

Ministry of Education and Training Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

Ho Chi Minh City University of Fine Arts

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NGUYEN THI NGOC DIEP

**DECORATIVE ARTS IN SOME TYPICAL COMMUNAL
HOUSES IN BINH DUONG**

A SUMMARY OF ART DOCTORAL THESIS

Ho Chi Minh City - 2022

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**DECORATIVE ARTS IN SOME TYPICAL COMMUNAL
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A Summary of Art Doctoral Thesis

Art Theory and History

Code 9210101

Under the guidance of the Assoc.Prof. Dr. Nguyen Van Minh

Ho Chi Minh City - 2022

Completed at
Ho Chi Minh City University of Fine Art
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Introduction

1. The necessity of the project

Religious forms of Vietnamese in Binh Duong as well as in the South were formed on the inherent basis which were brought by migrants from the Middle and North villages. In the sixteenth century, the local artistic identity was expressed through shaping technique features in decorative works at communal houses, pagodas, shrines, and mausoleums, etc... with special decorative shaping elements. It has its own unique characteristics in terms of content, decorative images, forms, and languages that are very clearly expressed and thence, deserved to be cherished.

Currently, Binh Duong has possessed 125 communal houses, three of which are recognized as National Art and Architecture Relics. It is crucial to, in current period of renovation and integration, preserve and promote nation's cultural typical values, cultural institutions and artistic values of communal houses in Binh Duong.

The theme on “*Decorative arts in some typical communal houses in Binh Duong*” has been chosen with purpose of fulfilling missing gaps of judgments, analysis and evaluations to clarify characteristics of communal house decoration art in Binh Duong. The thesis has also simultaneously contributed to the preservation and promotion of traditional values in the current period of integration and development.

2. Thesis Aims

2.1. General aim

The thesis has focused on communal house decoration art in Binh Duong, clarifying and enhancing the characteristics of local traditional decorative arts' value of the local communal houses.

2.2. Thesis tasks

- Determining theoretical basis of communal houses' decorative art in Binh Duong.

- Identifying decorative arts expressed in some typical communal houses in Binh Duong.

- Determining characteristics of communal houses' decorative art in Binh Duong.

The thesis has based on these main findings to form a basis to preserve original shaping elements and make suggestions to promote communal houses' values applied in modern architecture, designs and decorations in the context of economy and globalization integration.

3. Research objects and scope

Research object: Decorative arts features in some typical communal houses in Binh Duong.

Research scope: Survey has been conducted in eleven communal houses including Phú Long, Tân An, Dĩ An, Vĩnh Phước, Bình Nhâm, Nhựt Thạnh, Tân Hội, Sir. Ngãi Thắng, An Sơn, Dầu Tiếng, and Phú Cường (Bà Lụa) during the reclamation and formation of the new land -Binh Duong from the late 17th century up to now.

4. Methodologies

The study has used analytical method of Fine Arts, which is applied in analyzing the characteristics of the decorative arts of communal houses in Binh Duong. It is simultaneously combined with interdisciplinary approach of History, Culture, Ethnology, Cultural Semiotics, Philosophy, and Aesthetics to clarify the characteristics of research subjects in many different aspects. At the same time, some research methodologies such as field research, survey, interview, statistics, and comparison are also used to clarify the statements and hypotheses to find out new findings and avoid lameness when comparing, which may lead research results to be arbitrary.

5. Research questions

Question 1: How have culture and history of Binh Duong affected the formation and development of communal houses' decorative art in Binh Duong?

Question 2: How are characteristics of decorative art in some communal houses in Binh Duong expressed through decorative images, forms and languages?

Question 3: What are outstanding features of communal house's decorative art in Binh Duong? What are their roles in preserving and promoting communal house art values in current period of integration?

6. Research hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Binh Duong cultural characteristics that have been inherited and acculturated from Northern culture, interfered with Chinese culture have contributed to the formation of communal houses' decorative art features in Binh Duong.

Hypothesis 2: decorative art characteristics of some typical communal houses in Binh Duong are clearly expressed through decorative images, elements and principles of shaping.

Hypothesis 3: outstanding features of communal houses' decorative art in Binh Duong express traditional Vietnamese values, with unique and delicate aspects of local art. They play important and urgent roles in preserving and promoting in the current integrative period.

7. Scientific and practical contributions

7.1. Scientific contributions

The thesis has contributed to library data on indigenous traditional decorative arts and home decoration art in Binh Duong. The thesis is also a source of monographs for fine arts industry as well as local management and a reference to compile articles on Vietnamese art history in the period of communal house art in Binh Duong in the seventeenth century with ancient capital patterns and modules Vector graphics.

7.2. Practical contributions

The thesis has clarified and emphasized values of ancient arts existed in some typical communal houses that are attractive places to develop traditional tourism, culture and art in Binh Duong meeting the needs of economic development of modern life.

The thesis has provided some pictures of traditional decorative images and vector drawing patterns, along with some specific identificative information and artistic values, and proposed

some solutions to preserve and promote values of home decoration art in Binh Duong which contribute to local economic development by applying some modern designs.

8. Structure

Introduction (07 pages), conclusion (04 pages), list of published scientific works related to the thesis topic (01 page), references (09 pages), illustrative appendices (134 pages) and the thesis content with three chapters:

Chapter 1: Overview of research situation, theoretical basis, and practice of decorative images (39 pages).

Chapter 2: Art forms of decorative arts in some typical communal houses in Binh Duong (56 pages).

Chapter 3: Similarities and discrepancies of Characteristics of communal house decoration art in Binh Duong and some ways to promote their artistic values. (43 pages)

Chapter 1

RESEARCH OVERVIEW, THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL THEORY

1.1 Research overview

According to 138 references from 1973 up to now, there are three main works including Fine Arts, Culture, and History.

Research works have overviewed the formation and development of Vietnamese communal houses as well as those in Binh Duong according to historical divergence. An overview of traditional decorative images, symbolic values has also been demonstrated with symbols in altars, decorative sculptures, and decorative reliefs in

communal houses... In-depth analysis of plastic art in communal houses in the North has the form of canal carvings. Wood carving of Vietnamese in the South with many different genres of round statues, carvings, reliefs are basis for comparison in order to clarify of communal houses' decorative art characteristics in Binh Duong. However, in the process of comparing and contrasting, the researcher has paid attention to the synchronicity and materiality to show that the compared objects have inheritance, acclimatization and difference in order to avoid incorrect findings of the thesis.

1.2. Theoretical basis and applied theories

1.2.1. Definitions

- "Decorative arts"- a field of visual arts, their products are highly aesthetic.

- "Communal house"- a place to worship the village God, usually one, but sometimes many, called the "City Emperor" of the village. Communal house is a symbol for Vietnamese village community, a tangible element of Vietnamese village culture" [90, p.15].

- "Shaping"- creation and depiction of physical features in sculptures, paintings, applied arts and architecture through lines, colors, arrays, layouts and shapes and space expressed on the works

- "Engraving" and "Embossed": Dimpled lines, shapes, letters or texts from a hard surface such as wood, metal, stone, etc. are called carvings. Decorative figures that are embossed or combined with

embossed and carved on the plane are called "Embossed" art. It is based on the height of the block to distinguish as "high embossed" or "low embossed".

1.2.2. Theoretical basis

Vietnamese communal houses have been established since Tran dynasty is not only a public house for every inhabitant but also a worshipping shrine. Up to now, the oldest communal houses have been built since Mac dynasty in 16th century. The formation of Binh Duong communal houses have been supposed to be carried by immigrants from the North to Mekong delta. They built temples, shrines and communal houses for worship and ancestors who had established their new villages with their all respects and gratefulness.

The thesis is based on comments and analysis of previous related researches through historical data, during the process of formation and development of the new land as well as communal houses in the South and ancient Binh Duong. From these, the researcher has identified characteristics of regional, ethnic culture and theories of Art, Aesthetics combined with main theory of Fine Arts to hypothesize decorative arts in some typical communal houses. Art expression in Binh Duong is one of traditional art forms that mainly reflect certain life aspects in order to satisfy people's aesthetic needs. At the same time, research process is orientated as follows: Analyzing visual language in some typical communal houses in Binh Duong is analyzing visual arts of round statues, carvings, reliefs, and maps. Worshipping items and paintings are decorated on traditional

Vietnamese wooden structures. Clarifying the identification of replacing golden patterns in royal palaces with decorative images of flowers, birds, and local fruits is true or not.

1.2.3. Applied theories

1.2.3.1. Theory of art study

M. CaGan's wrote: " arts division is a product of historical development" [71, p.203] (translated by Phan Ngoc). Therefore, the author has applied these arguments to analyze and compare decorative arts of communal houses in Binh Duong with others in Vietnam from the North to the South. In addition, decorative art characteristics in some typical communal houses in Binh Duong has a unique position in Vietnamese traditional decorative carving art because the division of rich and poor classes in art does not have any meanings. Conventionally, art is expressed to satisfy human aesthetic needs.

The thesis has worked on "conventional aspects" in communal house decorative art in Binh Duong through principle of artistic typification in mythical - folk composition method [64, p.182]: If artists deeply understand the form, they use a realistic form of description but if not , they go through a series of phenomena to weave a decorative image that can be perceived. Or it can be said that artists have used fictions associated with human strength for supernatural forces, gods with supernatural power.

1.2.3.2. Aesthetic theory and philosophy

Uniqueness and aesthetic values of Hegel was first analysed in art world as an organic fusion with historical analysis. Hegel [49]

also emphasized specific analysis of characteristics of paintings in terms of artistic fiction and characteristic composition... Therefore, the author has based on Hegel's thesis of eternity and fusion of art to recognize enduring values of decorative arts from their outer shapes to inner nature.

The thesis has applied dialectic and social history thesis from Marxism-Leninism with the concept of “objective beauty in a whole harmonious life and beauty reflected in art share a very closed relationship that cannot be apart. The beauty in art achieves a highly humanistic aesthetic ideal through the authenticity in real life”. The above thesis has helped the researcher to deeply analyze the beauty through forms of conventional information, highlighting artistic values of decorative images in communal houses in Binh Duong with high ethnicity, which is considered as a picture of agricultural civilization.

1.2.3.2. Theory of Cultural Areas and History

Surveys conducted in the old Binh Duong have proved that the settlement form was elongated, so there has been no surrounding bamboo ramparts with no separate and closed villages like those in the North. Therefore, the formation of an open cultural area is a distinctive feature of the Northern culture. The relationship between nature and folklore is influenced by traditional thoughts, aesthetic conceptions, local people's behaviors and ethnic groups toward natural phenomena during historical processes that have formed cultural identities of folk culture of Vietnamese in the South [8, p.47]. It is historical conditions, social development process, migration and

forms of settlement, landscape, nature and environment that have formed cultural area. Those are also factors that have the strongest impacts on cultural development. Creating differences, indigenous elements in ethnic culture. This difference is the factor that makes unique characteristics of Binh Duong personality of being liberal, open-minded and simple.

1.2.3.4 Theory of Semiotics, Symbols, and Icons

The PhD candidate has applied the above theory on the classification of symbols and images in traditional Vietnamese visual arts as a basis to analyze and compare decorative carvings of communal houses in Binh Duong with those in the North and those in the South. Those are "symbols associated with light, still prominent with the custom of *worshipping the Sun* and the sense of asking for water..." [16, p.191]. Decorative images are associated with *luminous forces* like *clouds, Sun, and Wave etc...*

Engraving decorative images of Han Nom script on pairs of horizontal and non-parallel characters is a common decorative art form that has existed in a long-lasting and less variable manner. Because of the depth of content and the strictness of the decorative form, it has created a lasting vitality of the text through many historical changes [44, p.16]. Besides, symbols of legends and stories are often decorated in the form of round statues or embossed reliefs, ceramic mosaic- an art element from China.

1.3. Overview of communal houses in the South and Binh Duong

1.3.1 Southern communal houses' formation overview

The period from 1620 to 1698 could be considered as the formation period of Saigon - Southern Vietnam. At that time, communal houses in the South were built to meet inhabitants' needs of a place to worship predecessors, who had reclaimed their new land, established hamlets, and opened markets. ... With the principle of "*when eating a fruit, think of the man who planted the tree*", the Southern communal houses were originally built by Vietnamese immigrants with orthodox beliefs.

According to historical divergence, architecture and sculpture of communal houses in the South have much depended on the prosperity of communal houses associated with each period from 1698 to 1975 and up to now. Communal house in the South has been a complex with many square houses with four pillars. This type of house has an area of expanding to four sides with a set of rafters that are equally square, has been usually only a place of worship without any living purpose. Considering the layout of the architectural units, communal houses own many different styles of words "Nhat", "Tam", "Ding", "Cong", or "Khau" ... The open architecture and objects of worship in three groups are proof of inheritance and acculturation of communal houses in the North, and the "Vo Ca house" is one of the special architectural forms that only exists in communal houses in the South.

1.3.2 Communal houses in Binh Duong Overview

Binh Duong formation and reclamation were basically completed between the end of XVII and the beginning of XVIII century in

Nguyen Dynasty. Therefore, there were some villages still named after Tong Binh An phase while some have been renamed according to new administrative areas [52].

“Communal houses in the South in general and in Binh Duong in particular have shared a formative style of the Later Le and Nguyen dynasties with standards of rectangular ground and structured in the form of the word “Nhat” or “Dinh” [122, p.241].

Most communal houses are built on high mounds with many big trees, often facing rivers, canals or roads for convenient transportation. Communal houses in Binh Duong are prior to the South due to the saying "*the saint looks at the South, listening to people's wishes*". The four pillars and the main hall of communal houses in Binh Duong are often decorated with wooden carvings in familiar traditional themes and symbols, revolving around the image of Han - Nom literary values. This plays a very important role in preserving spiritual values imbued with Vietnamese culture in the new land of the South as well as Binh Duong in the early established period. According to current statistics, Binh Duong has 125 communal houses and 39 ordinations, distributed throughout all districts of the province. Communal house in Binh Duong is a place to worship Gods of the Citadel, “Hoang Bon Canh”, who is a specific historical figure, had merits to the country and residences. In front of the communal house yard, there is usually a concrete screen decorated with embossed mascots such as Dragon, Tiger, Phoenix... meaning “avoid bad behaviors from bad people, and to chase demon spirits”. This is a

different side among communal houses in Binh Duong and the South with those in the North.

Sub-conclusion

The synthesis and analysis of previous studies have clarified the date of formation and development of communal houses in Binh Duong from the late seventeenth century. Binh Duong culture has been interfered, acculturated and inherited from culture of the North and Chinese. With theoretical system integrated in respective research methods mentioned above, a consistent theoretical and epistemological basis has been established for the characteristics of communal house decoration art in Binh Duong with the resonance of national and local traditions.

Chapter 2

DECORATIVE ARTS IN SOME COMMUNAL HOUSES IN BINH DU'ONG

2.1. Binh Duong communal houses' decorative art in images

2.1.1. Image of “*Tứ Linh*” - the four supernatural creatures

The decorative image of the Four supernatural creatures are four fictional mascots created by myths and legends and are concretized in the language of decorative visual arts in communal houses in Binh Duong. The image of *Four supernatural creatures* carries familiar folk meanings with *Dragon, Unicorn, Turtle, and Phoenix*. While the image of the Four supernatural creatures represents for Royal and occupies the central position in communal house decorative art, decorative images of *crane, lion, carp, tiger* have

meanings of praying for rain and bountiful crops. Besides, other regular and invariable mascots are alternately decorated including *bat, horse, carp, bear and owl...*

2.1.2. Images of flowers and fruits

Decorative images of *flowers, leaves and fruits* are sometimes combined with birds to form classic decorative themes. Decorative images of fruits like *peach, pear, pomegranate, gourd ...* are familiar images. Fruit specialties of the region are most often seen in local visual arts of Binh Duong. Artists flexibly express their wishes for a prosperous and lucky life in the new land on communal houses in Binh Duong.

2.1.3. Images of Nature

In Vietnamese traditional visual arts, decorative images of *Nature* have been excellently developed. They have maintained a connection to the past to contribute more vitality to the present and the future. Decorative images of nature are one of typical and condensed patterns from real life of each ethnic group or each residential area, forming their own decorative images. They are considered to be precious identity [16, p.85]. Decorative figures regularly presented in communal houses in Vietnamese villages as well as those in Binh Duong include the Sun and gourd, waves,...

2.1.4. Decorative images of Characters in legends and stories

Ancient Binh Duong people were somehow influenced by culture of ethnic groups including Chinese, the Cham, the Khmer, etc. Living together in the newly reclaimed land, they communicated, exchanged, and traded with each other to save folk festivals. Art

creation resulted in the exchange and learning from each other with creative thinking and aesthetic needs. That is the reason why artists in ancient Binh Duong have shown legends and stories with decorative images in Chinese culture like *Bat Tien (eight Fairies)*, *Tam Da (Three Gods)*, etc. *Journey to the West, the Sun God and the Moon God...*

2.2. Binh Duong communal houses' art in forms, languages and sculpture

2.2.1. Round statue sculpture

In the 19th century, Binh Duong artisans made round statues with celadon ceramics, ceramic sculpture techniques and simplified shaping methods. Ancient Binh Duong artisans have achieved the standard of round statue sculptures that bring viewers emotions and artistic excitement through a specific visual language, specifically in terms of shape, space and light. They also synthesized many different shaping elements to achieve tight layouts with Sculpture of *Lion, Dragon, Crane, Turtle, and White Horse statues* in familiar positions in all interior spaces in Binh Duong.

2.2.2. Engravings

In order to express artistic decorative images, Binh Duong artisans have studied and created imaginative images with conventional modeling methods, block array style, symmetrical classical compositions decorated in communal houses in Binh Duong. All high or low embossed images represent shapes with their full depth and space within the flat space of the layers. The invisible carved boxes increase the area of the background space and improve the

ability to catch light by combining the light reflection of yellow, vermilion red or deep black to create depth for the shapes.

2.2.3. Emboss - reliefs

2.2.3.1. Embossing

Binh Duong artists have applied embossed reliefs with the slanting technique to depict thick depth on thin layers of space by depicting the inner half of the hidden details, creating a sense of volume on the work. Anterior and the posterior subclasses depend on the proximity of decorative figures on overall symmetrical classical composition. There are many different, separate layers to evoke feelings with shape depth based on rules of cartoon perspective. Details are simplified with many - gap- layouts, creating a conventional space expressing the vastness and depth. In addition, due to concrete material, it is necessary to process large arrays to create high adhesion and durability. Therefore, communal house decorators in Binh Duong often use this form to shape relief paintings that combine high or low embossing techniques to create roughness in combination with familiar contrasting colors of red, green, blue, yellow, black, and white that contribute to the richness of materials as well as decorative forms.

2.2.4. Carved worshipping items

2.2.4.1. Carved altars

Binh Duong communal houses have been structured as shrines delicately carved with wood. Altars' edges and letter of "God" are embossed in the center. Wooden altars are painted gilded with decorative images, altar edges are carved with symmetrical decorative

projects on both sides of longitudinal axis parallel to Shinto axis. Artists have applied familiar styles of embossed vertical and horizontal rectangular boxes creating many different layers in front and back layers.

2.2.4.2. carved incense-tables

Currently, decorated incense –tables in communal houses in Binh Duong are usually made of wood and bronze with many forms of embossed, carved and gilded with familiar and traditional decorative images. The clump fits each slit, symmetrically across the Shinto axis. Usually, the front face is embossed with decorative images to create a front layer with a thick depth and cubic space. Although the space on each box is limited, artists have made good use of the spatial ratio correlation.

2.2.4.3. Carved incense burners

Incense burners stored in communal houses in Binh Duong are usually made of ceramic, bronze or wood with different stylized shapes. They are usually shaped with four kneeling legs, a circle on the top or with three kneeling legs and big body. They are carved and decorated with many flexible forms like a round belly linked with three kneeling legs to shape a lion head. Each kneeling leg is sculpted in a very vivid way. Body burners are painted with decorative images of dragon and phoenix in strokes and sketches styles. This somehow helps reduce monotony in decorating crafts at communal houses.

2.2.4.4. Embossed Bat Buu and drum hanging frames

Each communal house in Binh Duong has two sets of Bat Buu decorated in the main hall in front of the God altar with similar decorative content. Bat Buu composes of a top like an array, which is

carefully embossed with sacred decorative images [15, p.100]. Bat Buu is carved with eight decorative images corresponding to eight legends with different meanings. Two sets of Bat Buu decorated symmetrically on both sides of the Shinto axis is a familiar arrangement and layout of classical decoration. In addition, each communal house has been equipped with drum hanging frames, palanquins, altars, banners... decorated with images of Dragon, Unicorn, Phoenix, and Flowers... These are flexibly applied depended on the budget each communal house can manage.

2.3 Binh Duong communal houses' decorative art in patterns

Painting in communal houses in Binh Duong is a decorative art of painting landscape on auxiliary works in communal houses like Vo Ca house, screen, altar... In this period, Binh Duong artisans knew how to apply the law of Western painting perspective to decorative paintings. Artists describe different dimensions of decorative arrays and images of *Roads, Rivers, Streams, Mountains, and Horizons...* Although shaping styles this period were quite simple, artistic values were not really excellent, they have expressed unique features of communal houses' decorative styles in Binh Duong.

Sub-conclusion

The beauty in folk art of woodcarving in communal houses in Binh Duong has reached the ideal decorative image of aesthetic and humanity through the authenticity of life expressed in art. Decorative colors in all communal houses in Binh Duong are mostly bright but warm combined with gilded paint, liberal shapes, simplified decorative images of the Four Supernatural creatures interspersed with

Birds and Fruits that are familiar with local people. Classical layouts are symmetrical with typical carving forms, contributing to increase the artistic, cultural and historical values of local communal houses.

Chapter 3

SIMILARITIES, DIFFERENCES, CHARACTERISTICS PROMOTING DECORATIVE ART VALUES IN BINH DUONG COMMUNAL HOUSES

3.1. Similarities, Differences in decorative arts of communal houses in Binh Duong vs those in the North and the South

3.1.1. Similarities

3.1.1.1. Similarities in images

Communal houses in the South and Binh Duong carry traditional Vietnamese values, containing folklore through decorative images of *mascots, flowers, birds, legends and stories, glowing images...* However, the difference in decorative images of communal houses in Binh Duong is expressed through specific decorative images of localities with folk meanings of reviving the new land, wishes to have a prosperous, happy life with many children. These images include *roses, bats, peach, custard apples, pomegranates, grapes, gourds...*

3.1.1.2. Similarities in layouts

Symmetrical classical layout is a typical form in which visual elements are arranged dignifiedly in shrines, pagodas or temples. However, in Binh Duong communal houses, difference in decorative images arrangement compared with classical layouts is the simplified dragon interspersed with *fruits, birds and other mascots*.

3.1.1.3. Similarities in decoration rules

Decorative forms in communal houses in Binh Duong and the South may not be as rich as those in the North. The difference is reflected in materials, decorative images and concept of composition. The arrangement of shaping elements based on symmetry, repetition and alternating rules is the most common form in traditional decoration projects because of their symmetry, creating solemnity in spiritual places. These repetition, alternating rules mean to create continuity, eternity to gather vitality.

3.1.2. Differences

3.1.2.1. Differences in carving forms

With varieties of materials, many decorative forms have been formed in Binh Duong communal houses, with one or two-layer blocks carving style or combining high embossed form as a highlight. At the same time, applying embossing technique on concrete material both promotes Vietnamese traditional carving techniques and reflects local embossing styles. These enrich expression forms and increase decorative art values in communal houses in Binh Duong.

3.1.2.2. Differences in colors

Communal houses in the South and Binh Duong have still retained traditional, wooden architecture. However, colors are brighter than those in the North as golden lacquer and glossy or brown are usually applied on pavilions, wooden poles. Bright, contrasting but warm color schemes are on reliefs embossed with concrete and celadon on round statues.

3.2. Features of communal house decoration art in Binh Duong

3.2.1. Traditional, folklore images

Decorative images of communal houses in Binh Duong and their symbolic meanings are close to nature and farmers, highlighting true values of Vietnamese art and culture, hidden in rustic and simple characters of labors. The significance in communal houses' decoration art in Binh Duong is in nature and has similar expressions of decorative and shaping images, showing both conventionalization and folklore, rustic of local flowers, trees and fruits.

3.2.2. Decorative arts with interference and acclimatization of Chinese culture

In some areas of the South like Binh Duong, Đồng Nai, Hồ Chí Minh city, images in temples and communal houses reflect cultural interference with Chinese during the cohabitation. Local people exchange and assimilate Chinese culture, form creative ideas, then stylize decorative images in accordance with daily concepts become images. Different decoration of communal houses in Binh Duong as well as the South have been shown abundantly, which is rarely seen in those of the North.

3.2.3. Carving and shaping blocks style

Binh Duong artisans have demonstrated the form of carving through the immense carving process of tables and chairs, altars, and edges of incense altars in communal houses. Carved altars are

combined with embossed layers of separate layers expressing shapes with full depth and space within the flat space of the layers on the background. The carved form combines the "low carvings" technique, the layout is symmetrical, liberal and not dense. Lights engraved lines are curving lines to create arrays. Decorative images are close to life and nature are features of carving techniques in communal houses in Binh Duong.

3.2.4. Symmetrical decorative layout with decorative images of Fruits, Birds, Natural Landscapes

The acculturation of traditional Vietnamese decorative art and local specific shaping style in communal houses in Binh Duong is demonstrated through the creativity of artisans, breaking decorative form symmetry with the image of the four traditional supernatural creatures interspersed with rich decorative images of Binh Duong locality like fruits. These symbols stand for best wishes of inhabitants that are worth being preserved and promoted respectively.

3.2.5 Bright colors still keep rustic and warm style of traditional wooden architecture

Binh Duong artists often apply techniques of lacquer, illuminations to decorate objects in accordance with folk psychological and aesthetic conceptions with three main colors of red, black and yellow. Beside decorative colors of the above traditional carving techniques, artists also focus on painting with colors like blue, green, red, yellow as accents and black borders of the images. Familiar decorations are representation of folk woodcuts. In general, decorative

colors in interior space of communal houses in Binh Duong, are bright but warm and rustic, suitable with traditional Vietnamese wooden architecture.

3.3. Binh Duong communal houses' roles and promoting their art values

3.3.1. Binh Duong communal houses' roles

Historical-cultural communal house vestige is a crystallization of artistic and cultural creative labor that our forefathers worked so hard to build. Therefore, preserving and promoting cultural values are important and necessary in the process of renewal, development and integration. This also contributes to the development of the country in both society and economic.

3.3.2. Promoting artistic values during preserving process

3.3.2.1. Art values in Binh Duong communal houses

The beauty of communal houses' decoration art in Binh Duong is expressed through rich forms of information, highlighting valuable characteristics of traditional locality and indigenous decorative arts. Estimation is through the principle of artistic typification of myth-folk composing method. Normality exists in all aspects of life. Inheritance can be found through the flexibility artist's shaping. Communalism with deeply human nature spreads throughout society both locally and regionally. The intersectionality and profound cultural values are expressed in many different religious forms in Binh Duong locality.

3.3.2.2. Preserving communal houses' decorative art values in Binh Duong in modern life

Some practical solutions should be synchronously and effectively implemented during the reserving communal houses' decorative art values in Binh Duong needs. At the same time, it is necessary to pay attention to a few points like original elements. Repairmen must be skillful and have some good knowledge of traditional decorative arts in the South so that they could remain the original beauty. Anti-termites should be applied with the technique of peeling off outer barks. Han Nom cultural heritage should be copied and stamped. Values of communal house decoration art in Binh Duong in the current integration period could be promoted in some fields like modern architectural design, historical character design, legends, stories about 3D graphics, designing a set of traditional product brands, composing monumental paintings, developing historical and cultural tourism, fine art training activities associated with experience, surveys and fieldworks, specialized production.

Subconclusion

The identification of communal house decoration art in Binh Duong manifests itself through following characteristics: simplified decorative image of the *Four Supernatural creatures*, alternating between *Fruits and Birds*. Also, there is an adaptive interference with decorative images in Chinese literature. A variety of shaping materials have been used with wood, concrete, bronze, ceramic or painting.

In the current integration period, the process of restoring communal house vestiges in Binh Duong requires solutions to preserve the originality of all tangible and intangible elements that are

necessary for future generations to learn, inherit and develop these local traditional decorative art expression forms.

Conclusion

Traditional decorative art in Binh Duong has been analyzed and evaluated from perspectives of studying decorative arts in some typical communal houses in Binh Duong expressed through decorative images, forms and languages. Shaping local traditional decorative art styles are compared with those of the domestic and foreign regions in order to enhance artistic values. Since then, the research has contributed to the preservation of traditional cultural values, historical relics and economic development. The promotion has been implemented and applied in a number of areas of modern design and architecture like theater construction, vacation houses, villas, resorts, restaurants, cafes that combine architectural design idea with traditional elements. The thesis has also been useful for some advertising graphic designs, stylize game and comic characters, decorative apps, and monumental paintings.../.

Related works

1. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Diep (2017), *Traditional decorative arts of Phu Long communal house - Binh Duong*, Past and Present Magazine, No. 483, May 201, p. 57 – 59, HCM City.

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