

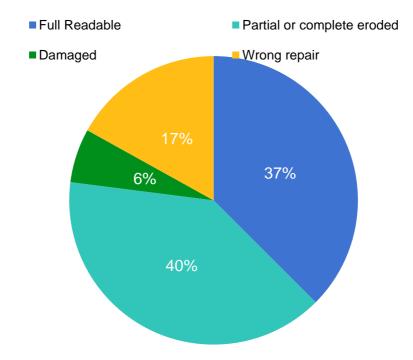
# REPORT NGŨ HÀNH SƠN INSCRIPTIONS CONDITION



Latest update: 12.6.2022

#### IN GENERAL

In the process of data collection and preservation of the written Nom script in the monitoring area, our research team has only counted about 90 inscriptions scattered in 05 caves: Tang Chon, Huyen Khong, Van Thong, Linh Nham, Am Phu and some other locations. Huyen Khong cave has 59 inscriptions, Tang Chon cave has 20 inscriptions, Linh Nham cave has 03 inscriptions, Van Thong cave has 02 inscriptions, Am Phu cave has 03 inscriptions and the others have 03 inscriptions. Of which, only 79 inscriptions were taken and surveyed in the two largest caves, Huyen Khong and Tang Chan. Other areas cannot be surveyed due to lack of equipment and financial constraints.



According to a preliminary survey of 76 inscriptions at Huyen Khong and Tang Chan caves, there are only 31 inscriptions in full readable condition (accounting for 40.79%), 33 inscriptions with partially or completely eroded (accounting for 43 %), 5 inscriptions were damaged such as chisels etching on documents, writing overlaid on documents (accounted for 6.58%), 14 inscriptions were damaged due to wrong restoration such as painting over, chiseling and overlapping documents (accounting for 18.42%).

#### **INSCRIPTIONS IN HUYEN KHONG CAVE**



Huyền không Cave

Huyen Khong cave is one of two caves located on Thuy Son mountain, the highest one in the Marble Mountains. Huyen Khong cave is openair, has a round arch, a flat base, and has five holes in the arch to connect with the outside. During the day, sunlight floods in. That fanciful shimmer has made the cave one of the attractions with the highest spiritual value here.

The entrance to the cave has an archway with the name carved on Huyen Khong Quan, the

gate is a bit narrow, the steps are quite deep, there are statues of *Defenders of the Justice (Dharma)* in the middle of the cave, a reminder for people to give up wrong thoughts when they arrive at the sacred Buddha's door.

Inside the cave is an upside-down bell. At the top is the statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, made in 1960 by artist Nguyen Chat, who is famous in Non Nuoc stone art village. Below is the altar of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva. On the left side of the cave, there is a temple to Ms. Ngoc Phi (Mrs. Chua Tien); Temple of Loi Phi (Lord Thuong Thousand). Deep right is the ancient Trang Nghiem Tu temple built in 1825, consisting of three compartments. The main hall worships Buddha, the left side worships 3 saints (including Quan Cong, Quan Binh and Chau Xuong) symbolizing virtue, wisdom and loyalty. In particular, the right room worships Ong To and Ba Nguyet, where couples come to pray for love and hope that Nguyet Lao will tie the pink thread for a hundred years of happiness.



Huyền không Cave

The survey shows that the cave has about 59 inscriptions.



- Tittle: untitled Kind: inscription of name Author: Unidentified Status: blurred letters, unreadable Solutions:
- . Stamping
- . Digitizing
- . Improving ~50%

#### 2. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #002



Title: Untitled

Author: Unidentified Status: Painted, unreadable Solutions:

- . Stamping
- . Digitizing
- . Improving ~30%

#### 3. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #003

Title: a poem in Nom Script



Author: Tiểu Cao Nguyễn Văn Mại<sup>1</sup> Age: XIX century Status: blurred, broken, improper restoration with cement Solutions: . Stamping . Digitizing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Short bio: Tiểu Cao Nguyễn Văn Mại (1858-1945) was a famous poet, politician of the Nguyen Dynasty. He used to govern Quang Nam province, and was instrumental in the development of education in this area during his rule. This is a rare Nom poem carved on stone in Vietnam, and the only song of Ca Tru discovered in South Central Vietnam (Ca Tru is a unique performance genre found only in the North of Vietnam). This document is the only one, a copy has not been found in other forms.



Title: poem in Sino-Nom Script Author: Hà Đình Nguyễn Thuật<sup>2</sup> Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: . Stamping . Digitizing

#### 5. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #005



Title: poem in Sino-Nom script Author: Văn Xương Trần Xuân Nguyên Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

### 6. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #006



Title: Phúc Kiến Đồng An nhân Author: Unidentified Chinese Status: Readable Solutions: . Stamping

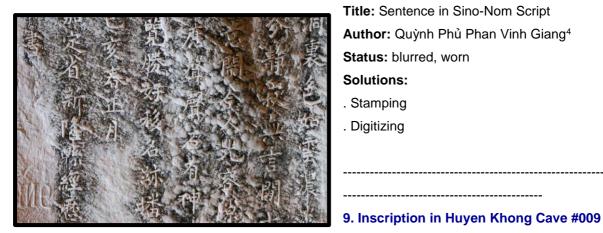
. Digitizing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> **Short bio:** Hà Đình Nguyễn Thuật (1842-1911) was a famous doctor of philosophy, poet and politician in Vietnam in the 19th century. He left behind many works in many genres including literature, painting, calligraphy... This is a poem in the Vietnamese variant of Chinese Tang poetry, praising the natural scenery of Ngũ Hành Sơn.



- Title: a poem in Sino script Author: Thích Diệu Ngộ3 Status: blurred Solutions: . Stamping
- . Digitizing

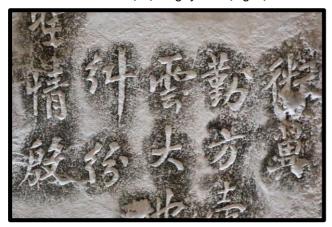
#### 8. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #008



Title: Sentence in Sino-Nom Script Author: Quỳnh Phủ Phan Vinh Giang4 Status: blurred, worn Solutions:

- . Stamping
- . Digitizing

Title: Poem in Sino-Nom Author: Hàn Lâm Thị độc Nguyễn Trọng Lạc<sup>5</sup>



Status: readable Solutions: . Stamping

. Digitizing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Short bio: Thich Dieu Ngo is a monk of unknown origin. The photo includes 2 inscriptions. His document is on the right.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Short bio: Quỳnh Phủ Phan Vinh Giang was a Chinese-Vietnamese businessman

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> **Short bio:** Hàn Lâm Thị độc Nguyễn Trọng Lạc (?-?) was an official of the Nguyen Dynasty.



Title: Untitled (poem?) Author: Unidentified Status: Blurred, unreadable, worn Solutions: . Stamping . Digitizing

-----

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #011



12. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #012

#### Title: Unidentified



Author: Unidentified Status: Blurred, unreadable, worn Solutions: . Cleaning

. Stamping

Title: Unidentified

. Digitizing

Author: Unidentified Status: readable Solutions:

- . Cleaning
- . Stamping
- . Digitizing



- Title: Untitled Author: Unidentified Status: readable Solutions: . Cleaning
- . Stamping
- . Digitizing





#### 14. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #014

Title: Untitled Author: Unidentified Status: Unreadable, worn, blurred Solutions:

- . Cleaning
- . Stamping
- . Digitizing

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 15. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #015



Title: Poem in Sino-Nôm script Author: Phan Thành Kỷ (unidentified) Status: Readable Solutions: . Stamping Printing

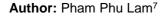
. Digitizing



Title: Poem in Sino-Nôm Author: Cúc Viên Trương Quang Đản<sup>6</sup> Status: readable Solutions: . Stamping . Printing

\_\_\_\_\_

17. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #017 Title: Untitled





Author: Unidentified Status: worn, blurred, unreadable . Stamping . Digitizing ------18. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #018

Title: Untitled

Age: 19th century Status: readable

Solutions:



#### Solutions:

- . Cleaning
- . Stamping
- . Digitizing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> **Short bio:** Cúc Viên Trương Quang Đản (1833-1914) was a famous mandarin of the Nguyen Dynasty. He is one of the authors of the national history book Dai Nam Thuc Luc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Short bio: Pham Phú Lâm was born in Quang Nam, he was an official in the Nguyen dynasty.



Title: Poem Author: Kim Giang Nguyễn Trọng Hợp8 Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: . Stamping . Digitizing

20. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #020



Title: Untitled Author: Lễ Bộ Tả Thị Lang Hồ Đệ9 Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: . Stamping

. Digitizing



### 21. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #021 Title: Unidentified Author: Unidentified Status: worn-out, blurred, painted, unreadable Solutions: . Stamping . Digitizing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Short bio: Nguyễn Trọng Hợp (1834-1902) was a merit-based mandarin in 7 reigns of the Nguyen Dynasty. He left a legacy of more than 400 Nom poems in Kim Giang's complete literary poetry collection and Tay tra thiet collection after going to France.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Short bio: Lễ Bộ Tả Thị Lang Hồ Đệ is an official during Nguyen Dynasty



- Title: Poem Author: Mai Tăng Đào Tấn<sup>10</sup> Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: . stamping
- . Digitizing

#### 23. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #023



Title: Untitled Author: Unidentified Status: worn, blurred, unreadable Solutions:

- . Stamping
- . Digitizing

24. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #024 Title: Nam Kỳ - Trung Kỳ (Cochinchine - Annam)



Author: Unidentified Status: Readable Solutions: . Stamping

. Digitizing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> **Short bio:** Đào Tấn (1845-1907) is a famous official and composer of Vietnamese Tuong (Tuong is the only theatrical performance in Cochinchina in Vietnam from the 17th to the 19th century).



Title: Untitled Author: Unidentified Status: worn,blurred, unreadable Solutions: . Stamping . Digitizing

Title: Untitled

Solutions: . Stamping . Digitizing

Author: Unidentified

26. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #026



27. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #027 Title: Untitled



\_\_\_\_\_

Status: worn, blurred, painted, unreadable

Author: Liên Nghiệp Hiên chủ nhân Hường Thiết Lục Khanh <sup>11</sup> Status: readable Solutions: . Stamping . Digitizing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>Liên Nghiệp Hiên chủ nhân Hường Thiết Lục Khanh is a politician, prince of the Nguyen Dynasty. Huong Thiet joined the anti-French tax resistance movement

Title: name signing

Author: origin from Mỹ Tho

Status: unidentified characters, yet investigated (no images cause too high)

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Solutions:

- . Photographs for Investigation
- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

#### 29. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #029



## Author: Unidentified Status: Unclear characters

#### Title: Poem

Author: Nam Châu Lê Văn Đạo Status: Readable Solutions: . Stamping Printing . Digitizing

-----

**30. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #030 Title:** Untitled



#### Solutions:

- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

Title: Untitled

Author: Hường Thiết Lục Khanh (unidentified)

Status: readable, not image yet (too high)

#### Solutions:

- . Photographs for Investigation
- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

#### 32. Inscription #032



Author: Hà Đông La Khê (unidentified) Status:

Title: Untitled Author: Hải Nông Bùi Văn Dị<sup>12</sup> Status: readable Solutions: . Stamping Printing . Digitizing

**33. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #033 Title:** Name signing



#### Solutions:

- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Famous writer, legate, 7 Nguyen Dynasty reigns, writing mate of Tự Đức king and other well-known writers of the time, co-author of Đại Nam Thực Lục (translated from <u>http://luutruquocgia1.org.vn/gioi-thieu-tai-lieu-luu-tru-ve-danh-nhan-bui-van-di</u>)



Title: Unidentified

36. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #036 Title: Unidentified

Title: Untitled Author: Long Cương Cao Xuân Dục<sup>13</sup> Status: unclear characters Solutions: . Stamping Printing

. Digitizing

35. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #035

\_\_\_\_\_

Author: Unidentified Status: Etched Painting

#### Solutions:

- . Photographs for Investigation
- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

**Note:** deep inside the cave, not available to investigate

Author: Unidentified Status: Etched Painting Solutions: . Photographs for Investigation

- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

**Note:** deep inside the cave, not available to investigate

37. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #037

<sup>13</sup> Cao Xuân Dục was born in Thịnh Mỹ, Diễn Châu, Nghệ An. In 1876, he entered Vietnamese Imperial examination and was awarded the degree of provincial graduate (舉人 - cử nhân), in the same class with the famous anti-French patriot Phan Đình Phùng from Hà Tĩnh.

He served under the Nguyễn Emperors Đồng Khánh and Thành Thái and held several important government posts including Governor-General of Hưng Yên (1889) and minister of education (1907). He was one of the four top advisers to the Emperor during the Vietnam-France conflict in the early 20th century.

#### Title: Unidentified



38. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #038



**39. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #039 Title:** Unidentified

Author: Unidentified Status: Etched Painting Solutions:

- . Photographs for Investigation
- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

Note: too high, not available to investigate

-----

Title: Unidentified Author: Unidentified

Status: Etched Painting

#### Solutions:

- . Photographs for Investigation
- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing
- Note: too high, not available to investigate
- \_\_\_\_\_

Author: Unidentified Status: Etched Painting Solutions:

- . Photographs for Investigation
- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

Note: too high, not available to investigate



41. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #041



Title: literature (bài tán) Author: Quỳnh Phủ Lý Triệu Tuấn (unidentified) Age: 19th Century Status: Readable Solutions: Complete Restoration, Digitizing.

-----

Title: Unidentified Author: Unidentified Status: Etched Painting Solutions: . Recovery . Stamping Printing

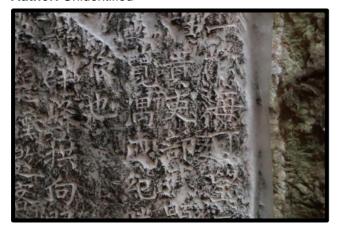
-----

-----

42. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #042

. Digitizing

Title: Unidentified Author: Unidentified



## Status: Etched Painting Solutions:

- . Recovery
- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing



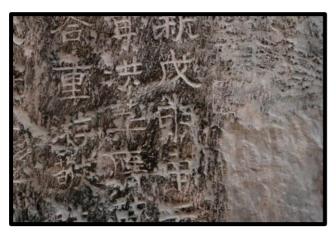
Title: Unidentified Author: Unidentified Status: Etched Painting Solutions: . Stamping Printing

. Digitizing

44. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #044 Title: đề danh



Khoa Tân<sup>14</sup>



Author: unidentified Status: Unclear characters Solutions: . Stamping Printing . Digitizing

-----

45. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #045

Title: poem in Sino-Nôm script Author: Bộ thượng thư Bình Nam Nguyễn

Status: Unclear characters, worn, blurred Solutions:

- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 14}$  Belongs to the painting department of the chief minister Nguyen Khoa Tan in Binh Nam.



- Title: poem Author: Kim Giang Nguyen Trong Hop Age: 19th century Status: blurred, worn Solutions: . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing



#### 47. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #047

Title: Bia công đức cúng chùa "Phổ Đà Sơn Linh Trung Phật" (merit tablet of "Đà Sơn Linh Trung Phật" pagoda. Author: folk persons Age: the year 1640 Status: blurred, worn Solutions:

- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing



Title: name signing Author: Unidentified Status: blurred, worn Solutions:

- . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing



- Title: Bia tạc tượng Quan Âm (Guanyin carved on tablet) Author: Unidentified Age: 1955 Status: readable Solutions: . Stamping Printing
- . Digitizing

#### 50. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #050



Title: (bài vị) / (tablet) Author: Phước Quảng Sa Môn Age: 18th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

#### 51. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #051

Title: Untitled
Author: Unidentified



Age: 18th century Status: All text content is punched , only decorative patterns remain Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing



Title: poem Author: Kinh Lịch Phạm Tĩnh Trai Age: 19th century Status: worn-out, unclear Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

-----





Title: Untitled Author: Unidentified Age: 19th century Status: All text content is punched , only decorative patterns remain Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

54. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #054



Title: poem Author: Loan Pha Trần Văn Thống Age: 19th century Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing



Title: thơ Author: Quất Đình Ưng Ân Status: worn-out Solutions: **Stamping Printing** Digitizing

56. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #056



Title: Untitled Author: Binh Bộ Thị Lang Nguyễn Bá Trác Status: worn-out Solutions: **Stamping Printing** Digitizing -----

-----

57. Inscription in Huyen Khong Cave #057 Title: Untitled

Author: Unidentified Status: worn-out, unreadable



Solutions: **Stamping Printing** Digitizing



Title: thơ

Author: Phong Khe Hoang Huu Kiet performed the poem of Dr. Hoang Binh Status: Worn-out Solutions: **Stamping Printing** Digitizing

---



Title: đề danh Author: Unidentified Status: worn-out Solutions: **Stamping Printing** Digitizing \_\_\_\_\_

------

#### IV. INSCRIPTION IN TÀNG CHƠN CAVE

Tang Chon cave has an area of about 10x7m including 3 caves and 3 caverns

From the outside in, through a natural stone archway is Linh Dong Chon Tien Temple. The temple was built in the 6th year of Minh Mang, the form of the temple is similar to Trang Nghiem pagoda in Huyen Khong cave. The temple has 3 worship halls: the middle room worships the stone statue of Buddha Shakyamuni (formerly worshiping Thai Thuong Lao Quan), the right room worships Linh Son Thanh Mau - a gray-brown sandstone goddess statue, with a typical style for Champa visual arts, worshiping Tam Da and Bat Tien.

The cave has about 20 inscriptions





Tàng Chơn Cave



Title: site signing "Tàng Chân động" Author: the King Minh Mạng Age: 19th century Status: Readable, Painted Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

-----

#### 2. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #102



Title: Poem in Sino-Nôm script



Title: Poem in Sino-Nôm script Author: Như Như Đạo Nhân Hồng Vịnh Age: 19th century Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #103

Author: Hường Thiết Lục Khanh Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing



Title: Poem Author: Mai Tăng Đào Tấn Age: 19th century Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

-----

5. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #105



Title: Nom Script Writing Author: Tam Xuyên Tôn Thất Mỹ Age: 19th century Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

6. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #106 Title: poem



Author: Cử nhân Tôn Thất Lãm Age: 19th century Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing



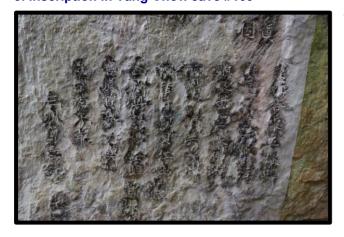
Title: literature Author: Mộng Liên Nguyễn Đình Thị Oanh Age: 19th century Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing



#### 8. Inscription #108

Title: Poem Author: Hy Tăng Tĩnh Khang Đặng Văn Trinh Age: 19th century Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

9. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #109



Title: parallel sentence Author: Tam Xuyên Tôn Thất Mỹ Age: 19th century Status: worn-out Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

Title: name signing



Author: Hường Thiết Lục Khanh Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

-----





12. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #112

Title: name signing Author: Hàn Lâm Thị Độc Hoàng Phước Lợi Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

\_\_\_\_\_



Title: name signing Author: Bình Nam Nguyễn Khoa Tân Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: cleaning, investigating Stamping Printing Digitizing



Title: name signing Author: Hội An Công Sứ / Hoi An Envoy Age: ~20th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

#### 14. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #114



Title: poem Author: Mai Viên Nguyễn Khoa Nghi Status: Unclear characters Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

-----

15. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #115



Title: Poem in Sino-Nôm script Author: Phan Thành Kỷ Status: unclear characters Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing



Title: damaged inscription (unched)) Author: Unidentified Status: unclear characters Age: 18th century Status: all the characters got punched. Solutions: . Stamping Printing

.Digitizing

\_\_\_\_\_

17. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #117
Title: Nam Bảo Đài Hinh bi
Author: Unidentified
Age: 18th century
Status: Most of the characters got punched, not photo yet
Solutions:

.taking photo, investigating
Stamping Printing
Digitizing

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #118

Title: Unidentified



Author: Unidentified Status: the entire tablet content was punched Age: 18th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing



Title: thơ / poem Author: Vương Tử Cán Status: unclear characters Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 20. Inscription in Tàng Chơn cave #120



Title: đề danh Author: Hường Thiết Lục Khanh Age: 19th century Status: readable Solutions: Stamping Printing Digitizing

-----

-----