

Decorative art of Vietnamese village communal houses: symbolic values and the folk visual language

Декоративное искусство вьетнамских деревенских общественных домов: символические ценности и народный визуальный язык

До Ань Туан

*Университет Ван Ланга,
Хошимин, Вьетнам*

Đỗ Anh Tuấn

*Van Lang University,
Vietnam*

УДК 728.03 | НАУЧНАЯ СТАТЬЯ | [HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.24412/2686-9675-4-2025-184-195](https://doi.org/10.24412/2686-9675-4-2025-184-195)

АННОТАЦИЯ

Народное искусство в оформлении домов вьетнамских деревенских общин представляет собой форму всестороннего культурного самовыражения. Здесь традиционная эстетика, символические верования и общественные настроения переплетаются с помощью визуального языка, пропитанного местным колоритом. Эти мотивы, выходящие далеко за рамки простого орнамента, структурированы в систему символов, как священных, так и глубоко укоренившихся в народной культуре. Анализируя фундаментальные элементы, такие как система символических ценностей, культурная глубина, заложенная в визуальных формах, специфическое эстетическое мышление и характерные для искусства условности, это исследование показывает, что оформление общественных домов не только демонстрирует либеральные методы визуального творчества, но и служит

ABSTRACT

Folk art in the decoration of Vietnamese village communal houses represents a form of comprehensive cultural expression. Here, traditional aesthetics, symbolic beliefs, and communal sentiments interweave through a visual language imbued with indigenous character. Far beyond mere ornamentation, these motifs are structured into a system of symbols, both sacred and deeply rooted in folk culture. By analyzing fundamental elements - such as the system of symbolic values, the cultural depth embedded in visual forms, the specific aesthetic mindset and art characteristic conventions this study shows that communal house decoration not only demonstrates liberal techniques of visual creation but also serves as a repository for the strata of community memory and knowledge. Thus, communal house decoration defines a distinct visual identity for Vietnamese rural communities. This research emphasizes the

хранилищем пластов общественной памяти и знаний. Таким образом, оформление общественных домов определяет особую визуальную идентичность вьетнамских сельских общин. Это исследование подчеркивает внутреннюю взаимосвязь между народным изобразительным искусством и структурой традиционных социокультурных систем, подтверждая непреходящую роль и жизнеспособность народного искусства в сохранении и популяризации вьетнамских культурных ценностей.

Ключевые слова: народное искусство; украшение деревенских общинных домов; визуальная символика; народные верования и культура; традиционное вьетнамское изобразительное искусство.

Для цитирования: До Ань Туан. Декоративное искусство вьетнамских деревенских общественных домов: символические ценности и народный визуальный язык. *Современные востоковедческие исследования*. 2025; Том 7 (№4). С. 184-195 <https://doi.org/10.24412/2686-9675-4-2025-184-195>

1. Introduction

Within the spatial structure of traditional Vietnamese villages, the communal house serves as an integrated cultural center, where various layers of historical, religious, and indigenous artistic values converge. Not merely an administrative institution or a sanctuary for the “*Thành hoàng*”¹ the tute-

intrinsic relationship between folk visual art and the structure of traditional socio-cultural systems, affirming the enduring role and vitality of folk art in preserving and promoting Vietnamese cultural values.

Keywords: Folk art; Village communal house decoration; Visual symbolism; Folk belief and culture; Traditional Vietnamese fine arts.

For citation: Đỗ Anh Tuấn. Decorative art of Vietnamese village communal houses: symbolic values and the folk visual language. *Modern Oriental Studies*. 2025; 7 (4). P. (In Russ.) P. 184-195 (In Russ.) <https://doi.org/10.24412/2686-9675-4-2025-184-195>

lar deity with legendary and historic origins, the communal house embodies the worldview, philosophy of life, and aesthetics of the Vietnamese people. Here, “*ritual*”² activities, festivals, and communal cultural practices unfold in a space imbued with symbolism — from architecture to decoration — each laden with profound meanings and

¹ Thành hoàng — A concept of the tutelary deity with legendary and historic origins. The tutelary deity of the village is enshrined in the communal house, the spiritual center of the community.

²Ritual — activities refers to the collective ritual acts of worship, including preparing offerings, conducting ceremonial rites, praying, and commemorating spiritual entities such as deities, ancestors, national heroes or cultural founders.

aesthetic emotions of the local people.

The decorative art of the communal house transcends auxiliary or purely aesthetic functions. It operates as a unique visual language, capable of conveying spiritual, religious, ethical, historical, and philosophical messages through expressive imagery, color, line, and composition. Motifs such as the “four sacred creatures”³, “four treasures”⁴, “tiger faced amulets”⁵, and scenes of folk life are expressed through a process of “symbolization”⁶ rich in metaphor, abstraction, and sacred connotation. The decoration of communal houses thus becomes a “visual text,” where ideas, beliefs, and imaginations are encoded in concrete images that reflect not only folk religion but also absorb various strata of local culture and customs Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, as well as the symbols of wet-rice agriculture within the context of Vietnamese traditional village society.

Therefore, the decorative art of Vietnamese communal houses should be regarded not merely as a traditional artistic activity but as a system of thought, interlinking historical culture, folk aes-

thetics, and symbolic “anthropology”⁷ in an interdisciplinary manner. This research thus delves deeply into the system of symbolic values and the distinctive visual language of communal house decoration, clarifying the inherent relationships among folklore, belief, and the traditional socio-cultural structure, while reaffirming the communal house as a “living museum” of Vietnamese folk art.

2. Identity and expressive content of communal house decorative art

2.1. Syncretism and folklorization

During the development of Vietnamese art under the Le and Nguyen dynasties (1428–1945), communal houses emerged as a prominent indigenous cultural space, exemplifying the intersection of court art and folk creative traditions. While court art strictly adhered to formal rules of composition and symbolism especially regarding sacred animals like dragons, phoenixes, and tiger faced amulets which represent royal authority and hierarchical order (Phan, 2016), communal house art reveals a more flexible mode of reception, in which

³ Four sacred creatures — is a concept rooted in East Asian culture, particularly prevalent in Vietnam, China, Japan, and Korea, referring to four sacred creatures that symbolize fundamental cosmic elements and embody profound spiritual and geomantic (feng shui) significance.

⁴ Four treasures — refers to four auspicious elements, often represented by the four seasons, four symbolic plants, or four identical digits in feng shui and folk culture.

⁵ Tiger faced — amulets is a symbolic object in ancient Eastern military and administrative culture, particularly prominent in imperial China and feudal Vietnam. Shaped like a tiger's head, it functioned as an official token of authority, representing the emperor's command. It could not be forged or misused, and its possession signified legitimate power granted by the sovereign.

⁶ Symbolization — refers to the process of transforming something into a symbol — a representative image or sign that carries symbolic meaning. It can involve turning an idea, event, person, or object into a symbol that holds deep significance, is easily recognizable, and evokes associative memory.

⁷ Symbolic Anthropology — is the study of how cultural meanings are constructed, transmitted, and expressed through symbols, rituals, art, language, beliefs, and other cultural forms. It emphasizes the interpretation of symbols as the core of cultural consciousness.

formal elements are “folk-ized” through the lens of rural creativity and aesthetic sensibility rooted in the agrarian community. For instance, in court art, the dragon was crafted as a central metaphysical symbol, representing the king’s authority and the harmonious order of the cosmos (Nguyen, 2020). However, when transferred to the communal house context, the dragon was reinterpreted in softer, more approachable forms: elongated, undulating bodies, rounded lines, supple details emphasizing decorative over authoritative symbolism. Compositions such as “*dragons playing with clouds*” or “*fairies riding dragons*” (Fig.03) are thus no longer rigid ritualistic icons but become artistic symbols imbued with the breath of folk life.

From the perspective of symbolic anthropology, the transformation of the dragon from royal to communal context exemplifies “*cultural syncretism*” combined with the “*folk mechanism*”. In this process, symbols of power are recontextualized through a local lens, while still retaining their sacred core, essential to their religious function. While Lévi Strauss’s structuralist theory (1963) posits that symbols require stability to maintain functional meaning, in Vietnam, adaptability is the mark of cultural vitality. Symbols survive only when they adapt to new receiving environments. The folklorization of the dragon is thus not a mere aesthetic phenomenon but a reflection of profound cultural transformation in communal house art where the sacred and the mundane, courtly norms and local creativity blend to form the rich and dynamic identity of Vietnamese traditional decorative sculpture.

2.2. Major themes and cultural meanings

In contrast to the strict formality, canonical orientation, and power-centric focus of royal art, the decorative art of Vietnamese village communal houses is shaped and developed within the sphere of communal life, deeply folkloric, where art is not merely creative expression but also a means of reflecting the worldview, cosmology, and collective memory of the rural populace (Tran, 2012). In this environment, three prominent thematic contents emerge: everyday life, fertility beliefs, and the re-enactment of legends and community memory. These elements do not exist in isolation but frequently interlace, forming a multi-layered visual symbolic structure that is both concrete and metaphorical, descriptive and semiotic simultaneously. A significant highlight in communal house wood-carving art is the abundant depiction of “*everyday scenes of leisure and entertainment*”, along with various other activities: from “*lantern dances*” (Fig.06) and festivals to folk games such as traditional “*wrestling*”, which symbolically represent labor and communal life. These carvings go beyond mere decoration or narrative illustration; they serve as a repository of collective memory and belief systems, embodying, in the most tangible way, the local ideological worldview.

Two exemplary works, “*Feeding the pigs*” (Fig.01) and “*Mother’s smile*” (Fig.02), profoundly reflect fertility beliefs through figurative symbols and character expression. The image of a woman with a large belly and full breasts stands as a clear emblem of reproduction, nurturing, and the agricultural cycle. Meanwhile, “*Mother’s smile*” depicts the mother-child bond through gesture and gaze, evoking an inner space rich in myth, where

imagery replaces language and symbol supersedes narration. Beyond this, communal house art establishes a complex visual code, as seen in works like *"Four people drinking wine"* and *"Eight Arhats crossing the river"*. The act of drinking symbolizes community bonding, rendered in a horizontal composition with flexible lines. Placed in the context of agricultural belief and the ritualistic function of the communal house, these carvings should be seen as *"pictorial texts"* with both semiotic and narrative roles. Thus, communal house carving is not only a visual artifact of aesthetic value, but also a focused manifestation of community memory, spiritual values, and the interpretive mechanisms of Vietnamese.

3. The distinctive visual language

3.1. Stylistic characteristics: Expression and convention

Unlike classical Western art, which emphasizes anatomical structure, the golden ratio, linear perspective, and chiaroscuro, which are all used to construct a visually persuasive world, Vietnamese folk art constitutes a unique aesthetic regime, where beauty is judged by its capacity to convey cultural and spiritual meaning rather than to recreate reality. From a visual studies perspective, this style may be understood as a form of symbolic visual coding, where reality is not objectively reproduced but interpreted through communal emotion and intuition.

The image of the *"literati riding the dragon"* (Fig.04) is idealized in its depiction a high fore-

head, narrow eyes, low nose, delicate face not representing a specific historical individual but serving as a model of virtue, embodying messages of intellect and integrity. Similarly, the figure of the *"young maiden"* with a large head, prominent chest, and short body symbolizes fecund beauty and reproductive vitality, wholly contrary to the idealized anatomical forms of Western Renaissance art. Here, beauty does not reside in geometric precision but in the artisan's ability to amplify inner spirit through form a fundamental principle of folk artistry (emotional focus, elimination of extraneous detail).

However, some postmodern scholars critique that to claim communal house art is a *"distinct and stable"* visual language is to overlook its dynamism, regional diversity, and processes of cultural hybridization. Influences from China, Buddhism, indigenous beliefs, or imported techniques have all contributed to a multi-layered aesthetic field, where each image may carry multiple meanings, rather than adhering to fixed or homogeneous interpretations as proposed by *"normative assumption"*⁸. Interpretation of imagery in communal house art thus demands a dynamic perspective, situating each image within specific contexts of space, time, and custom. Through this highly symbolic, non-naturalistic, and conventionalized style, the communal house art has forged a language of collective memory, where the artisan is not only a craftsman but a visual storyteller, carving into each grain of wood the shared ideals and lived experiences of rural Vietnamese communities.

⁸ Normative assumption — refers to an argument or standpoint constructed upon presumed premises that are widely accepted as "common sense" or social norms, without the need for renewed justification or empirical proof.

3.2. *Flexible composition and rhythm*

Unlike the tightly symmetrical compositions of classical Western art or the ritualistic structures of Buddhist and Confucian architecture (with principles such as “*central axis*” and “*main subsidiary axis*”), the decoration of the Vietnamese communal house permits multiple perspectives and localized focal points. In architectural elements like beams, rafters, or tie beams, artisans do not impose a rigid order but adapt to the qualities of the wood, the structural shapes, and the chosen narratives. This generates multi-directional, adaptive, and open compositions, exemplified by scenes like “*wrestling*” or “*dragon dance*” where the main character is positioned at a relative center, yet harmoniously integrated with surrounding details. The outcome is a visually balanced field, in which every element plays an equally important role in the storytelling process.

Rather than the clearly stratified layers of Buddhist paintings or the high-relief royal works of Huế, folk art deploys overlapping, sequential images, seamlessly transitioning between motifs sacred animals, mythological episodes, everyday life scenes linked by geometric rhythm and harmonious movement, akin to a continuous visual symphony. For example, in the communal house of Tho Tang, the carved sequence of “*Eight Arhats crossing the river*” and “*Fairies riding dragons*” at Tay Đàng unfolds without being segmented, illustrating the influence of yin yang and five element philosophy in Vietnamese culture: all things are in flux, interacting, with no absolute fixity.

Period, recent research, especially in post-structuralist aesthetics and folk semiotics, affirms

that randomness in folk design does not equate to disorder but represents a non-formal order where beauty lies in dynamism and interaction rather than stasis. Just as the Japanese wabi sabi aesthetic values the beauty of imperfection, Vietnamese communal house art finds harmony in unevenness, vitality in indeterminacy, reflecting a profound aesthetic worldview of wet-rice agricultural communities, that is open, humanistic, and attuned to nature.

3.3. *Carving techniques and color coordination*

In the visual arts of Vietnamese folk tradition, particularly in the decorative sculpture of communal houses, technique is not merely a material tool but the foundational structure for visual language and aesthetic expression. The techniques of openwork carving, high relief, low relief, and pierced carving differ not only in execution but also in their roles in establishing symbolic depth and meaning. Openwork carving, in which the background is hollowed out to raise the motif, is typically employed for sacred or mythological subjects. The “*Lantern dance*” motif at King Le’s communal house (Fig.06) exemplifies how openwork carving creates light effects and shadows, enhancing the sense of movement and the sacred aura. After completion, openwork panels are usually undercoated in indigo to create visual depth, overlaid with red lacquer, and selectively gilded at the highest points, so that reflected light accentuates the sacred atmosphere.

High-relief carving, conversely, produces decisive, raised forms suitable for symbols of power such as “*dragon disgorging a pearl*” (Fig.05) and

"lantern dance" (Fig.06) manifesting virtuoso open-work technique, yielding supple, lively, and expressive lines. Elements like the dragon's body, the phoenix's wings, or the fairies' figures are sculpted with softness, suggesting agile movement in a multi-layered space. *Low-relief carving*, on the other hand, embodies the Eastern metaphorical spirit by recessing lines into the background to create depth within the overall composition. Subtle elements such as leaves, clouds, or water waves are rendered in diluted indigo or cool blue, which serve to highlight the raised carvings in the foreground. According to Phan C. T. (2011), the simplification of low relief in modern restorations leads to a "*rupture of folk visual grammar*" (*Restoration of Heritage and Cultural Memory*, p.92). This shows that the technique is not merely a formal device but also critical element to preserving traditional expressive language.

Lastly, "*pierced carving*", a technique involving the full perforation of decorative elements on altar doors and pedestals, is considered the most advanced within the communal house carving system. According to P. H. (1954), this technique generates "*lively light*," enabling the architectural space to become vibrant and sacred (*Connaissance du Vietnam*, p. 211). Light passes through the perforations as if "*breathing*" creating a profound visual experience. In works such as "*Maiden riding a dragon*" (Fig.03) and "*Dragon expelling a pearl*" (Fig.05), the background surfaces are typically painted in deep red, orange, indigo, or dark blue,

while the contours and raised patterns are subtly accented to reflect light, enhancing visual vibrancy. From a symbolic structural perspective, pierced carving techniques represents a fusion of light, shadow, and image a visual embodiment of indigenous spiritual concept.

However, some domestic scholars have argued that the overuse of red and gold in restoration projects may result in "*excessive sacralization*"⁹, diminishing the natural, rustic character that defines folk imagery. Researcher Nguyen, T. H. (2021) asserts that if the application of color is reduced to a purely technical process, disconnected from the overall composition and meaning, the original symbolic essence becomes distorted. Field observations, however, indicate that in select cases - such as the "*Lantern Dance*" (Fig.13) at King Le's communal house in Ninh Binh, the gold highlights and indigo background are handled with subtlety and intention demonstrating the artisan's ability to balance sacredness with the simplicity of rural life. According to Taylor (2004), in Southeast Asian folk art, the over prescription of color symbolism can sometimes limit individual artistic expression, resulting in a loss of visual flexibility.

Beyond its symbolic role, color is also employed as a visual strategy to create depth and contrast. Background tones such as indigo blue, earth brown, or ink black, though not strikingly vivid, convey a subdued and contemplative atmosphere, resonating with the rustic spirit of Vietnamese countryside life (Fig.05). These tones not only

⁹ Excessive sacralization — is a term commonly used in the analysis of art, culture, or symbolism to describe the phenomenon in which an object is over-idealized, deified, or metaphysically elevated beyond its original, grounded reality.

highlight the dominant red and gold hues but also construct a multi-layered visual field, allowing viewers to sense the sacred stillness of the space. This balanced combination is not merely a result of material use but reflects the adaptive creativity of folk artisans, as noted by Phan, C. T. (2012).

4. Communal house: The “Living museum” of folk art

In the cultural evolution of Vietnam, the communal house has served not only as a site for religious rites but also as a living space for the preservation and reproduction of folk art. Unlike modern museums where artworks are immobilized within static, decontextualized displays the communal house functions as a “*living museum*”, in which folk art is not isolated from the community but rather internalized and perpetuated through ritual practices, daily activities, and collective memory (Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies, 2020). This vitality is most clearly expressed through traditional festivals such as “*Ky Ye000n festival*”¹⁰, “*Spring festival*”¹¹, and “*Royal decree procession*”¹², where art is not merely a visual backdrop, but an integral component of the ritual experience.

Another defining feature of communal house art is its collective authorship, in which artistic creation does not bear the mark of individual identity, but instead reflects shared cultural knowledge. The carvings, lacquered decorations, and architectural arrangements at Đình Bảng communal house (Bac Ninh), for instance, are unsigned a manifestation of depersonalized thinking aimed at communal values and ritual function. This stands in stark contrast to modern Western art, where the individual artist and the singularity of the artwork are celebrated. This perspective is reinforced by Alfred Gell’s theory of “*Art and Agency*” (1998), which asserts that in traditional societies, art does not serve a purely aesthetic function, but rather operates as a link within a network of social actions, where the artwork assumes the role of a “*social agent*”.

However, some domestic art critics, such as Nguyen, Q. (2008), have argued that the “*depersonalization*” model may blur the boundary between art and craft, thereby diminishing the status of the communal house within the aesthetic framework of modern art criticism. Yet, it is precisely this non-individualized mode of thinking that affirms an alternative aesthetic system, wherein beauty is inseparable from function and

¹⁰ Ky Yen festival — an annual peace and prosperity ceremony held at communal houses to pray for the well-being of villagers, abundant harvests, and favorable weather. The festival typically consists of two parts: the ritual section (offerings, incense rites) and the festive section (folk singing, classical theatre, etc.).

¹¹ Spring festival — a spring offering ceremony conducted at the beginning of the lunar year, typically in the first month (thang gieng), to give thanks to deities and pray for a prosperous new year. It serves as a ritual inauguration of the new cycle, often associated with spring festivals.

¹² Royal edict — an imperial edict issued by the king to confer divine status upon a deity or to officially recognize a tutelary spirit worshipped in the communal house. “Royal decree procession” (procession of the edict) is the ritual of parading the royal decree from its place of safekeeping (usually the home of the chief officiant or another sacred location) to the communal house for ceremonial offerings during festivals.

community. One of the key features that positions the communal house as a “*living museum*” is its interdisciplinary integration of the arts. At *So* communal house (Quoc Oai), art manifests not only through sculpture but also through music, performance, oral folk traditions, and religious symbolism where motifs such as dragons, phoenixes, guardian lions, lotuses, and chrysanthemums function as cultural codes expressing cosmological views and traditional moral principles. This perspective stands in contrast to the formalist criticism of Clive Bell (1914), who asserted that art must remain autonomous from religious or social functions in order to preserve its “pure aesthetic value”. Nevertheless, within the context of Vietnamese communal houses, art cannot be separated from ritual and communal function. This integrative approach closely aligns with Wagner’s theory of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total artwork), in which various art forms converge within a lived, practical space to create a holistic and cohesive aesthetic experience.

Ultimately, the role of the communal house extends beyond that of an artistic repository, it actively reactivates cultural memory within contemporary contexts. Many communal houses, even amidst ongoing urbanization, continue to maintain festivals, performances, and communal interactions, demonstrating that folk symbols remain vibrantly alive rather than “*frozen*” as in museums lacking community engagement. As noted by researcher Pham M. H. (2019), the ability of the communal house to “*live alongside memory*” ensures that traditional cultural values do not become extinct, but are instead reinterpreted and revitalized by the contemporary generation. The vitality of the

communal house, therefore, is not a mere rhetorical metaphor, but rather a functional model of cultural preservation, where art continues to be “*living practice*” embedded in community life, precisely where folk art is not separated from daily life, but rather “*transmitted through lived experience*” a space where memory, ritual, aesthetics, and community intersect.

5. Conclusion

Folk art in the decorative system of Vietnamese communal houses is not merely a collection of traditional visual motifs, but rather a multi layered symbolic structure that reflects the humanistic worldview and distinct cultural logic of wet rice agrarian communities. From sacred animal imagery such as dragons, phoenixes, tiger faced amulets, to vernacular motifs, fertility worship practices, and expressive, intuitive visual language, the art of communal house decoration constitutes a symbolic totality of the “*sacred - profane - living*”, in which the transcendent and the mundane do not stand in opposition, but instead coexist and interweave. This reveals that the aesthetic sensibility of folk art is not constrained by royal conventions or the modern artist’s ego. Rather, it operates according to a communal logic wherein art functions as a medium of cultural memory, belief, and collective knowledge. Unlike tangible heritage that has been “*frozen*” in the past, communal house decorative art exists within a dynamic space of festivals, ritual practices, performances, and communal life. Ceremonial occasions such as “*Ky Yen festival*”, “*Royal decree procession*”, or “*Folk ritual singing*” serve as moments that reactivate layers of symbol, sound, and image, forming a distinctive interdisciplinary

art form, in which sculpture, architecture, music, and movement collaboratively narrate a cultural story. Thus, the communal house is not merely a religious institution, but also functions as a “*living museum*”, preserving and reanimating visual memory, folk aesthetics, and the spiritual consciousness of the community. In the face of modernization where many communal houses are at risk of deterioration, distortion, or commercialization the research of folk art in village communal house decoration should move beyond mere preservation of form, and instead be recognized as a creative and contemporary cultural resource. When properly understood in terms of its symbolic and aesthetic value, each carved motif in the communal house is not merely a legacy of the past, but a living cultural archive, where art, belief, history, and the folk consciousness of Vietnam converge.

References

Vietnamese documents

1. Nguyen, Q. (2008). *Impersonal thinking and communal values in the art of Vietnamese communal houses*. *Vietnam Fine Arts Journal*. [in Vietnamese]
2. Nguyen, T. H. (2021). *The impact of restoration on symbols and folk aesthetics in the art of Vietnamese communal houses*. *Journal of Culture and Arts*, (6), 45–52. [in Vietnamese]
3. Nguyen, V. T. (2020). *The dragon symbol in Vietnamese court and folk art*. Hanoi: *Culture and Ethnic Publishing House*. [in Vietnamese]
4. Phan, C. T. (2011). *Heritage preservation and folk visual memory*. *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, (3), 90–94. [in Vietnamese]
5. Phan, C. T. (2012). *Carving techniques and visual language in the art of Vietnamese communal houses*. *Fine Arts Journal*, (8), 27–35. [in Vietnamese]
6. Phan, H. (2016). *Court sculpture art and the process of folklorization*. *Journal of Culture and Arts*, (5), 58–64. [in Vietnamese]
7. Pham, M. H. (2019). *Vietnamese communal houses and the reconstruction of cultural memory in the context of urbanization*. *Journal of Folk Culture*, (12), 12–19. [in Vietnamese]
8. Vietnam Institute of Fine Arts. (2020). *Vietnamese folk art in the spiritual space of village communities*. Hanoi: *Fine Arts Publishing House*. [in Vietnamese]
9. Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies. (2020). *Living art spaces in Vietnamese village communal house festivals*. Internal research report. [in Vietnamese]

Foreign documents

10. Bell, C. (1914). *Art*. Chatto & Windus.
11. Gell, A. (1998). *Art and agency: An anthropological theory*. Oxford University Press.
12. Lévi-Strauss, C. (1963). *Structural anthropology* (C. Jacobson & B. Grundfest Schoepf, Trans.). Basic Books.

13. Taylor, N. (2004). *Visual arts in Southeast Asia: Tradition and innovation*. University of Hawai'i Press.
14. Wagner, R. (2001). *The invention of culture*. University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1975)

Приложения / Illustrations



Figure 1: Feeding Pigs

Phat Loc Communal House - 17th Century



Figure 3: Maiden Riding a Dragon

Tay Dang Communal House - 16th Century



Figure 4: Mandarinate Scholar Riding a Dragon

Ha Hiep Communal House - 17th Century



Figure 2: A Mother's Smile

Hung Loc Communal House - 17th Century



Figure 5: Dragon Exhaling a Pearl – Decorative Colors

King Le's Communal House – 17th Century



Figure 6: Lantern dance – Composition and Decorative Colors

King Le's Communal House – 17th Century

Сведения об авторе

До Ань Туан

Преподаватель факультета искусств
и дизайна
Университет Ван Ланга

Information about the Author

Đỗ Anh Tuấn

Lecturer
Faculty of Fine Arts & Design
Van Lang University

Информация о статье

Поступила в редакцию: 25.09.2025.

Одобрена после рецензирования: 02.10.2025.

Принята к публикации: 10.10.2025.

Information about the article

The article was submitted 25.09.2025

Approved after reviewing 02.10.2025

Accepted for publication 10.10.2025