx of international tourists and Thai visitors from Pai, leading to the renovation of houses to accommodate tourists and a revitalization of the area. Recent studies also show that urban architectural adaptation in Southeast Asia has been largely influenced by both internal socioeconomic transitions and global tourism trends. These works emphasize the shift from traditional housing to tourism-driven multifunctional structures in historical urban zones, like Chiang Khan. Global studies emphasize that Western architectural influence is often hybridized with local traditions, resulting in a form of 'cultural layering' that reflects both historical continuity and tourism commodification. Global literature further stresses that architectural identity in historic towns must reconcile modernization pressures with community-based planning. However, technological advancements also played a role in addressing housing challenges and developments.

During the period 2007–2010, the Chiang Khan community transformed from a quiet and serene village into a popular tourist destination, resulting in noticeable changes in the residents' way of life. Many of the original Chiang Khan residents began moving out, selling their homes, or renting their properties to outsiders who established tourism-related businesses. Increased investments from external investors

led to renovations, modifications, and the construction of new buildings within the area, turning the community into a significant tourism hub. This aligns with the research of Chinoros Pantavee (2010), which explains that tourism significantly revitalized previously declining communities, shifting their primary purpose toward catering to tourism. Contemporary urban studies suggest that such revitalization often results in gentrification, where community identity is restructured around consumer experiences rather than indigenous heritage.

Since 2010, the Chiang Khan community has undergone significant changes. Previous business operators began moving out, while new entrepreneurs, major investors, and descendants of the original residents returned to establish businesses in the area. Tourism patterns and tourist demographics shifted, leading to a mix of people within the community. Development efforts primarily focused on fostering the local economy, with most old wooden houses being renovated into accommodations, restaurants, souvenir shops, cafés, and homestays to meet tourists' demands. This aligns with the research of Warinat Phitakwongwan (2014), which explains that the transition into a tourist city, starting in 2009, reflects changes in the way of life and relationships among people, moving toward a more individualistic dynamic. However, international perspectives suggest this individualism often emerges in tandem with cultural homogenization, where unique local practices are altered to fit broader market expectations.

Cultural Adaptation in the Economic Sector Since 2009, the Chiang Khan community has adapted to becoming an economic area, with locals shifting their way of life and mindset to participate in a more diverse economic system. New occupations have emerged in the community to meet the growing demands of tourists visiting the area. Chiang Khan residents began planning their lives and developing professions to align with the local economy, leading to cultural changes in housing to support the growing and increasingly diverse economic activities in the community. This aligns with the research of Chinoros Pantavee (2010), which explains that the evolution of communities integrating trade economies has played a significant role in shaping relationships within various dimensions of commerce systems. In similar cases, global studies have shown that such transformations reshape not only architecture but also power dynamics and community agency in heritage zones.

Cultural Adaptation in Value-based The Chiang Khan community has adapted its values to align with the growth of tourism. Locals have altered their way of life, embracing new ideas, behaviors, and values because of interactions and trade with people from diverse social backgrounds. This has led to a blend of new values and beliefs with traditional culture, which is then passed down to future generations to ensure that the original culture coexists harmoniously with modern societal trends. This aligns with the research of Panat Hannakind (1994), which explains that values refer to the recognition, acceptance, and willingness to follow certain principles or ideals held by individuals or groups in a society. These values can pertain to objects, ideas, or actions in various aspects, such as economics and social practices. Newer studies argue that in global heritage cities, such hybrid values emerge through repeated negotiation between authenticity and tourist satisfaction.

Cultural Adaptation in Architectural Styles. The cultural adaptation in architecture within the Chiang Khan community reflects a variety of housing styles and integrations, ranging from traditional structures, hybrid designs that combine traditional and modern elements, to entirely modern styles. The construction materials used also vary, including traditional materials like wood and bricks as well as modern materials like glass and cement, chosen for their suitability for renovations or new constructions. Additionally, the functional uses of these buildings have diversified to meet the changing needs of the community. This aligns with the research of Khaisang Sukavattana (1977), which discusses Western architectural influences in Thailand and the events that impacted architectural works. The study highlights the influence of Western architecture at different periods, affecting building styles, construction methods, and materials, as well as functional purposes in environmental contexts. Similarly, the National Cultural Commission (1992: 32–36) explains that cultural adaptation involves blending and adjusting elements to create harmony and coexistence within the same society, such as between old and new cultures. More recent interdisciplinary works argue for a dynamic, globally influenced vernacular that evolves through cultural hybridity and tourism consumption (King & Abu-Lughod, 2020).

Scientific Implications:

This study, while qualitative, contributes to a deeper understanding of how localized communities adapt their architectural practices under tourism-driven pressures (Aydemir, 1999). Future research should explore the environmental consequences of replacing traditional materials with synthetic ones and the socio-economic implications of resident displacement in heritage zones. Quantitative studies could measure shifts in property ownership, land value, and demographic transitions to offer empirical grounding.

Key research gaps include:

- Lack of data on environmental degradation due to modern materials.
- Absence of long-term studies on resident displacement and gentrification.
- Need for cross-regional comparison with other ASEAN heritage towns facing similar transitions.

Future research should explore the environmental sustainability of modern construction materials and the social impacts of resident displacement in Chiang Khan. These areas offer valuable insights into the long-term consequences of tourism-driven architectural change and can strengthen the scientific and practical relevance of heritage adaptation studies.

8. Conclusion

This study reveals how Chiang Khan's residential architecture has evolved in response to tourism, transitioning from traditional to hybrid and modern forms. Using a qualitative approach, it captures the socio-cultural nuances of adaptation. However, further research should include empirical metrics such as material sustainability and displacement impacts. The findings support global observations that heritage communities face tension between preservation and commercialization (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Tan & Richards, 2020). By identifying these transformations, the study contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable heritage management and urban change, especially in rapidly evolving tourism-driven towns across Southeast Asia.

Suggestions

1) It is recommended to conduct broader studies on Residential Architecture to provide a more comprehensive view of the Chiang Khan community.
2) Future research should assess these changes, such as the disadvantages of transformations, shifts in traditional beliefs, and the spread of increasingly diverse cultures in the current context. To build on the findings of this study, future research should explore the environmental impacts of replacing traditional construction materials such as wood and clay tiles with modern alternatives like cement, steel, and glass in Chiang Khan. Another important area of investigation is the effect of resident displacement due to tourism-led

development on community cohesion and intergenerational cultural transmission. Additionally, researchers should examine how external tourism investors influence the transformation of architectural identity and local heritage values. Comparative studies with other ASEAN heritage towns undergoing similar transitions would also provide valuable regional insights into gentrification, cultural blending, and sustainable adaptation strategies.

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