



Spiritual culture and the practice of spiritual rituals in Vietnam: Case study of Dau Pagoda festival, Bac Ninh and Tran Temple festival, Nam Dinh

Liu Yin Liang ^{1*}, Le Van Tan ²

¹ PhD student, Vietnamese Studies, VNU Institute of Vietnamese Studies and Development Science, Vietnam

² Associate professor, Doctor, Faculty of Tourism, Vietnam Trade Union University, 169 Tay Son street, Dong Da district, Hanoi City, Vietnam

* Corresponding Author: **Liu Yin Liang**

Article Info

ISSN (online): 2583-8261

Volume: 04

Issue: 01

January-February 2025

Received: 10-11-2024

Accepted: 12-12-2024

Page No: 01-15

Abstract

In the long-term development of history, cultural values are summarized, built and developed in that long-term development history. Spiritual culture as a cultural value of human beings, as well as other cultural values such as culinary culture, costume culture... are formed and developed in the process of dealing with the natural environment, human society, and through human actions, cultural values are expressed. Spiritual culture is a culture that expresses sacred values in daily life and expresses sacred beliefs in religious life. Such as worshiping gods, worshiping Mother Goddesses, worshiping ancestors are all spiritual cultural activities of Vietnamese people. These activities have revealed the beliefs in the sacred realm of the Vietnamese community, and through these activities, those beliefs have existed for a long time. The paper will study the relationship between spiritual culture and spiritual ritual practices at Dau Pagoda festival in Bac Ninh province and Tran Temple festival in Nam Dinh.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJSSER.2025.4.1.01-15>

Keywords: Spiritual culture, spiritual ritual, festival, Dau Pagoda, Tran Temple.

Introduction

Originating from the rice civilization, agriculture has nurtured the souls of Vietnamese people from ancient times to the present. Originating from the Red River with heavy alluvium that fertilized the fertile Northern Delta, this was a favorable condition for agriculture to develop very early. Being a country influenced by East Asian culture, Vietnamese people have long been associated with many festivals in their lives. Most provinces in the Northern Delta worship the god of agriculture and are associated with a rich spiritual life. Spiritual culture and festivals help people remember and respect the gods who have blessed people, so that people can express their gratitude and demonstrate their attitude towards nature and the invisible supreme beings.

Spiritual culture is a concept that refers to factors related to beliefs, faith, and spiritual activities of people, reflecting values, philosophies of life and understanding of the universe, life, death and the relationship between people and supernatural forces or the invisible world. It is an important part of the culture of many ethnic groups and is often expressed through rituals, worship, customs and activities related to religious beliefs or personal beliefs about the spiritual world. In the Vietnamese Dictionary of the Institute of Linguistics (2005), culture is only recognized as "the general sum of material and spiritual values created by humans in the historical process", but not specifically recognized as the consciousness of living truthfully, creating material, spiritual, linguistic, legal, scientific, educational, religious, literary, artistic values of individuals, groups, and communities in the nation and human society; Spirituality is only recognized as "soul, spirit" or "the ability to know in advance that an event

will happen to oneself according to idealistic concepts”, but not specifically recognized as the true life of individuals, groups, and communities in the nation and human society. Up to now, although there is no complete and unified definition of spiritual culture, scholars and scientists basically believe that spiritual culture is a special form of culture created by humans in the process of material activities. The greatest value and meaning that spiritual culture brings to humans is spirit and sacredness.

Festival culture and spirituality are always closely linked to human life in the development of life, bringing a great value system for the development of cultural consciousness. Vietnam is a purely agricultural country from the origin, all crops and things depend on the climate conditions of nature, nature is like a mother who nourishes her children from an endless source, that is why there is "mother nature". The phenomena of nature, ancient people always faced the inexplicable, so they always expected the heavens and earth to be temperate to develop agriculture.

In Vietnamese folk songs it is written:

“Người ta đi cấy lấy công

Tôi đây đi cấy còn trông nhiều bề

Trông trời, trông đất, trông mây

Trông mưa, trông gió, trông ngày, trông đêm”

(Some people go to work to get paid, but when I go to work, I have to look in many different directions, looking at the sky, the earth, the clouds and wind. Looking at the rain, the sun, looking all day and all night.)

In agricultural life, natural disasters and droughts often appear, greatly affecting production, so it is not always a "bumper harvest". There are times when the weather is unstable and everything is not going well. When people turn to spiritual beliefs, the culture of worship and rituals is born. The fertility beliefs of agriculture aim at the growth of crops, the harmony of heaven and earth and yin and yang. Therefore, spiritual culture is an aspect or means to help people behave more friendly with the natural ecosystem. From there, it helps to improve the lives and relationships of people with all things around them.

Spiritual culture is considered the path of practicing morality towards the perfection of each individual. It is the flow connecting the origin, the past and the present. Spiritual culture is considered the relationship between humans and the transcendent, supernatural world, connecting humans with nature over time and associated with the personal memories of each person.

In Vietnamese folk songs it is written:

“Con người có tổ có tông

Như cây có cội, như sông có nguồn.”

(Man is born with an origin; just as a tree has its roots, a river or stream has its source.)

2. Literature Review

The issue of spirituality and spiritual culture of Vietnamese people has been of interest to many previous researchers. The earliest works that more or less mentioned the issue of spiritual culture of Vietnamese people can be mentioned as Outline of Vietnamese cultural history by scholar Dao Duy Anh published in the 30s of the 20th century; Vietnamese customs by Phan Ke Binh, a collection of his research articles

published sporadically in magazines in the 20s and 30s of the 20th century; Vietnamese culture: research and reflection by Professor Tran Quoc Vuong; Foundations of Vietnamese culture by Professor Tran Ngoc Them;...

In Studying Southern Spiritual Culture, author Nguyen Dang Duy focuses on a relatively systematic study of the spiritual culture of the residents in the Southern region through the Mother Goddess worship and traditional festivals influenced by the culture of the Cham people. In this work, issues of the spiritual culture of the Vietnamese people in the South were mentioned such as: filial piety to ancestors; Cao Dai religion; Hoa Hao religion; worship of gods, worship of Mother Goddess in the South; Catholicism in the South;...

The most systematic work and also one of the earliest works is Spiritual Culture by author Nguyen Dang Duy. The work limits the research on the spiritual culture of the Vietnamese people in the North, has the nature of introducing, generalizing and systematizing many issues, from the discussion of spiritual culture to the presence of spiritual culture in all aspects of community life; the issue of spirituality in religious beliefs of the Vietnamese people in the North; spirituality in the belief in the gods of heaven and earth; spirituality in the worship of Mother Goddess; spirituality in funerals and ancestor worship; spirituality in Buddhism; spirituality in Taoism; spirituality in Christianity;... In general, this is a work that has many contributions to the research on spirituality as well as the spiritual culture of the Vietnamese people, which many later studies often cite. We refer to the interpretation and understanding of spirituality, spiritual culture, and the systematic implementation of the presence of spiritual and cultural life in the Vietnamese community in this work.

In the book Vietnamese Spirituality, author Associate Professor Nguyen Duy Hinh stated: “Spirituality is a premonition about invisible phenomena that affect human life, perceived through the long-term experience of a community. The premonition about the Sacred affects the life and death of people”. In the book, Associate Professor Nguyen Duy Hinh also raises, researches and discusses quite thoroughly about the types of Vietnamese spirituality, from religion to belief, the role, value and influence of these spiritual issues in the life of the community,...

In addition, we can also mention works that focus on researching one or several issues related to the spiritual culture of Vietnamese people in each specific space and region; sometimes they are studies on a specific aspect of religious culture (Buddhism; Confucianism; Taoism; Christianity); on cultural beliefs (beliefs in worshipping gods of heaven and earth; beliefs in worshipping Mother Goddesses, beliefs in worshipping tutelary gods; beliefs in worshipping ancestors, etc.). Some typical studies among them are as follows:

- Following the course of history, the lands, gods and consciousness of the Vietnamese people by Tran Quoc Vuong;
- Famous Vietnamese temples, pagodas and mausoleums by Tran Manh Thuong, editor-in-chief;
- Old customs of Vietnamese beliefs, upper and lower volumes by Toan Anh;
- Vietnamese temples and shrines by Professor Vu Ngoc Khanh, editor-in-chief;
- Folk rituals - Ancestor worship rituals of Minh Duong;

In general, in Vietnam, there are quite a lot of general research works on Vietnamese spiritual culture. Basically, through these works, researchers have provided quite detailed instructions, analysis, generalization, systematization and interpretation of the spiritual cultural aspects of Vietnamese people (in relation to Vietnamese traditional culture in general).

In addition to the works and monographs that mention spirituality and spiritual culture of Vietnamese people mentioned above, a number of theses, doctoral dissertations, a number of scientific articles, reports at relevant conferences and seminars also more or less mention this issue. Professor Do Quang Hung in the article Current issues of spirituality and spiritual culture pays due attention to the story of spirituality and spiritual culture of Vietnamese people in general. In the article, the researcher pointed out the different concepts of previous researchers about spirituality. From there, the Professor believes that the key point of different definitions of spirituality is still meeting: "... always associate spirituality with the Sacred. The Sacred (Sacré) is a great discovery of mankind with the meaning that it is the sublimated value of the "mundane world" and has long been considered the most important criterion for the emergence of beliefs and religions. It is worth mentioning that the Sacred in the contemporary world seems to be re-enacted with new nuances and values". We are also interested in this generalization of the researcher: "In studies on religion, spirituality, extrasensory perception, special human abilities... have long been considered near-religious. That means, although spirituality itself is not a religious belief, it is very close to these concepts and sometimes they are major concerns of humanity that are difficult to separate." According to this way of thinking, the researcher suggests not to put spiritual life apart from social life as well as the cultural life of the nation. Spirituality is an element of national culture. "The need to satisfy spiritual life in the current conditions of anxiety and change is real. But the explosive development and the inevitable exploitation of the market economy and complex social psychological motives make this issue quite prominent today" in Vietnamese society.

In the article "Learning about different definitions of spirituality", researcher Ho Ba Tham has researched quite meticulously the understandings of spirituality and from there came to the conclusion that: "Currently, it is probably difficult to find a satisfactory definition of spirituality. In my opinion, the key reason for this is the recognition or denial of the field called spiritual life. To put it more literally, this depends on whether the subjects believe that there is a soul that remains after death? Does the afterlife exist? Only with that belief, do people acknowledge the meaning of acts of communication with the mysterious supernatural world, that is, spiritual life. Belief in a supernatural world that exists parallel to the real world has always existed not only in underdeveloped ethnic groups in the past, but also in civilized human communities in industrial and post-industrial societies today. That surreal world seems to contain the ideal for those who turn to it, seems to provide potential judgment and is worthy of their expectations. Thus, the researcher, whether or not he believes in the soul and the afterlife, is still witnessed the spiritual life of the surrounding communities as an objective reality that needs to be studied. The radical materialist view believes that only living people have intellectual life, thinking, and soul; that when people die, all

of that is lost; that there is no afterlife and it is impossible to communicate with the world that exists in that belief. Perhaps, that consistent materialism is the reason why the term spirituality has not been in the common vocabulary for quite a long time. On that basis, author Ho Ba Tham spent time analyzing the understanding of spirituality in a narrow and broad sense, and at the end of the article, he gave his own opinion that is suggestive for further research as follows: "In essence, spirituality should be understood as a transcendent, surreal area in the deep spiritual life of humans, alongside the intellectual and spiritual areas that are considered normal, mundane activities. Literally, spirituality is communication with the sacred, with the sacred. Thus, spirituality is the sublime sacredness in everyday life, and also the sacred belief in religious life. However, in terms of origin, the foundation of spirituality is the mystery, the mysterious power of the universe and human consciousness, of which sanctification is only a derivative part."

Continuing the above research, author Ho Ba Tham in the article Spirituality is a research object of science and philosophy, researcher Ho Ba Tham has examined spirituality quite thoroughly, both from science and philosophy. The perspectives will bring different interpretations on the same spiritual issue. The presence of spirituality in humans, in the real life of humans is real but it is clear that understanding it, acknowledging it, accepting it and finding it meaningful is another matter. The researcher pointed out eight points related to approaching spirituality as follows:

- (1) Researching spiritual phenomena is both a study of natural phenomena and a study of complex socio-cultural reality with many dimensions. Spirituality as such has natural, conscious aspects, cognitive, emotional aspects, socio-psychological aspects, and specific socio-cultural aspects.
- (2) Clarifying the origin and causes of spiritual phenomena; the trend of movement, the process of transformation, outbreak, and development of spiritual phenomena... Clarifying the characteristics, properties, and roles of both types of spiritual phenomena.
- (3) Research on spiritual phenomena... to refute what is wrong, what is deviant, what is mistaken, and determine what is right, but not simply say no or yes, but must discover what is behind that mysterious, superstitious "spiritual curtain"...
- (4) Research on spiritual phenomena in terms of philosophy must be based on the achievements not only of modern science, but also of social sciences and humanities. At the same time, inherit the rational, progressive, and humanistic thoughts in religions, especially Buddhism from the past to the present.
- (5) Research on trends in perception of concepts, right and wrong, idealism, materialism, science, religion or superstition about spiritual phenomena... (interdisciplinary research), thereby clearly showing the harmful effects of superstition and extreme spiritual consciousness.
- (6) Research on spiritual phenomena not only contributes to perfecting the worldview, philosophy of life, dialectical materialism, history, humanism in general and especially in the field of spirituality, spiritual science and spiritual culture...
- (7) Research on spiritual phenomena requires both respecting spiritual beliefs and actively building scientific beliefs, promoting scientific awareness while respecting "spiritual"

perceptions such as intuition, information from the sixth sense... avoiding rude refutation, but also avoiding "taking advantage of spirituality" to cheat, doing harmful things...

(8) Research on spiritual phenomena in terms of philosophy and science is not only to continue building a humanistic materialism worldview, but is also necessary to serve as a basis for building and implementing policies and laws in the spiritual field, avoiding the situation of being either right-leaning, passive, and lax in the face of their spontaneous changes, or left-leaning, inclined to using the current regime to brutally suppress those phenomena."

Author Van Lac in the article *Spiritual life and the positive aspects of spiritual life* believes that "Spiritual life is a form of human consciousness and social consciousness... Spiritual life is a life oriented towards pure, noble, honest, beautiful and sacred values that have been summarized by people over thousands of years of history... Orienting towards spirituality is not only a need but also a way to help people live more honestly and better. That is the desire of people towards truth, goodness, beauty and eternal happiness. That is the cultural value and eternal life in contemporary society that we need to honor. Spiritual life also creates solidarity, connects the past, present and future, has a strong spreading power, creates sacred emotions and vibrations". Emphasizing the positive and beautiful aspects of spiritual culture is the focus of the article.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research methodology

Spiritual culture was formed almost along with the history of human society. The process of movement and development of human history is also the process of movement and development of spiritual culture. From the simplest perceptions and understandings of the natural world, society and people to deeper and more comprehensive understandings of these issues, people gradually formed and summarized their own contemplations on spiritual issues and spiritual culture.

Therefore, the article is based on the viewpoint and dialectical method of Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism to perceive the issue of spiritual culture. The spiritual culture of Vietnamese people, from the practical life to the abstraction in folk songs and proverbs and from folk songs and proverbs to the practical life, has a process of formation, movement and development, gradually inheriting each other, the good aspects are preserved and gradually eliminating negative and superstitious elements. Also from this reflection, spiritual culture is perceived from the refraction of the material life of residents to the spiritual life. Material comes first, the practical life of residents comes first, then comes the spiritual life. Material life has a finite nature (sufficient) but spiritual life has an indefinite element (ie does not stop, is infinite). For that reason, if in the past spirituality was simply belief, a vague and limited understanding of humans before the natural world, then later on, especially at the present stage, it has received more and more attention from the community, in many different forms.

Thus, with the viewpoint that material comes first, spirit comes later; with two principles (universal connection, development): aiming for comprehensiveness, movement; Three laws: finding the origin, motivation and path of development and Six pairs of categories: the basis for considering comprehensiveness and depth, the issue of

spiritual culture will be comprehensively illuminated by us through the expression of Vietnamese folk songs and proverbs.

In addition, the methodology of the structural system is also an important reference for the implementation of the research problem in this thesis: The system is a structure of many elements that are related to each other. In the system, there are partial elements, the parts are related to each other and are related to the system. With that meaning, the thesis tries to find out the relationship and systematic nature of the elements in the spiritual culture of the Vietnamese people through folk songs and proverbs. The systematic method sees spiritual culture as a whole system and seeks to analyze that whole system into parts, find out the comprehensive systematic nature, the elements only create the most complete meaning when they participate in the system. The structural system perspective also considers spiritual culture from many aspects, many aspects and in a state of constant movement and in specific circumstances (specific cultural space).

3.2. Perspectives on approaching research problems

Interdisciplinary approach to area studies

* *Interdisciplinary approach*

In Vietnamese studies, the interdisciplinary approach is used as the most important and decisive orientation. This approach has a superior advantage over the specialized approach, of course, with appropriate studies. The interdisciplinary approach places the research object in a development space with the interaction of values in all dimensions such as nature, ecology, culture, society, history, economy, policy, etc., providing a relatively comprehensive view of the region. We base on the viewpoint on the interdisciplinary research method of Prof. Dr. Nguyen Quang Ngoc as follows: "The interdisciplinary research method is a method of using two or more specialized methods simultaneously, effectively and equally to perceive an object or phenomenon. For example, when conducting fieldwork in a specific village, the researcher (or research group) can use different methods such as History, Ethnology, Economics, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Geography, etc., provided that there is no distinction between which method is primary and which is secondary (or which method is dominant and which method is complementary). However, it is necessary to identify that interdisciplinary research here also has different levels of breadth and narrowness, and the level of interdisciplinary research depends on the ability to simultaneously, comprehensively and effectively use many specific methods for a research subject to bring about a common scientific understanding.

* *Access to Learning Area*

According to Prof. Dr. Nguyen Quang Ngoc, "The regional study method takes the socio-cultural space, including the fields of human activities and the interaction between humans and natural conditions as the object of research. The purpose of regional study is to achieve a comprehensive understanding of a socio-cultural space, to find out the characteristics of nature and human life in that space". Accordingly, the most important purpose of regional study in this study is to identify, analyze, and evaluate the manifestations of spiritual culture through Vietnamese folk songs and proverbs. On that basis, "the studies must have the value of consulting, policy criticism, and ultimately directly contribute to the sustainable development of the region, that

is, providing input for the policy process". The research results of the thesis will certainly contribute to explaining and clarifying to have a comprehensive view of the issue of consciousness, life, and spiritual culture of Vietnamese people through folk songs and proverbs; through its manifestation in the life of the community.

4. Research Results and Discussion

4.1. Some basic concepts

4.1.1. Spiritual concept

Spirituality, in terms of words, is understood as: heart (心) is the heart, spirit, human consciousness, mind, center; spirit (靈) is the spirit, god, soul, good and goodness, flexible, effective, majestic; Currently, spirituality (心靈) in Chinese is understood in a broad sense as "inner heart, thoughts and feelings", belonging to the spiritual category.

Spirituality is a concept that is no longer strange to researchers as well as to the community life of countries and territories around the world. It is also a concept that is perceived in many different forms of reception, changing over time. Spirituality in the Vietnamese Dictionary, Professor Hoang Phe said that it is "The ability to know in advance that an event will happen to oneself, according to the idealistic concept", is "soul, spirit". According to this understanding, the Vietnamese Dictionary believes that spirituality is the soul, spirit of humans in general, which is very vague. As for the ability to know the future, with the element of spiritual intuition and the ability to judge that an event will happen/occur in the future, it is considered idealistic (negative). The history of human thought has witnessed a never-ending struggle between the idealistic school and the materialistic school, so it is clear that considering spirituality as idealism also needs to be reconsidered.

Like culture, spirituality has many different interpretations. Up to now, this is still an open concept. Roberto Assagioli once exclaimed: "If there is a word that is most confused, difficult to understand, and misunderstood, it is the word spirituality".

According to Nguyen Dang Duy: "Spirituality is the sacred and sublime in everyday life, the sacred belief in religious life". Tran Thi Mai Nhan believes that spirituality "is often understood as the mysterious spiritual life of humans, in contrast to purely rational consciousness. It includes the irrational, the subconscious, the unconscious, the innate instincts that can emphasize intuition, intuition, and mysterious abilities".

According to our observations, up to now there are the following directions of spiritual research:

Firstly, spirituality is considered an abnormal phenomenon, a "line" of communication between the living and the dead. Vietnamese researcher Do Kien Cuong (Việt Nam) believes: "In our country, the term spirituality is being used in the following meanings: 1/ Spirit, intelligence,...; 2/ Belief,...; 3/ Abnormal phenomena, such as extrasensory perception, or the power of the mind over matter". "Pham Ngoc Quang only attributes spirituality to the underworld, a phenomenon that has a belief in: 1/ the existence of ghosts, 2/ ghosts have the ability to perceive, advise, and help the living know information that is and will happen, helping people to function more effectively, 3/ people (some) have the ability

to contact ghosts, which is too limited and easily blocked, no matter how important it is. "

Secondly, looking at spirituality in the course of historical development, at each stage, spirituality has different connotations. Researcher Nguyen Hoang Phuong believes that: "spirituality is the magical rituals of primitive peoples; divination and prophecy in ancient times; religion and theology in medieval times; extrasensory perception, the harmony of the universe, and partly the manifestation of modern cosmic wisdom".

Third, the concept of spirituality is based on psychoanalysis. Freud (France) believes that the origin of spiritual consciousness comes from primitive totemistic rituals, when people were both afraid and tried to protect the "historical" decision to kill their common father. Jung (Switzerland) started from the theory of the subconscious and dreams to explain the origin of spirituality. After studying the superego, Roberto Assagioli (Italy) believed that spirituality is the supreme reality in its transcendent, absolute form, without any specific limits or regulations. Thus, spirituality itself transcends all limits of time or space, all connections with matter... spirituality is eternal, infinite, free, universal. That highest and absolute reality cannot be known intellectually, because it surpasses human intelligence, but it can be stated as rational postulates, developed intuitively and, to a certain extent, experienced mystically. Fourth, the concept of spirituality is closely linked to religion. Researcher Do Lai Thuy believes: The concept of spirituality is both narrower and broader than the concept of religious belief. Narrower because in religious belief, in addition to the spiritual part, there is also superstition and religious fanaticism... Broader because spirituality is closely linked to the concepts of the sacred, the sublime, the transcendent... not only in religious life, but also in spiritual life and social life. The authors of the History of Spirituality even identified it with the history of Christianity when they wrote: Spirituality certainly has its own strange attraction. The relationship between man and God in its deepest form is the foundation of Christianity... Then, the Christian world created a vast spiritual literature. Besides, supernatural figures, especially saints, were described as perfect models. A rich sacred literature was born. Researcher Trac Tan Binh said: "The religious history reflects the spiritual experience of man, and at the same time is a vivid reflection of the formation and development of the soul of the subject nation". Fifth, the concept of spirituality has the nature of synthesizing the above research directions, presenting the most basic characteristics of the concept. Researcher Nguyen Dang Duy said: "Spirituality is the sacred and sublime in everyday life, the sacred belief in religious and spiritual life. That sacred and sublime, sacred belief is condensed in symbols, images, and ideas". Researcher Ho Ba Tham in the article "Learning about different definitions of spirituality" believes: "Spirituality is the mysterious power of the universe, of the human brain, in the consciousness of depth, height and the sanctification of that power at certain levels and aspects".

Although there are different concepts, through the concepts presented above, we see that spirituality has the following basic characteristics:

First, spirituality has a close relationship with religion. Each religion has a system of "saints" that are mythologized and have influenced people through many generations, such as Buddha in Buddhism or God in Christianity. Until today,

followers of the above religions still believe in the boundless power of the saviors in their religions.

Second, spirituality is linked to human consciousness. Only people with consciousness and soul have a concept of spirituality: "A person who has lost his mind and is no longer able to think has nothing in his head, nor is he spiritual."

Third, spirituality is closely linked to belief in the sacred.

Fourth, spirituality is closely linked to the deceased. In fact, activities such as soul calling, worship, and adoration all stem from the belief that these activities are a way to connect people on earth with souls in the other world. As researcher Le Thu Yen said, spirituality is "a philosophy about human existence after death".

Fifth, spirituality is historical, inherited, continued, and passed down from generation to generation. However, spirituality is not "unchangeable" but has the ability to adapt and change depending on circumstances and human perception. Each person, depending on circumstances, status, level of education, etc., may have different concepts of spirituality.

Humans are born with many different abilities, perhaps a depth of some infinite abilities that humans themselves are not fully aware of. Scientists have proven by a logical system that, besides aspects such as physical ability (PQ), intellectual ability (IQ) and emotional ability (EQ), humans have another aspect of ability, which is spiritual ability (SQ). Spiritual ability is the spiritual life, the diversity, richness and also the subtlety of the deep consciousness of humans. Creating a beautiful spiritual life is a clear and pure conscience, the final boundary that each person will stop at to perceive and control their own behavior, not to go astray, to avoid darkness and find light. Spirituality is the soul, but also a hunch, a priori and also a posteriori about the purity of the soul, of spiritual life. Spirituality is the depth of consciousness, of consciousness, of memory, the repression that always longs for liberation. Spirituality makes people go slower, think, listen and be in harmony, not only with nature or ecology but also the way each person knows how to listen to themselves. Spirituality is the beauty that belongs to people and the community, so it is a value that always has the opportunity to become human.

4.1.2. Concept of spiritual culture

When spirituality is recognized as a part of human life, it will quickly become a cultural issue. Belonging to the deepest dimension of human consciousness and soul. Spiritual culture did not receive attention in the cultural research scheme of the previous socialist academic community. When examining the relationship between literature and spiritual culture in Vietnam, Professor, Dr. Tran Dinh Su affirmed: "For a long time, due to the primitive, extreme materialist concept, identifying literature with scientific awareness, with politics, we not only rejected spiritual phenomena in general, considered them superstitious, but also criticized them as unscientific, irrational phenomena in life and in literature". Approaching spiritual culture from the perspective of cultural studies and dialectical perspective shows that: spiritual culture is a unified product of the objective and subjective in the development of society. Therefore, although up to now, human understanding of spiritual phenomena still has many gaps, but as a social phenomenon, a type of reflection of social existence, in the end, it cannot be without regularity.

Perhaps what leads people to step into the spiritual world "is a world with many mysteries that science has not yet fully explained. But basically, it can be affirmed that it is a world associated with beliefs about noble, sacred values, towards spirituality, people expect to move towards values of truth, goodness and beauty" is the dream. With science, the material of dreams is reality. Reality here, first of all, is the need to explain about one's living environment, about the world and about oneself. Following the locomotive of dreams is the symbol, the system of tables of legends and myths. That symbol is the first mark of culture. It is an image that people can name, even though it is difficult to find some symbols with names in this world such as unicorns, dragons... The first symbols that people created were actually just images recorded on cave walls. But here it should be noted that the more obscure the statue, the higher its power and sacredness. The highest humanity (many cultural researchers call it humanism) of spiritual culture is gratitude to those who have incarnated as the source of the country, creating the sacredness of history. On this point, there seems to be little difference between East and West. Perhaps the difference is that the sacredness in the West is less isolated from everyday life than in the East, and architecture and rituals are concrete manifestations. Therefore, the sacredness of the East has a more mysterious or mystical color than that of the West.

The history of human society shows that spirituality is an aspect of human life. The problem is in classifying spirituality. In classifying spirituality, the humanistic criterion must be placed first. That is also one of the reasons why spiritual culture is a part of culture. Therefore, not every phenomenon is spiritual culture. Spiritual culture and superstition have a very thin boundary. Due to the subjectivity and strength of belief, it is not always sensitive enough to distinguish. With a comprehensive and developmental perspective, it can be affirmed that: Spirituality is the power of the past realized. Therefore, in many cases, spirituality is a means of expressing the strength and spirit of the nation... It can be affirmed that the basis of spirituality and spiritual culture is spiritual belief. Belief, spiritual belief, religious belief and faith are different concepts in terms of level and level of reflection. When talking about belief, we only want to emphasize and prove that belief is the result of thinking and can be verified. Belief contains information and knowledge. In scientific research, belief plays an extremely important role, not infrequently supporting scientific achievements. Belief is a product of thinking, so the intervention of subjective factors is inevitable, so there are scientific beliefs and non-scientific beliefs. With non-scientific beliefs, do not rush to attribute them to religious beliefs because the truth is concrete and must be tested through practice. Spiritual beliefs, religious beliefs and faith, if reduced to a common denominator, have the common point of the subject's mental activity towards objects that cannot be tested, cannot be proven, and if there is an intention to test or prove, it is considered offensive. That belief is the sacred connection between reality and surrealism, between the mundane world and the spiritual world. Therefore, that belief is the beginning of everything. Spiritual belief is a concept used to refer to all kinds of beliefs that people have in the spiritual world. The spiritual world (sacred world) is an extremely broad concept. It can be said that there are as many types of beliefs and religions as there are spiritual worlds. The difference between spiritual worlds,

beliefs and religions is not only created by doctrine but also by cultural traditions, or material and spiritual ways of living. That difference can be found in spiritual rituals. Religious belief and faith have in common the belief that believers place in, send to the supreme sacred beings. However, there is a distinction between religious belief and faith. In religious belief there is still a trace of reason. That is absolutely not in faith. Spiritual culture is an integral part of human culture, the convergence of: sacredness, inspiration and conformity of truth, goodness, and beauty at the most ideal level. These are also the specific signs of spiritual culture. The scientific significance of the problem is that spiritual culture is a part of human culture, so it will have all the characteristics of culture. But spiritual culture is a form of culture, so besides the general and the particular, there is also the unique to affirm its reasonable existence. The sacred creates spiritual culture and in turn, spiritual culture makes the sacred become something of society, something of humanity. That is the dialectic of spirituality and culture. The issue of spirituality in developed societies has proven this observation. But that has also caused misunderstandings for the intuitive view: the more civilized the society, the smaller the role of spirituality. In general, spiritual culture is a part of ethnic culture, closely linked to customs and habits, fixed in language, condensed into motifs, poetic prototypes of traditional narratives. "Spiritual culture will follow the existence of ethnic groups on earth, associated with people and expressed in literature and art. In modern people, scientific people and spiritual people are still intertwined, living together in one body, one soul". The two concepts of spirituality and spiritual culture are very "close" to each other, both referring to "the sublime sacredness in everyday life" and "sacred beliefs in religious life" which are difficult to distinguish clearly and specifically. In our literary knowledge, we understand that with spirituality, researcher Nguyen Dang Duy tends towards the static, spiritual element of this concept when he believes that the sacred and sublime in daily life and the sacred belief in religion are both "condensed in symbols, images, and ideas". Meanwhile, with spiritual culture, he tends towards the dynamic and material element. Nguyen Dang Duy wrote: "spiritual culture includes invisible culture, visible culture, and culture of action". In the three elements that make up spiritual culture above, in addition to invisible culture (concepts and ideas about spirituality), visible culture and culture of action are both expressive and material. However, not every tangible or actionable element that expresses the sacred and sublime in life and sacred belief in religion can be called spiritual culture. Only actions that bear cultural manifestations are called spiritual culture, while those that are countercultural and negative are not considered spiritual culture. Just like the recognition of the existence of spirituality in the aspects of human capacity, spiritual culture is the beauty of spirituality, in other words, spirituality is a part of human culture. The reception, manifestation of human cognition as well as human actions in good aspects, towards the truth, goodness and beauty of social life, express spirituality as the spiritual culture of humans as well as of the community. Spiritual culture is both obvious and hidden, both observable and beyond the ability to be observed by the naked eye. Spiritual culture in that dimension is both attractive, seductive and magical, challenging, and thus, spirituality and spiritual culture have kept pace with the footsteps of humankind from ancient times to today's life. It

originally belonged to humans, but as soon as it was created, it "definitely" had its own "way of existence" to give birth to, to be admired, respected, and controlled. That is also the reason why spirituality and spiritual culture will certainly forever be both an answer and a mystery to humans and society.

4.2. Practicing Buddhist worship rituals: the case of Dau Pagoda (Thuan Thanh, Bac Ninh)

4.2.1. History of formation and development of Dau Pagoda

Dau Pagoda, also known as Dien Ung (延應寺), or Phap Van (法雲寺), is a pagoda located in Thanh Khuong ward, Thuan Thanh town, Bac Ninh province, about 30 km from Hanoi. The pagoda is located in Dau area, which was called Luy Lau during the Han Dynasty. In Dau area, there are five ancient pagodas: Dau pagoda worships Phap Van (法雲寺, "cloud god"), Dau pagoda worships Phap Vu (法雨寺, "rain god"), Tuong pagoda worships Phap Loi (法雷寺, "thunder god"), Dan pagoda worships Phap Dien (法電寺, "lightning god") and To pagoda worships Man Nuong, the mother of Tu Phap. These four gods were originally gods of agriculture, creating magic of clouds, rain, thunder, and lightning to serve and influence the farming of the people. Due to the influence of Buddhism, these gods were transformed into Buddhas and worshiped. Located on a high, wide land, surrounded by lush green trees, the temple yard with wells and village ponds creates a typical scene of the northern countryside. Built from 187 to 226, Dau Pagoda is now nearly 1,800 years old, Dau Pagoda holds the record for the oldest pagoda in Vietnam, considered the first Buddhist center of Việt Nam and a top-notch landmark of the ancient Kinh Bac region. The pagoda was rebuilt in 1313 and restored many times over the following centuries. King Tran Anh Tong ordered the first-class scholar Mac Dinh Chi to rebuild Dau Pagoda into a hundred-room pagoda, a nine-storey tower, and a nine-span bridge. Currently, in the upper hall, only a few carvings from the Tran and Le dynasties remain. The pagoda was ranked as a historical relic by the State on April 28, 1962.

When the pagoda was built in the early AD, the first Indian monks came here. At the end of the 6th century, the monk Tini-da-luu-chi from China came to this pagoda, establishing a Zen sect in Vietnam. Like many pagodas in Vietnam, Dau Pagoda was built in the style of "inner public, outer private". Four rows of rectangular interconnected houses surround three main houses: the front hall, the incense burning hall and the upper hall. With a system of Buddha statues demonstrating the integration, exchange and adaptation between Indian Buddhism and the indigenous cultural beliefs of the Vietnamese people, Dau Pagoda still preserves quite intact the woodblock set "Co Chau Phat Ban Hanh", dated 1752, telling the story of Buddha at Dau Pagoda. This is an important historical source to help research the history of Vietnamese Buddhism, which was recognized by the Prime Minister as a National Treasure in 2023.

The formation and existence of Dau Pagoda is closely linked to the development history of Việt Nam. Together with some neighboring pagodas, Dau Pagoda forms the largest Buddhist center in Vietnam and the region. Many famous ancient masters practiced and presided at Dau Pagoda in Bac Ninh such as: Mau Bac in the 2nd century, Khuong Tang Hoi, Chi Cuong Luong in the 3rd century and Zen Master Ty Ni Da

Luu Chi in the 6th century. The ancient pagoda has gone through countless ups and downs of thousands of years of history. With the erosion of time and the devastation of war, Dau Pagoda was damaged and had to be rebuilt and repaired a lot. However, the cultural and spiritual values of Dau Pagoda are still preserved intact. In particular, the story of Buddha's mother Man Nuong associated with the birth of this ancient pagoda is still passed down to this day. In 2013, Dau Pagoda was ranked as a special National Monument by the Prime Minister.

With a long history, over time, the folklore in Dau Pagoda has been increasingly enriched with many layers of meaning, from the festivals held at Dau Pagoda, the legends, stories, and folk songs have helped make the life of Dau Pagoda more vibrant and rich, imbued with Vietnamese cultural identity. This is what makes Dau Pagoda widely circulated among the people as well as the next generations. Dau Pagoda Festival has entered the subconscious of people forever in this land through the folk songs passed down from generation to generation, one after another, remembering this traditional festival:

*“Dù ai đi đâu về đâu
Hễ trông thấy tháp chùa Dâu thì về
Dù ai buôn bán trăm nghề
Tháng tư ngày Tám thì về hội Dâu”*

(No matter where we go or where we return/ Seeing the image of Dau Pagoda, we all come back/ No matter who does business in a hundred different professions/ On the eighth day of the fourth month, we all come back together)

The first two verses of the folk song show the deep impression in the hearts of the people about their homeland, no matter where they go, what they do, when they see the image of Dau Pagoda tower, everyone remembers and returns to that place. Dau Pagoda tower symbolizes the deep connection of the people with their homeland, with a sacred place. The last two verses emphasize the importance of Dau Pagoda festival, held on the 8th day of the 4th lunar month, this festival is an opportunity for people from everywhere, no matter how busy they are with work, to return to participate. It is a big festival, not only has religious significance but also shows community solidarity and gratitude to ancestors. Thus, the poem not only talks about a historical place but also shows the sacred feelings of the people for their homeland and long-standing cultural values.

Dau Pagoda not only has its own cultural space in the Buddhist land of Bac Ninh but is also passed down in folk songs and typical festival culture of the Vietnamese people as one of the great festivals with long history.

*Mùng bảy hội Khâm, mùng tám hội Dâu
Mùng chín đâu đâu trở về hội Gióng.*

(On the seventh day, there is the Kham festival, on the eighth day, there is the Dau festival/ On the ninth day, everyone returns to the Giong festival)

To describe and remember the sacred and majestic Dau Pagoda festival in the land of Kinh Ky Bac Ninh, there are many folk songs preserved in the remaining woodblocks at Dau Pagoda. All social classes from kings to common people gather at Dau Pagoda to show their respect and pray for good things in life. *“Người ta hội họp rông mây*

*Đôi bên phố xá vui tầy cảnh tiên
Khai quang khánh tán mãn viên
Đặt làm lễ hội Tràng yên thuở này.”*

(People gather dragons and clouds/ On both sides of the street, there is joy in the fairyland/ The opening ceremony is complete/ The Trang Yen festival is held at this time)

4.2.2. Dau Pagoda Festival

Dau Pagoda Festival has a history parallel to the birth of the pagoda, the festival is held annually on the 8th day of the 4th lunar month, the same day as the birth of Buddha Sakyamuni, this is considered the oldest festival in Việt Nam today, the festival takes place within 12 villages of Dau commune, the main ritual of Dau Festival is to pray for favorable weather, to bless people to have a peaceful life, prosperity and happiness. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the festival was held very solemnly, according to legend, the procession included palanquins, worshipping horses, flags, fans, umbrellas, soldiers carrying palanquins from all directions to the temple, this is also one of the rare festivals organized by King Tran and carried from the temple to Thang Long citadel and held the ceremony right in the palace. The festival is held in 4 large temples worshipping Tu Phap including: Phap Van, Phap Vu, Phap Loi, Phap Dien and To Pagoda worshipping Lady Man Nuong (mother of Tu Phap). In which, Dau Pagoda is the center of the festival. Dau Pagoda is the first pagoda of Vietnamese Buddhism, a testament to the transmission of Vietnamese Buddhism originating from India. Every year, on the 8th day of the 4th lunar month, the people in the region are excited and jubilant to open the Dau Pagoda festival, which is considered the oldest festival that still exists today. Historical records show that kings often come here to attend the festival, worship Buddha, pray for rain, and even the Phap Van statue was brought to the capital Thang Long many times to pray for rain. The festival is held with solemn and dignified rituals according to traditional customs commemorating the day Buddha's mother Man Nuong gave birth to a daughter.

The main activity of the festival is that the villages organize the procession of the statues of Phap Van (Mrs. Dau), Phap Vu (Mrs. Dau), Phap Loi (Mrs. General), Phap Dien (Mrs. Dan) from their village's pagodas to gather at Dau pagoda. The procession includes worshipping horses, flags, fans, umbrellas, and palanquins from all directions. The most special and impressive thing is that when arriving at Dau pagoda, the "mother chasing her child" game takes place. The palanquins of Mrs. Dau, Mrs. Dau, Mrs. General, and Mrs. Dan, each palanquin runs 3 laps and then returns to the original place. Then the most anticipated "water robbery" game takes place. When the command is given, the palanquins of Mrs. Sam, Mrs. Dau, and Mrs. Rain race to the main gate. The palanquin carrying the lady who arrives first gets the water, and wins. People believe that if it is Mrs. Dau, that year will be a good harvest, if it is Mrs. General, that year the fields will be full of worms and leeches, and business will be difficult. In addition, the villagers also organized the procession of "Thach Quang Buddha" and "Tu Phap Buddha" to Man Xa pagoda (Man Nuong's motherland) to pay respect to their ancestors, and the "weekly parade". Along with the ceremony, there were festival activities: Quan Ho singing on boats; Dong Ngu water puppetry; performances of traditional folk art forms such as Ca Tru, Trong Quan, Cheo singing,

Van singing...; mass art exchanges, sports competitions and folk games. The ceremony was in the pagoda, visitors from all over came to pray. As for the festival outside the yard, people carried 11 Buddha palanquins outdoors to pay respect to their ancestors at Nghiem Phuc Tu pagoda, then returned to participate in performances and entertainment. These were Trong Quan singing, Cheo singing, Ca Tru singing, stick dancing, drum dancing, and the most special of which was the "water robbery" competition.

According to the old people, in the past, the Tam Quan gate of Dau Pagoda was in front, about 200m from the entrance of Dau Pagoda. The gate was very large and high, with 7 entrance arches. On the festival day, people built 2 large pavilions on both sides of the inside of the gate to prepare for the competition. After returning from the ancestor worship, all 4 statues in the Tu Phap system were arranged in a horizontal row to sit in public outside the Tien Duong row. Then when entering the competition, only 2 statues were allowed to participate. They were Phap Vu and Phap Loi. According to the rules, each statue participating in the water-stealing competition was only allowed to be carried by 8 people. They were strong young men, of equal height, wearing hats and yellow shirts with red stripes. The 2 Buddha statues were also given beautiful temple hats and robes. Then when the command was given, 16 young men simultaneously lifted the palanquin onto their shoulders in a ready position, running as fast as they could forward. The wind blew, making the Buddha's robe swell. Whichever statue reached the finish line first was considered the winner.

Dau Pagoda Festival is an indispensable need in the spiritual life of Dau people. Because it is not only a need to seek Buddha and immerse yourself in vibrant and typical folk cultural activities, but also has the important meaning of praying for all good things, praying for favorable weather - an eternal wish of agricultural residents. Dau Festival is a festival of all families and will last forever.

4.2.3. Cultural and educational values of Dau Pagoda

Dau Pagoda was built in the 2nd century, under the Hung King Dynasty, and is one of the oldest Buddhist temples in Vietnam. Dau Pagoda has the typical architecture of traditional Vietnamese Buddhism, including items such as Buddha hall, ancestral house, three-door gate, tower, and ancillary buildings. These works bear the imprint of ancient culture and architectural art, reflecting the development of Buddhism from the early period in Vietnam. In addition, Dau Pagoda is a place to preserve many relics, stone steles, and ancient artifacts, contributing to the preservation of historical, cultural, and religious values of the Vietnamese people. The pagoda is a symbol of the exchange between cultures in the history of the country's development.

This place is also the center of Buddhism development, especially during the Ly and Tran dynasties. This pagoda has welcomed many eminent monks and scholars, and is the place where Buddhist schools in Vietnam have developed. Every year in March and April of the lunar calendar, thousands of Buddhists and tourists participate in festivals. This festival is not only an occasion for people to worship Buddha and pray for peace, but also an opportunity to express folk cultural values, music, and national arts such as Quan Ho singing and folk games. Dau Pagoda Festival is also the place where unique cultural activities take place, closely associated with the spiritual traditions of Bac Ninh people.

This is not only a place to worship Buddha but also a center for moral education, teaching humanistic values such as compassion, joy, wisdom, and mindfulness. Lectures, chanting, and sermons at the temple contribute to cultivating the virtues and ethics of believers, especially in living peacefully, being tolerant, and helping the community. Rituals and religious activities at the temple also help Buddhists deeply realize the impermanence of life, encouraging people to live meaningfully, aiming for enlightenment and inner peace.

Religious architectural works in general and Dau Pagoda in particular are places to preserve and promote tangible and intangible cultural values, helping the younger generation to be aware of the importance of protecting the nation's cultural heritage. The followers who come here not only learn about Buddhism but also are educated about the responsibility to protect and maintain traditional values. In addition, the organization of festivals and community activities at Dau Pagoda also emphasizes the role of solidarity and mutual love in the community, helping to promote awareness of living together, protecting the environment, and maintaining cultural heritage.

The courses at Dau Pagoda are a place for people, especially young people, to learn about spirituality, Buddhism, and methods to improve their spiritual life, achieve peace and wisdom. The Buddhist teachings at the pagoda, especially the methods of meditation and reciting Buddha's name, help believers develop their thinking, awareness and deep understanding of themselves and life.

4.3. Practicing the ritual of worshipping Thanh Hoang: the case of Tran Temple (Nam Dinh)

Tran Temple (陳廟 - Tran Mieu) is a historical and cultural relic of Vietnam, built in 1695 on the old Thai Mieu of the Tran Dynasty, Phu Thien Truong, known as the "second capital" of the Dai Viet emperor, second only to Thang Long citadel. Currently, Tran Temple is located on National Highway 10, Tran Thua Street, Loc Vuong Ward, Nam Dinh City, Nam Dinh Province. Tran Temple relic site includes: Thien Truong Temple, Co Trach Temple, Trung Hoa Temple. All 3 temples together with Pho Minh Pagoda (Thap Pagoda) - the place to worship the King, Buddha King Tran Nhan Tong, create a unique and distinctive religious and belief complex in terms of architectural art, imbued with the cultural and historical values of the nation. Tran Temple historical and cultural relic is one of the typical architectural works of Nam Dinh province. Currently, through excavations by archaeologists, the underground area around the Tran Temple area still has many vestiges of the ancient Thien Truong Palace with strips of broken bricks and tiles shaped like lemon flowers, drainage pipes arranged with typical baked bricks,... In the 17th century, this architectural work was rebuilt and underwent many renovations, during the Nguyen Dynasty, this place was built with additional rooms similar to the architectural style of today. On December 19, 2014, the Tran Temple Festival was recognized as a national intangible cultural heritage.

4.3.1. History of formation and development of Tran Temple

Since ancient times, the Northern region has had a tradition of worshipping gods, each type of worship has different

rituals. Located in the Red River Delta, Nam Dinh is an ancient land with a unique folk religious life, imbued with the culture of wet rice agriculture. According to Vietnamese folk beliefs, since ancient times, every time a village was established, people often had the custom of building a temple (communal house, shrine, pagoda) to worship gods, the chosen god was called the village's Thanh Hoang. According to the people's concept, the village's Thanh Hoang always witnessed the villagers' lives, bestowed blessings on the good people, and punished the evil ones. Therefore, whenever there was a big job, people went to the temple to worship and ask for the gods' protection; when there was an injustice, people went to the temple to swear and ask the gods to witness. Thanh Hoang are gods who have a great influence on the development of the community. Tran Temple, the place to worship the Tran Kings, also includes the ritual of worshipping Thanh Hoang to show gratitude to those who have contributed to protecting the country and keeping peace for the people. This is a combination of ancestor worship and deity worship, showing respect for heroes and deities who have contributed greatly to the nation. Tran Temple Festival is one of the largest and most important festivals in Vietnam, held in Nam Dinh province every January. This is a traditional festival, commemorating and showing gratitude to the Tran Kings, especially Tran Hung Dao, who is considered a national hero in the resistance war against the Mongol invaders. In addition, affirming the traditional festival of Tran Temple as the quintessence of the original cultural heritage with unique rituals and beliefs has helped preserve and promote the unique heritage values and profound lessons for future generations. (Reference from Khanh Dung's article, Nam Dinh Newspaper, Tran Temple Traditional Festival - The quintessence of cultural heritage of origin, 2023).

The origin of Thanh Hoang is very diverse. According to historical documents, Thanh Hoang originated from China during the Three Kingdoms period. In the study of "Vietnamese Thanh Hoang beliefs", Nguyen Duy Hinh said that Thanh Hoang is a guardian deity that was worshiped by the people before, and was later given the title of Thanh Hoang by the king (Nguyen Duy Hinh, 1996, p. 388). According to Religious Studies (Nguyen Ngoc Mai, 2016, p. 106), the Thanh Hoang gods that are worshiped are divided into 3 types: Upper-class gods, Middle-class gods, and Lower-class gods.

The main places to worship Thanh Hoang are at village communal houses and temples, where villagers gather, hang royal decrees and instructions with rituals and festivals taking place to pray for the peace and prosperity of the community and family. These communal houses and temples are places for spiritual activities of the community, helping to connect people with protective deities, especially Thanh Hoang, the deity of the village. - "Considering the original idea, each direction has a famous mountain, a big river; the court built a temple to worship the mountain and river god to be the master (head) of the affairs of that direction only. Next, the court selected loyal and righteous mandarins and those who had contributed to the country, and also built temples for the villagers to worship them nearby. From then on, the people gradually imitated each other, every place had to worship a god to be the master of their village. Vietnamese people believe that: "The land has Tho Cong, the river has Ha Ba; Every land must have its own God; so we must worship him so that he can support the people", so every day the worship

of the god becomes more prosperous..." (Phan Ke Binh, 2005, p.78;79). The Thanh Hoang at Tran Temple are often worshiped in parallel with the Tran kings, such as Tran Hung Dao, King Tran Nhan Tong... Although mainly worshipping the Tran kings, the worship of Thanh Hoang in this temple also reflects the connection between folk beliefs and the worship of national heroes. This ritual also shows gratitude to those who have helped the community overcome difficulties, protect the homeland, is a combination of ancestor worship and god worship, showing respect for heroes and gods who have made great contributions to the nation.

Speaking of Saint Tran who is being worshiped here, he is the Duke, Commander-in-Chief of Hung Dao Dai Vuong Tran Quoc Tuan (1228-1300), a politician, military man, royal member of Dai Viet, born in Tuc Mac village, Thien Truong prefecture, the second son of An Sinh Vuong Tran Lieu. The life and glorious career of National Hero Tran Hung Dao are associated with 3 resistance wars against the Yuan-Mongol invaders in the 13th century, praised forever for his example of loyalty, steadfast spirit and outstanding military talent. With profound military knowledge and progressive ideology of class and national solidarity, Hung Dao Dai Vuong Tran Quoc Tuan brought the military science and art of Dai Viet under the Tran dynasty to the peak of "martial arts, civil governance", establishing glorious feats in the cause of building and defending the country. He is the famous author of the heroic poem "Hich tuong si" and two military books, "Binh thu yeu luoc" and "Van kiep tong bi truyen thu". After his death, the royal court conferred on him the title "Thai su Thuong phu Thuong Quoc cong nhan vu Hung Dao Dai Vuong". In the popular consciousness, with his example of loyalty, talent and great contributions to the country, when he died, the people honored him as a saint and built temples everywhere to worship and show gratitude for his merits.

Tran Temple not only exists as a spiritual entity in the religious life of the Vietnamese people, but for generations, it has become an important part of the national cultural and poetic source. Tran Temple, as a place to worship the Tran kings, national heroes and gods who protect the country, has been preserved and worshiped by the people for many generations. The image of Tran Temple and the Tran kings has become a powerful symbol in poetic works, incorporated by ancient poets and writers into their literature and poems to praise patriotism, the noble sacrifice of heroes and the historical and cultural values of the nation such as:

*Đền Trần Thương ở vùng đất thiêng,
Bao đời thờ cúng vua Trần kính trọng.
Người dân ai cũng một lòng thành kính,
Mong đất nước bình yên phát triển.*

(Tran Thuong Temple is in a sacred land/ For generations, King Tran has been worshiped with respect/ All the people are sincere in their respect/ Wishing for the country to develop peacefully.)

This song affirms that Tran Temple is a sacred place, with the presence of kings, a place associated with glorious feats in the history of the nation, and at the same time an important spiritual and cultural center. "Forever worship" shows the longevity of this tradition through many generations, showing that worshipping the Tran kings has become a part of the spiritual life and beliefs of the community. These four

verses express the meaning of not only wishing for a peaceful country but also wishing for the country to develop in all aspects: economy, society, culture, but also the desire for prosperity and sustainable development for future generations.

*“Nhất vui là hội Trần Thương,
Đủ đình đủ đám, thập phương tiếng đồn.”*

(The most joyful is the Tran Thuong festival/ Full of festivals and celebrations, rumored from all over)

Tran Thuong Temple Festival is held on the 15th day of the first lunar month and the 20th day of the eighth lunar month every year with many unique and special folk cultural activities, such as the water procession and the rowing competition on the river. This poem especially expresses the excitement and joy. The word "first" means the most important, the highest, showing that this is the festival that is considered the most joyful, the most magnificent, bringing joy and excitement to the participants. This also shows the specialness of Tran Festival, which is a major cultural event that people always look forward to. This also describes a grand and bustling picture of the festival with the participation of many people from the communal houses, groups (groups of people), coming from all over. This scene is not only a celebration but also a connection of the community, showing cultural exchange, national solidarity through attending the festival together, making Tran Temple Festival a special cultural mark of the Vietnamese people.

*“Lễ hội Đền Trần đón xuân về,
Khắp nơi vang tiếng hò reo vui về.
Dân tứ phương về dâng hương kính,
Chúc vua Trần sức khỏe lâu dài”*

(“Tran Temple Festival welcomes spring/ Everywhere resounds with joyful cheers/ People from all over come to offer incense/ Wishing King Tran long-lasting health)

The Tran Temple Festival is usually held on the occasion of the Lunar New Year, when spring is coming, bringing a fresh, bustling atmosphere. The poem describes both the time of the festival (in spring) and the joyful, hopeful atmosphere of the people when participating in the festival at the beginning of the new year, not only the local people but also those who come from far away. In the last verse, although the Tran kings have passed away for a long time, in the hearts of the people they still consider the Tran kings as the gods who protect the nation. The act of "wishing the Tran kings" is an act of showing respect, admiration and the desire for the Tran kings to continue to bless and help the country, help the nation overcome all challenges, maintain prosperity and peace.

According to the research work "Tran Temple Seal viewed from Han Nom documents" by Dinh Khac Thuan and Viet Anh, it is written:

十四夜觀開印會	Đêm 14 đi thăm hội khai ấn
曾聞昔日有陳王	Từng nghe rằng ngày trước vua Trần
即墨猶留族祖堂	Ở đất Tức Mặc có đền thờ tổ
萬頃移來田地廣	Ban đầu dời tới Vạn Khoảnh đất đai rộng rãi
康村定宅孝和彰	Sang Khang thôn, lấy sự hiếu với

mẹ cha, hòa cùng anh anh em cư trú	
展誠以祭前魚廟	Từ ấy tỏ lòng thành kính hằng
năm tế tại Ngự miếu	
開印惟祈後克昌	Và khai ấn để cầu sự tốt lành cho
lop tương lai	
天下如今誰對此	Nay trong thiên hạ, nơi nào sánh
được	
斯民斯邑望恩長	Thế là dân làng sở tại mãi mãi nhờ
on to lớn	

(Nguyễn Văn Tuấn, Việt Anh, 2016, tr.150)

(14th night, visit the seal opening ceremony

I have heard that in the past, King Tran

In Tuc Mac land, there was a temple to worship his ancestors

Initially moved to Van Khoanh with spacious land

Sang Khang village, out of filial piety to his parents, lived with his brothers

From then on, he showed his respect every year at Ngu temple

And opened the seal to pray for good things for the future generation

Now in the world, there is no place comparable

So the local villagers forever thanked him for his great kindness)

(Nguyen Van Tuan, Viet Anh, 2016, p.150)

The ancient Tran Son Nam Ha (now Nam Dinh city) was also known as Thien Truong prefecture - a land of outstanding people, with the glorious Dong A spirit of the land and sky, considered the second capital after Thang Long citadel of the 13th - 14th centuries. This place has produced wise kings, outstanding generals who made three resounding victories of the Vietnamese people against the Yuan - Mongol, along with the tradition of learning that contributed to building the powerful Tran dynasty, becoming one of the peak dynasties of the feudal regime in Việt Nam. This Chinese poem and translation were collected, copied and translated by Duong Van Vuong, with the opening verse having an exact time, on the night of January 14, recalling the special atmosphere of the Tran Temple Seal Opening Festival. This night is the time to perform the seal opening ceremony, a sacred and important ritual in the festival, and participating in the festival is to show respect and pray for the country. The poem mentions the location of Tuc Mac, according to history books, Tuc Mac is the historical land where the Tran kings lived and reigned, then moved from Tuc Mac to Van Khoanh, where there was a large area of land. This could be a strategic move, reflecting the process of development and territorial expansion of the Tran dynasty, in which choosing a location with a large area of land was a symbol of prosperity, showing that the decisions of the Tran kings not only served political goals but also had significance for the development of the whole land. In addition, filial piety and gratitude to ancestors and parents are also mentioned with the care of family and relatives because this is one of the core values in Vietnamese morality. The people in the village are harmonious, living together in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation, and this reflects the value of community and family in feudal society, with strong moral principles. This poem also mentions Ngu Mieu - a place to worship gods and ancestors. This sentence shows that people maintain annual worship rituals to commemorate heroes and pray for peace and prosperity for themselves and the

community. No other place can match the solemnity and sacredness of this festival, showing the special position of Tran Temple in the hearts of people all over the world. In conclusion, the poem is a remembrance and honor of the Tran Kings, especially through the seal opening and worship rituals. It is not only a matter of remembering history but also showing cultural inheritance, gratitude to ancestors and respect for heroes who have contributed to building and protecting the country. The last verse carries the message that Tran Temple and this festival will always bring blessings to the nation, with a strong belief in the longevity and development of the country.

4.3.2. Tran Temple Festival: January 14 - 15

Every year, at the Tran Temple relic site in Nam Dinh, there are two major festivals. One is the Tran Temple Seal Opening Ceremony in early spring, the other is the Tran Temple Festival in August. These two festivals attract a large number of local people and tourists from all over the world to attend. Through the festival, people flock to Nam Dinh to express their gratitude for the merits of the 14 Tran Kings, to find the origin of the glorious Dong A spirit by offering incense, paying respects, and paying tribute to the merits of the Tran Kings and National Hero Tran Hung Dao.

The Tran Temple Seal Opening Ceremony takes place on January 14-15 every year. On the evening of the 14th, people begin the ritual of carrying the seal box from the inner palace of Co Trach Temple to Thien Truong Temple. At exactly the hour of Ty, the seal opening ceremony takes place. After that, local people and visitors from all over the world go to the temple to worship and ask for the seal leaf to pray for a successful and prosperous new year.

The Tran Temple Festival in August takes place from the 15th to the 20th of the 8th lunar month. The ceremony begins with the procession from the communal house and surrounding temples to offer incense at Thien Truong Temple. The festival will be extremely bustling with extremely attractive folk cultural activities. Among them, it is necessary to mention the 5-generation martial arts performance, wrestling, lion dance, playing cards, walking on the bridge, singing, Bai Bong dance...

In the village tutelary god worship ceremony, the ritual and the festival are a whole. The ritual is the religious part, expressing the deepest moral values of the people of each village in the Northern Delta. The ritual part includes a system of behaviors expressing the respect, gratitude, and wishes of the people for the village tutelary god. That is expressed in the funeral oration. The funeral oration mentions the achievements of the gods worshiped at the communal house, the royal decrees of the tutelary gods. This both expresses the respect and gratitude of the local people for the gods, and arouses historical traditions, educating the tradition of drinking water and remembering its source for generations of descendants. The funeral oration of the Vietnamese is used to communicate with the gods, mainly asking the gods to bless the villagers. In the traditional festivals of the Vietnamese, the funeral oration is written in Chinese characters. Currently, the funeral oration of many Vietnamese villages in the Northern Delta is written in Quoc Ngu script. After the procession and worshiping ceremony of the Thanh Hoang, there is the festival with competitions, performances, folk games, and cooking contests. The competitions and folk games in the festival always have

content related to the history of the village, describing the legends or achievements of the Thanh Hoang, praising the beauty of the village...

Tran Temple Seal Opening Ceremony

In recent years, through different stages of development, the Tran Temple Seal Opening Festival has gone from a royal ritual to a ritual that has gone beyond the scope of Tuc Mac village, becoming a national festival, attracting tens of thousands of tourists from all over the country. This festival takes place from January 14 to 15 every year, including rituals such as the procession of the seal box from Co Trach Temple to Thien Truong Temple, and the seal opening ceremony at the hour of Ty with the great humanistic meaning of praying for national peace and prosperity, world peace, prosperity, and all families enjoying the Tran Temple Seal. At exactly the hour of Ty (1 a.m.) on the 15th, the Tran Temple Seal Opening Ceremony officially begins. Immediately after the Seal is opened, everyone gathers at the temple to perform a sacrificial ceremony imbued with traditional colors that are being preserved and promoted, meeting the cultural and religious needs of local people, as well as the wish to preserve the brilliant Dong A spirit of the Tran Dynasty. The rituals include:

Ngoc Lo palanquin procession: Ngoc Lo palanquin procession is a special, important and spiritual traditional ritual of this festival, taking place on January 11 within the framework of the Tran Temple festival in Nam Dinh, with the meaning of carrying the spirit of the King, Buddha King Tran Nhan Tong from Pho Minh Pagoda to pay respect to the ancestors of the Tran Dynasty and witness the ancestor worship rituals at Thien Truong Temple. The ritual represents the harmony between national beliefs and religion (Buddhism) of Vietnam. During the ritual, people organize a palanquin procession, bringing the palanquins from Tran Temple out to pray for a year of favorable weather, good crops, and peace for everyone. The seal box is placed solemnly on the altar, inside are 2 wooden seals, with the small seal engraved with the words "Tran Mieu" and the large seal engraved with the words "Tran Trieu Tu Dien" and the small words "Tich Phuc Vo Cuong". Before the procession, an incense offering ceremony is held at Tran Temple to pay respect to the Tran Kings and the gods. People and officials will perform sacrificial rituals, offering incense and gifts to pray for blessings. The palanquin will be paraded through the main streets of Nam Dinh city, where people will welcome it with reverence, offer incense and pray. This process is not only a ritual to honor the Tran Kings but also an opportunity for people to pay respect to their ancestors and pray for national peace and prosperity.

Water Procession and Fish Sacrifice: On January 12, the Water Procession and Fish Sacrifice continue to take place at Tran Temple. This ceremony is meant to honor the fishing profession (which is the origin of the Tran Dynasty) and pray for favorable weather and good crops. Activities at this festival are to remind us of the origin of river fishing boats, showing respect to the ancestors of the Tran family. The Water Procession and Fish Sacrifice ceremony originates from the worship of gods, especially guardian gods and gods associated with water resources, rivers, lakes and ponds, with the belief that water gods can help maintain prosperity, bountiful harvests and bring peace to the community. This belief originates from the worship of gods who can protect

these resources, help them avoid natural disasters, storms and floods and have good harvests. The Fish Offering Ceremony also reflects a part of folk beliefs related to the worship of aquatic species, especially fish, animals associated with agricultural production activities, especially fishing and aquaculture. Before starting the Water Procession - Fish Offering Ceremony, a solemn incense offering ceremony will be held at Tran Temple to pray for the blessings of the gods. Fish are contained in red painted barrels, including snakehead fish and carp, symbolizing Tran Kinh and Tran Ly, the two ancestors of the Tran family. Water taken from the Red River is considered sacred water, with the power to protect and bring life to people. Young men in the village, in formal costumes, will carry a palanquin to the Red River, performing the water offering ceremony. The sacred water is brought to the temple to pray for a bountiful harvest and a prosperous and happy life. After the water procession, the fish offering ceremony will be performed. In this ceremony, offerings including fish and other types of offerings will be offered to the gods at Tran Temple. Fish are considered to be animals that can bring luck, so the fish sacrifice shows people's gratitude to aquatic species that have brought them a prosperous life. Fish can be released into rivers or lakes after the sacrifice as an act of thanksgiving and praying for the gods' blessings. The Water Procession - Fish Sacrifice ceremony carries the meaning of praying for peace, favorable weather, helping the land to be fertile and the crops to be bountiful. The festival not only honors the gods but is also an opportunity for the community to gather together, show respect, solidarity and cultural exchange. This is also an opportunity for people to express their gratitude for what nature and the gods have given them.

The Thuong Nguyen Festival on the 15th day of the first lunar month: The Thuong Nguyen Festival originates from Buddhism, according to which the 15th day of the first lunar month is considered a day to worship Buddha. In Vietnamese folk beliefs, the 15th day of the first lunar month is also considered the "Opening Summer Ceremony", opening a new year, showing respect and admiration for ancestors, gods and deceased souls. On this day, people hold ceremonies to pray for a new year of peace, prosperity, bountiful harvests and health for everyone, for national peace and prosperity, and for world peace. The offerings in the Thuong Nguyen Festival are often very diverse, including fresh fruits, candies, incense, tea, wine and special dishes symbolizing prosperity, such as sticky rice, chicken, banh chung, banh day. The ceremonies at Tran Temple are not only a traditional ceremony but also a cultural activity, demonstrating the profound humanity and pride of the people of Nam Dinh through the generations.

4.3.3. Cultural and educational values of Tran Temple festival

With thousands of years of history of building and defending the country, Vietnam has a rich and diverse culture, which has been accumulated through many generations with other ethnic groups. It can be seen that along with the process of economic development are the ups and downs of culture throughout the dynasties. Through the period of renovation, the country has made great strides in development, in which we not only innovate in economy and society but also innovate in perception and thinking, as well as improve material and spiritual life. As evidence of this, every year

there are inventory and restoration and embellishment of historical relics by competent organizations such as the Department of Cultural Heritage, whose predecessor was the Department of Museum Conservation under the Ministry of Culture and Information since the 1960s (now the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism), ... has made Vietnamese culture enter a new page, the whole nation enthusiastically embarked on economic and social reform.

Festivals are an attitude of gratitude "When drinking water, remember its source" and the admiration and honor of later generations for the merits and virtues of their ancestors. Therefore, festivals are considered a bridge connecting the past with the present, one of the very good educational environments for traditional culture and national identity for the young generation, a legitimate spiritual need of everyone, which needs to be respected. A country with many festivals like Vietnamese proves that Vietnamese people have a rich and long-standing culture.

Therefore, since ancient times, festivals have become a special place, a place to record the spiritual beauty of traditional Vietnamese customs. In particular, every spring, hundreds of flowers bloom, creating a fresh, vibrant atmosphere, and at this time, many festivals appear to share in the joy of the community. Among them, the Tran Temple Festival is famous as one of the special festival events of the Vietnamese people. The Tran Temple Festival was recognized by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2014. Organizing the traditional August festival of the Tran Temple not only has historical significance but also maintains the cultural values of the Vietnamese people. The death anniversary and Tet holiday are occasions for descendants to gather to remember the ancients and educate the descendants today, so that the gospel of ancestors is imbued in everyone's mind. It can be said that, hidden behind the peaceful pace of life, Nam Dinh always maintains the strong vitality of the national culture typical of the Red River Delta. The Tran Temple Festival with the image of 14 kings and Saint Tran Hung Dao is always the source for all Vietnamese people to turn to the spirit of national solidarity at the Tran historical and cultural relic site, which has 45 relics associated with the history of the most prosperous dynasty in the feudal history of Vietnam. (Quoted from Vu Thi Hoang Lan, 2022)

The Tran Temple Festival, held annually in Nam Dinh, is not only an event to worship the Tran Kings but also brings many profound cultural and educational values to the community. This is a long-standing folk festival, closely associated with the historical, religious and cultural traditions of the nation. Honoring the national cultural heritage: The Tran Temple Festival is an opportunity to honor the Tran Kings - heroes who have made great contributions to protecting and building the country throughout history. Rituals, such as "opening the seal ceremony", "offering incense", or "performing worship rituals", help preserve and promote the traditional religious and cultural values of the nation.

The nature of connecting the community and increasing solidarity is also one of the great meanings of the Tran Temple Festival. This festival has a great attraction for people everywhere, not only in Nam Dinh but also in other provinces. This is an opportunity to unite the community, demonstrate solidarity and love between generations in society, thereby maintaining the connection in the community. Through that, educate about history and

patriotism, especially the young generation, learn about the history and achievements of the Tran kings in the fight against foreign invaders.

5. Conclusion

Spiritual culture in the life of Vietnamese people exists, is preserved and promoted very richly, every year in the Northern region, there are more than a hundred festivals to worship gods taking place in the provinces. The multi-colored, multi-religious elements have become characteristics of the East Asian cultural region in general and Vietnam in particular. In general, festivals pray to gods, express respect and hope for peace in heaven and earth, and for people to have a peaceful and prosperous life. Besides, spiritual culture is a place for Vietnamese people to place their spiritual beliefs to overcome the difficulties of life. People seek to connect with gods and supernatural powers in many different spiritual forms from prayers, worship rituals, dances and songs... to create means of communication to express their respect. Thus, spiritual culture in Vietnam is always associated with worship rituals, and the practice of rituals becomes an essential element of Vietnamese spiritual culture. As Ngo Duc Thinh said in his work *Beliefs of Ethnic Groups*, "The acts of communicating with the gods are also expressed in countless ways, which depend on the forms of religious beliefs, on the cultural traditions of each ethnic group and locality, and on the level of social development of each ethnic group and country" (Ngo Duc Thinh, 2023, p.8). From there, it can be seen that spiritual beliefs or spiritual culture are not only mythological and supernatural elements but also originate from human emotions and beliefs in worlds beyond our control and rationality. Through studying the case of Dau Pagoda festival in Bac Ninh and Tran Temple festival in Nam Dinh, it is possible to affirm the close relationship between spiritual culture and spiritual ritual practices of the ancient Vietnamese as well as the present period.

6. References

1. Bao KQ. Phat Diem Cathedral. Available from: <https://trieuxuan.vn/en/nha-tho-chinh-toa-phat-diem/?actilang=true>. 2013.
2. Bat LD. Land and People of Ninh Binh. Hanoi: Culture and Information Publishing House; 2011.
3. Ben NC. Restoring Traditional Festivals in Vietnam: Preserving or Creating Traditions. Vietnam Studies - Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference; 2013.
4. Cuc LT. Human Ecology and Sustainable Development. Hanoi: National University Publishing House; 2015.
5. Chien K. Tich Dien Festival and Agricultural Thought. Communist Party of Vietnam Electronic Newspaper. Available from: <https://dangcongsan.vn/chao-xuan-ky-hoi-2019/dat-nuoc-va-xuan/le-hoi-tich-dien-va-tu-tuong-trong-nong-512491.html>. Accessed: 16 Dec 2024; 2019.
6. Chuong TX. Legend and Festival of Dau Pagoda. Hanoi: National University, University of Social Sciences and Humanities; 2014.
7. Duy ND. Spiritual Culture. Hanoi: Social Publishing House; 1996.
8. Dung K. Tran Temple Traditional Festival - The Quintessence of Cultural Heritage of Origin. Nam Dinh Newspaper. Available from: <https://baonamdinh.vn/van-hoa-nghe-thuat/202309/le-hoi-truyen-thong-den-tran-tinh-hoa-di-san-van-hoa-nguon-coi-d0e0c72/>. 2023.
9. Dao PTA, Cuc LT. Human ecology and sustainable development: Research in Vietnam. In: Proceedings of the scientific conference Human ecology and sustainable development: some issues from theory to practice. Hanoi: Agriculture Publishing House; 2017.
10. Phu Day Temple. Phu Day - Vu Ban - Nam Dinh. Available from: <https://phuday.com/den-mau-thuong-phu-day.html>. Accessed: 10 Dec 2024; 2021.
11. Dong NH. Discussing the concept of spiritual culture. Open Forum. Available from: <https://diendankhaiphong.org/ban-ve-khai-niem-van-hoa-tam-linh/>. Accessed: 14 Dec 2024; 2021.
12. Hai DH, Phuong NTM, Van TTK. Decoding the name of Ba Danh Pagoda in Kim Ban District, Ha Nam Province (From the perspective of traditional creativity). Journal of Art Education. 2022;41.
13. Lan VTH. Tran Temple Traditional Festival - A beautiful spiritual culture. Nam Dinh Newspaper. Available from: <https://dentran.namdinh.gov.vn/di-san-van-hoa-phi-vat-the-hoi-truyen-thong-den-tran-mot-net-dep-van-hoa-tam-linh-231634>. Accessed: 16 Dec 2024; 2022.
14. Loan TT. Vietnamese Culture on the Path of Development and Integration. Hanoi: National Culture Publishing House; 2022.
15. Phe H. Vietnamese Dictionary. Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House; 1988.
16. Phuong NH. Integrating East-West multiculturalism for a future educational strategy. Hanoi: Education Publishing House; 1995.
17. Phuong NTT. Spring trip to pagoda festival in Bac Ninh. Journal of Art Education. 2020;14-6.
18. Phuong T, Vu LT. 60 Traditional Festivals of Vietnam. Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House; 1995.
19. Quynh V, Phu K. Linh Nam chich quai. Hanoi: Kim Dong Publishing House; 2019.
20. Ha Nam Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism. Doi Son Tich Dien Festival 2024 - The largest rice-growing festival in the Northern Delta. Available from: <https://svhttdl.hanam.gov.vn/Pages/le-hoi-tich-dien-doi-son-2024---ngay-hoi-xuong-dong-lon-nhat-vung-dong-bang-bac-bo.aspx>. Accessed: 16 Dec 2024.
21. Phat Diem Bishopric. Phat Diem Cathedral. Hanoi: Religious Publishing House; 1999.
22. Tuan LA. The role of spiritual forests in the lives of ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands. Journal of Religious Studies. 2016;3(153):3-18.
23. Tham HB. Exploring different definitions of spirituality. Journal of Religious Studies. 2014;11.
24. Thinh ND. Beliefs of Vietnamese Ethnic Groups. Hanoi: Hanoi Publishing House; 2023.
25. Thinh ND. Vietnamese Mother Goddess Religion. Hanoi: Tri Thuc Publishing House; 2022.
26. Thinh ND. Beliefs and Religious Culture in Vietnam. Hanoi: Hanoi Publishing House; 2022.
27. Tho ND. Dictionary of Vietnamese Cultural Relics. Hanoi: Science and Society Publishing House.
28. Tho LV. Phat Diem Church - a unique Catholic architectural work in the East Asian style. Journal of Religious Studies. 2014;7:109-16.
29. Thy BTP. Tich Dien Ritual of Doi Son, Duy Tien

- District, Ha Nam Province with Tourism Development. Hai Phong: Graduation Thesis, Department of Culture and Tourism, Hai Phong Private University; 2011.
30. Vietnamplus. "March Anniversary of Mother's Death" and the magical legend of Saint Mother Lieu Hanh. Available from: <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/thang-ba-gio-me-va-huyen-tich-ky-ao-ve-thanh-mau-lieu-hanh-post940211.vnp>. Accessed: 16 Dec 2024.
 31. Xuan Bich Vietnam. Phat Diem Cathedral Where Christianity Meets Vietnamese Culture. Available from: <https://xuanbichvietnam.wordpress.com/2009/02/09/nh-a-tho-phat-diem/>. 2009.
 32. Xuyen DX. Going to the Temple to Worship Buddha: Things to Know. Hanoi: Culture and Information Publishing House; 2016.