

Preservation and Promotion of Pa Dung Singing in the Life of the Dao Ethnic Group in Vietnam (A Case Study in Thai Nguyen)

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Abstract:

Being considered as one of the cultural treasures, Pa dung singing is a unique folk song associated with the cultural life of the Dao ethnic group in Vietnam. Modern life brings many interwoven cultural forms, making the majority of young people not very interested in traditional cultural activities, while the elderly and artisans always seek to preserve, conserve, and pass on Pa dung singing because it is the culture and belief of the Dao people. Therefore, how to gradually resolve the above contradiction is a question that needs to be answered. To study this issue, we conducted fieldwork, took notes, interviewed, recorded, filmed, and collected Pa Dung lyrics from artisans and Dao elders in Thai Nguyen province; initially translated the meaning into common language, combined with secondary document analysis. The results showed that Pa Dung singing has a rich amount of documents, reflecting many topics related to ethnic cultural life, however, the performance life is not uniform in some Dao groups and areas. On that basis, the article proposes specific and practical directions to preserve, maintain, and promote a unique type of literature and folk culture in the life of the Dao people.

Keywords: preservation, promotion, Pa Dung singing, Dao ethnic group, Vietnam, Thai Nguyen

1. Introduction:

Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country. Each ethnic group has its own cultural nuances, especially the strong imprint of literature and folk culture with lasting vitality, creating a unified and diverse Vietnam. Every region of the country has its own unique folk songs. For many years, organizations and sectors have proactively and actively carried out activities towards preserving and promoting folk songs of ethnic minorities and have achieved remarkable results. However, in the context of a market economy, international integration, along with the explosion of the global digital revolution, besides favorable factors creating development,

there are also eroding impacts on traditional culture, including folk songs of ethnic minorities that are gradually fading away. In this context, the Party and State have become obligated to perform a central, urgent, and unavoidable mission in the cultural sector: the preservation and promotion of folk songs of ethnic groups.

The Dao people are one of 54 ethnic minorities in Vietnam, with a total population of 891,151 people (according to the results of the 2019 population and housing census announced by the General Statistics Office (GSO). Accounting for about 0.93% of the country's population, the Dao people are the 8th most populous ethnic group in

Vietnam. They live scattered across 34 provinces and cities, but are most concentrated in the northern mountainous provinces such as Tuyen Quang (232,540 people), Lao Cai (205,268 people), Thai Nguyen (88,467 people), etc. The Dao people include many unique groups/sectors such as: *Dao Đỏ*, *Dao Tiền*, *Dao Quần Trắng*, *Dao Thanh Y*, *Dao Quần Chẹt*, *Dao Lô Gang* and *Dao Làn Tén*. Each group has its own unique culture, language and costume, contributing to the richness of the Vietnamese national cultural identity. The Dao ethnic community in Vietnam has created unique traditional cultural values.

Pa Dung singing, sometimes referred to as Pá Dung or Páo Dung, is a distinctive folk song in the Dao people's traditional cultural treasure; it serves as a way for them to express their pride as well as their ideas, feelings, and life goals. Pa Dung melodies always have a lyrical, gentle, graceful color, with a strong appeal, touching people's hearts. At the end of October 2018, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Vietnam recognized the addition of eight more intangible cultural heritages to the list of national intangible cultural heritages, including Pa Dung folk songs of the Dao people.

The Dao ethnic group in Vietnam is actively transmits, promotes and extends its cultural identity. They are prepared to perform Pa Dung melodies and traditional costumes of their people. Initially, Pa Dung singing originated from the Cap Sac ceremony. Later, with the development of life, Pa Dung songs reflected the thoughts, feelings and all aspects of the lives of the people here. However, with the changes of time, living conditions and the impacts of the integration process of the market economy, especially in the context of the whole society entering the digital age as today, Pa Dung singing is gradually fading away. However, until now, the Dao people still believe that a man must go through the Cap Sac ceremony to be recognized as an adult, capable of taking part in important community activities and when he dies, his soul will be reunited with his ancestors. Therefore, although today's Dao youth are less interested in, or even do not know about,

Pa Dung singing, the customs and beliefs of the Dao people are all related to this unique folk song. That is, Pa Dung singing is always closely associated with the cultural life of the Dao people. Studying Pa Dung singing in their cultural life is studying the creative and passed-down values in religious culture, the beautiful features imbued with Dao ethnic identity.

2. Literature Review:

Researchers working on the collection and compilation process have been interested in the rich appearance of the folk songs of the Dao people in general and Pa Dung singing in particular. Typical works include: Pu Peo, San Diu, Dao, Lo Lo, Cao Lan ethnic folk songs (Many authors, 2012), Dao folk songs - Lo Lo folk songs (Trieu Huu Ly et al., 2018).

However, there are not many studies on Dao ethnic folk songs. In our survey, there is currently only the article: "*Dân ca nghi lễ đám cưới của người Dao Tuyền*" [Ban Thi Quynh Giao, 2017] and the monograph "*Dân ca nghi lễ đám cưới của người Dao Tuyền*" [Ban Thi Quynh Giao, 2017]. In order to shed light on the elements that represent ritual folk songs in the material and spiritual cultural life of the Dao Tuyen people, the author has collected, systematized, and compared Dao Tuyen ritual folk songs on published documents with field data; At the same time, research has focused on the content, art, and performance of ritual folk songs (such as those performed at weddings, funerals, and Cap sac). However, this research focuses mainly on the ritual folk songs of the Dao Tuyen branch, mainly in Lao Cai province and some provinces in the Northwest region of Vietnam.

Meanwhile, the preservation of folk songs and intangible cultural heritages is currently a matter of concern both in Vietnam and around the world.

Kurin (2004, 2007) emphasized that intangible heritage preservation cannot stop at "freezing" or "preserving" but must create conditions for transmission and development in the contemporary environment, through a legal framework, community-based inventories,

education and livelihood support for practitioners (Kurin, 2004; 2007).

Recent works continue to affirm the link between cultural heritage preservation and sustainable development. Bortolotto & Skounti (2024) synthesized many studies showing that heritage preservation is associated with artisan livelihoods, gender equality, community education and responsible tourism. Community-based preservation models are considered suitable for the context of traditional folk songs, which can be applied to Pa Dung singing.

It can be observed that Thai Nguyen province, Vietnam, has long been home to many different Dao groups (Dao Lo Gang, Dao Quan Chet, Dao Coc Mun, Dao Do, etc.), each possessing a rich repertoire of Pa Dung songs. These songs exist either in the form of ancient handwritten books in Chinese or as transcriptions in the Dao language. However, in-depth research on Pa Dung singing in this area remains rather limited. Moreover, during fieldwork in several Dao communities in Thai Nguyen, we found that the transmission of Pa Dung singing is uneven. For instance, in some localities, the lyrics are still preserved, yet performances or educational activities are either rare or irregular. In other localities, ancient books remain intact, but only a few people are able to understand, translate, and perform the songs. In still other localities, the lyrics survive only in the memory of a handful of elderly individuals. In addition, although the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Thai Nguyen (2018, 2021) has made preliminary efforts to compile statistics on the number of artisans, the forms of practice, and the occasions for performing Pa Dung, no comprehensive analysis has yet been conducted on its role in contemporary cultural life or preservation challenges.

This article inherits and applies previous research results on Dao folk songs and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, while also supplementing field data from Thai Nguyen, a region that has received relatively little scholarly attention. On that basis, the study aims to clarify

the close relationship between Pa Dung and the daily life of the Dao people, thereby proposing feasible solutions based on a community-based preservation model, combining cultural preservation and sustainable development.

3. Research methodology:

To conduct this research, we mainly employed fieldwork methods in areas with concentrated Dao populations in Thai Nguyen province (communes: Dinh Hoa, Phu Xuyen, Dan Tien). Our methods included note-taking, recording, and interviewing artisans and elders. Over the past two years, together with our collaborators, we have met many Dao people, particularly three artisans, elders, and leaders of Pa Dung singing clubs in the region: Mrs. Ban Thi Hong (Dao Coc Mun group, Dinh Hoa commune), Mr. Phan Van Hanh (Dao Lo Gang group, Dan Tien commune), and Mrs. Duong Thi Kim Canh (Dao Quan Chet group, Phu Xuyen commune). We have collected and accessed several ancient books (recording Pa Dung singing in Chinese), compiled about 200 Dao lyrics, translated 100 of them, and are continuing this work.

Additionally, we integrate qualitative research methods through secondary documents, including published works that collect Dao folk songs, such as Pu Peo, San Diu, Dao, Lo Lo, and Cao Lan folk songs (Many authors, 2012); Dao folk songs - Lo Lo folk songs (Trieu Huu Ly et al., 2018); numerous research works on the Dao ethnic group and Pa Dung singing of the Dao people, such as: master's thesis Pa Dung singing in the life of the Dao people in Phuc Chu, Dinh Hoa, Thai Nguyen (Dang Lang Hong Cam, 2023); and policies, projects, and policies pertaining to the issue of preserving and promoting folk culture and folk songs of ethnic minorities of the province and the State today.

4. Research results:

Pa Dung singing has a long history, originating from production activities and ancestral worship. Over time, its melodies have become closely associated with the Dao ethnic community, serving as a reflection of their social life. Through

Pa Dung, the Dao people express their emotions and aspirations for a better life.

According to the story of artist Ban Thi Hong (Dinh Hoa commune, Thai Nguyen) - the only person who has recorded and preserved Pa Dung singing there, the tradition of Pa Dung originated from the Cap Sac ceremony, itself a ritual of highly mysterious origins. In the past, the Dao people descended from China. According to legend, one year the Ban family of a village, for reasons that remain unknown, decided to leave their homeland. They gathered on a large boat and set out to find a new place to settle and earn a living. In that group, there was an 80-year-old woman who carried an incense bowl weighing 8 kilograms onto the boat. Shortly after she disembarked, a sudden storm struck, and the boat was swept out to sea for eight days and eight nights. Drifting endlessly without sight of the shore, everyone was scared so they prayed to heaven and earth for blessing and protection, thinking that if the boat safely reached the mainland, they would repay heaven and earth. After they finished praying, the sky suddenly darkened, and another storm arose and swept their boat to the mainland. From then on, they settled down and raised families, and that land has been known as Bac Giang. Once safe, they recalled the moments drifting on the sea, they decided to show gratitude through the Cap sac ceremony, in accordance with custom and worship Ban Vuong. Until now, the Dao people have never forgotten the favor, so when a son reaches 18 years old and has a wife, he must perform the ceremony to give thanks to heaven and earth, and to worship Ban Vuong throughout his life. Since then, Pa Dung singing has accompanied the Dao people in almost all agricultural rituals and beliefs such as: offerings of rice seeds, fields, new rice and rice souls; prayers for rain, and offerings to mountains and forests, etc. Nowadays, as life has developed, many of these rituals have gradually become obsolete and have been abandoned, with only the Cap Sac ceremony still being preserved. During this ceremony, the Dao people are required to sing about the origin of the Cap Sac ceremony, express

gratitude to heaven and earth, and say thanks to the shaman. Since then, Pa Dung singing has accompanied the Dao people in almost all rituals and agricultural beliefs, such as offerings of rice seeds, fields, new rice, rice souls, prayers for rain, and offerings to mountains and forests. In modern times, as life has developed, many of these rituals have gradually become obsolete and have been abandoned, with only the Cap Sac ceremony still being preserved. During this ceremony, the Dao people are required to sing about the origin of the Cap Sac ritual, express gratitude to heaven and earth and thanks to the shaman.

With a focus on four themes connected to four Dao cultural, religious, and everyday activities, Pa Dung singing portrays ethnic life in a realistic and vivid manner. These themes include: Pa Dung singing during the Cap Sac ceremony; Pa Dung singing during the customs of celebrating the New Year, new house, and weddings; Pa Dung singing during love affairs; and Pa Dung singing during daily songs. Pa Dung singing carries a very important spiritual and cultural value to the Dao people, and the greatest cultural value expressed in those Pa Dung melodies is the orientation to educate people to understand the origin of the nation and homeland.

4.1. Singing Pa Dung in the Cap Sac ceremony

First of all, singing Pa Dung is an indispensable part of the Dao people's Cap Sac ceremony, clearly reflecting their spiritual and cultural life. In the Cap Sac ceremony, the homeowner invites a female shaman, who is skilled in Pa Dung singing, to perform. In the past, the Cap Sac ceremony took place over three days and three nights, but nowadays, some procedures have been shortened, reducing it to two days and two nights. The Pa Dung performance will be performed on the second night in which the shaman sings for about an hour in three distinct parts. In the first part, she sings to honor the ancestors, to pay respect to the four directions of heaven and earth, and to express gratitude to the holy monks and generals who have come to witness the shaman's performance on behalf of the family.

Dao pronunciation	Translation
<i>Pịa chệ pải, lạ tái chiêm nhân</i>	<i>Entering the mat to thank the ancestors</i>
<i>Chiền pải chiền, chiền pải phay</i>	<i>The master's robe has many colors and shimmering silk ribbons</i>
<i>Pải phay mây liú dậu pải shỉng</i>	<i>To thank the holy generals in the four directions</i>
<i>Phảy pin miền khâm, mại phiêu phay, mại phiêu nam</i>	<i>Not yet finished, continue to thank all the ancestors</i>
	<i>Everyone in the four directions sees</i>
	<i>Both men and women do good deeds</i>
	[Fieldwork documents]

Then, the shaman stood in front of the 12 paintings in the ritual and, on behalf of the family, asked for permission to pray for blessings, so that she might successfully fulfill her sacred duties.

<i>Pải chiền shỉng, pịa thẩu tẩu ting pải</i>	<i>Pray to the family saints</i>
<i>Shỉng loòng, pải shỉng nhàng</i>	<i>The shaman entered the house and thanked the ancestors</i>
<i>Pịa phẩu tông thing pải pham pải</i>	<i>From men to women, they bowed three times before the generals</i>
<i>Toong shỉng mìn chìn, pải thẩu duần, pải thẩu pèng</i>	<i>Praying to thank equally, fairly, no one is better than anyone else</i>
	[Fieldwork documents]

In the second part, they sit down on the mat, holding a bell in their hands, this is called “Dung

é”, a pause within the Pa Dung performance. After a few minutes, they resume singing about the ritual objects used in ceremony such as mirrors given to the young man receiving the Cap Sac initiation. It is said that when he holds the mirror and sees his reflection appear more handsome, it signifies that blessings, prosperity, and wealth will come to him.

<i>Shảy tài nịm, shiểu nhân tông kỉnh</i>	<i>Human life is long</i>
<i>Shảy tài lìn, shiểu nhân tông kỉnh</i>	<i>Holding a mirror in your hand, you will see your face more beautiful</i>
<i>Guẩng guẩng chiu chiu loòng</i>	<i>Life is more prosperous, more wealthy</i>
<i>Nhiêm nhịn hẩng khâu chìn</i>	<i>Glory and wealth are sent to your life</i>
	[Fieldwork documents]

The next part of the Pa Dung lyrics speaks of the hardships of plowing, planting rice, raising chickens, ducks, buffaloes, pigs, etc. They recount the difficulties and deprivations faced by the Dao people - lacking warm clothes and food, etc. Therefore, they hope for heaven and earth, and gods to bless them, to end their suffering, and to make them a better life. These are also the reasons why they hold the Cap Sac ceremony.

In the third part, as dawn approaches, they stand up and sing songs to thank the shaman, the head chef, and all those who came to assist or to watch. Finally, they sing for the family receiving the Cap Sac to enjoy good health and prosperity in their livelihood, thus bringing the Pa Dung performance of the ceremony to a close.

<i>Nhut tẩu siết chiểu tông coong chiu</i>	<i>The sun rises early in the morning</i>
<i>Chiu kìn khé miền vìn lậu tài</i>	<i>Lighting up everywhere, guiding the way for visitors</i>
<i>Ké miền tẩu tái quẩng nam soong</i>	<i>The visitors wear</i>

<i>Chúa tạ cây hài suối lậu nà tài</i>	<i>colorful hats</i> <i>Wishing everything goes smoothly</i> [Fieldwork documents]
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In general, the content of the Pa Dung songs in the Dao people's Cap Sac ceremony reflects the gratitude of the homeowner to heaven, earth, ancestors, and shamans. These songs serve as their heart's voice in the face of a life filled with hardship. Such difficulties make them place a lot of faith and hope in the gods and shamans to bring blessings and prosperity.

4.2. Singing Pa Dung in customs and practices

In the traditional Dao wedding, cultural activities such as Pa Dung singing to invite betel or rice, and songs dedicated to worshipping ancestors and relatives, are indispensable. Young men and women sing to each other, invite wine, congratulate the bride and groom, and organize folk games imbued with the traditional culture of the nation. Pa Dung songs are also used to offer drinks, share meals, and wish each other good things at the family feast whether held at the groom's house or the bride's. The Pa Dung lyrics are sung on behalf of the parents to their children on the wedding day. With the consent of both families, on a good and holy day, the parents organize for their children, expressing the hope that they will live happily together forever:

<i>Shâu đặng diêm tông slú mạng lìn</i>	<i>Today is your happy day</i>
<i>Lìn tú phan chiu dạ chấy nhiết</i>	<i>Both families are holding a wedding</i>
<i>Lìn tú phấy chiu dạ dấy shoong</i>	<i>Wishing you two happiness</i> [Fieldwork documents]

During the wedding ceremony, the couple vows to live together for the rest of their lives, to be each other's companions, to share hardships, joys and sorrows. The promise expresses the Dao people's thoughts, feelings and sincere wishes.

<i>Vuồi mộng tría to tsá yền dàu</i>	<i>Living together forever</i>
<i>Dậu dĩa tím khóe dằm tsing tsố</i>	<i>Sadness and hardship together</i>
<i>Tsá á lúu nghìn vuôn dằm tói tàu</i>	<i>Happiness together is enough</i>
<i>Trộng kháu choáng tsiên dòì tsăn ấy</i>	<i>Giving birth to many children and grandchildren</i>
<i>Siam siêu púng tàng ý súy âu</i>	<i>Cannot bear to let them fade away</i> [Fieldwork documents]

During the New Year, the Dao villages become more vibrant with the cheerful laughter of young men and women calling their friends to celebrate Tet. Women, mothers, and sisters wear traditional costumes, join in folk games, and sing enchanting Pa Dung melodies. Throughout the holiday, the Dao people go from house to house and village to village, singing songs of wishing for a prosperous and peaceful new year.

Pa dung is also raised when the Dao people build a new house:

<i>Cá chông hiang húa chì tróng sêng</i>	<i>The family ancestors also bless</i>
<i>Ký mệnh tông trí chống sị côông</i>	<i>The monks and nuns return home</i>
<i>Dán phú mi tráo duôn muôn biểu</i>	<i>The family funeral has ended</i>
<i>Phàn pêng phàn triáng có quây tông</i>	<i>The soldiers and generals return home</i> [Fieldwork documents]

The housewarming song includes cheerful and affectionate lyrics congratulating the homeowner on being talented and doing well in business; wishing the family, relatives, and everyone in the village good health, happiness, and prosperity in business:

<p><i>Pậu cha ú</i></p> <p><i>Miền miến tại</i></p> <p><i>pậu pịa miến cha</i></p>	<p><i>Happy new house;</i></p> <p><i>Blessings to the whole</i></p> <p><i>family</i></p> <p><i>Everyone is always healthy</i></p> <p><i>and prosperous</i></p> <p>[Fieldwork documents]</p>
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<p><i>chưởng chiến sủng</i></p> <p><i>Phàng chải muồn chìn</i></p> <p><i>phéo phiu quây chéo</i></p> <p><i>phiu hàng</i></p>	<p><i>They can get married</i></p> <p><i>through meetings in the</i></p> <p><i>Cap Sac ceremony</i></p> <p><i>After understanding each</i></p> <p><i>other, there comes a time</i></p> <p><i>when they have to part</i></p> <p><i>ways and go home</i></p> <p>[Fieldwork documents]</p>
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Nowadays, young adults go to work far from home because of busy work, families no longer have as much time to organize housewarming ceremonies as in the past. When moving into a new house, most families simply invite a shaman to perform the ritual and invites guests to celebrate, and almost no longer sings Pa Dung.

4.3. Singing Pa Dung in couples' love

For the Dao people, singing Pa Dung love songs is a way for young men and women to become acquainted. Through these songs, they fall in love, and eventually get married. In the past, boys and girls mainly sang love songs during the Cap Sac ceremony. This was often the only opportunity for them to meet, as the distance between villages was very far and their time was mostly occupied with agricultural work, leaving little chance for social interaction. Therefore, on a bright moonlit night, at the house where the Cap Sac ceremony is performed, the red fire was burning, and signaling an invitation for unmarried young men and women to gather. In groups or individually, they come to meet each other with unusual excitement and nervousness. Such communal nights become the occasion for glances to seek each other out, for smiles to be exchanged, for songs, dances, and music to be offered as gifts, serving as trials and measures of the emotional bonds between young men and women.

In the middle of a quiet moonlit night, suddenly a love song resounds, seemingly calming the heart, gently letting the soul sink into each song. The songs are lyrical, tender and flowing, reflecting the purity and simplicity of the Dao people's spirit. The spiritual life of the Dao people is conveyed through soulful melodies that captivates the hearts, echoing endlessly and shining in the majestic wilderness. From young men and women to the elderly, all can participate in love songs, call-back songs, call-friend songs, etc. Love songs can express a person's personality, character, and flexibility in improvising the songs, from which both sides will understand each other better and find a suitable friend, lover, or soul mate:

<p><i>Ca đàng liềm liềm khú</i></p> <p><i>chéo phiu</i></p> <p><i>Tú kìn lậu pin liệp chấy</i></p> <p><i>dluây liệp chấy dng</i></p> <p><i>Sluất bủa mịn chìn</i></p>	<p><i>The Cap Sac ceremony</i></p> <p><i>always creates</i></p> <p><i>opportunities for men and</i></p> <p><i>women to get to know</i></p> <p><i>each other</i></p>
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<p><i>Sò shẫy puảng tòm khói</i></p> <p><i>lây nhiều</i></p> <p><i>Phẫy khói kình phẫy khói</i></p> <p><i>luồng</i></p> <p><i>Tòm khói lây nhiều phẫy</i></p> <p><i>khói shản</i></p> <p><i>Phẫy pây chiêm dĩa tú</i></p> <p><i>phang puồng tú kiu chìn</i></p>	<p><i>At first we met like</i></p> <p><i>fish</i></p> <p><i>The fish is deep in</i></p> <p><i>the sea</i></p> <p><i>Fish have many</i></p> <p><i>ways to travel</i></p> <p><i>Who knows when</i></p> <p><i>we will meet again</i></p> <p>[Fieldwork documents]</p>
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Love may be expressed differently by each individual, ethnic group, and community, but all of them share the belief that for love to endure, it must be founded on loyalty and honesty. Therefore, through the Pa Dung songs, boys and girls exchange questions about their interests,

habits, and lifestyles in order to understand one another more deeply. At times, the songs carry playful teasing; at other times, they reveal gentle and heartfelt emotions, reflecting the warmth and sincerity of Dao culture, and also to discover the other person's personality.

<i>lòong</i>	[Fieldwork documents]
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There are so many confidences that could not be expressed, they keep the songs in their minds along with the promises. True love must go through many challenges. Even though they have to be far apart, they still remember each other. Even if they have to cross mountains and pass at midnight, they do not hesitate, still keep their vows and dreams of being together.

5. Recommendations for preservation and promotion:

Pa Dung holds a special place in the cultural life of the Dao community in Vietnam. However, like many other traditional art forms of ethnic minorities, few people within the Dao community today know how to perform or are even familiar with it, despite its recognition as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2018. As educators, we recognize the necessity to plan a variety of activities in order to help preserve and promote the distinctive values of the country, including bringing Pa Dung to the classroom in Vietnam's multicultural educational environment.

5.1. In community activities:

First, focus on teaching activities:

In our opinion, teaching activities in the community should be considered the core and most important. First of all, the villages, hamlets, and hamlets where the Dao ethnic people live must establish Clubs so that everyone has the conditions and human resources to reproduce, record, and preserve Pa Dung melodies. The club also needs operating funds, as most of the artisans are farmers with difficult economic conditions, and without support, they would not have much time to take part in its activities. These Clubs can participate in summer activities with children, in Youth Union programs with young people to introduce and attract them to the unique melodies of their homeland, thereby gradually building a systematic training plan for the younger generation.

<i>So thấy sáng, puàng si mùa quyìn</i>	<i>The first day we met</i>
<i>Diễn khuây khuây, diễn khuying khuying</i>	<i>Like the vast ocean that we met</i>
<i>Puông sui mùa quyìn khuây khuây , khuying khuying diễm</i>	<i>People sing the song of Pa dung</i>
<i>Êng sáng diết tâu diễn pịa thing diễm pịa tuông</i>	<i>Like the rotten wind blowing the branches of the trees, swirling</i>
	[Fieldwork documents]

The desire for freedom in love, overcoming feudal etiquette, is expressed through Pa Dung melodies. Boys and girls become acquainted through songs, probing each other with glances and gestures. Through each lyrical exchange, if the girl is willing, she allows the boy to continue pursuing her. Yet, with the girl's tactfulness, she does not answer right away but has a half-hearted attitude "Nhìn thấy đường còn xa xôi lắm". Therefore, the boy is forced to reveal his heart more decisively and strongly to gain her trust and affection. Once they understand each other's intentions, they used their songs to share their feelings and arrange a time to meet again. They sing soft, loving songs that convey their love and desire for one another:

<i>Diễm sáng liu, shiêu cướp ca chày</i>	<i>Unable to sing it all, one will continue to memorize</i>
<i>Lòong lụy shiêu lòong lụy chòong</i>	<i>Remember the songs in one's mind</i>
<i>Pham keng piển dliá miến phang sít</i>	<i>At midnight the host went to invite</i>
<i>Diễm chằng pá khuýa quýa giang chiêu quýa diều</i>	<i>Not daring to light a fire, at midnight crossing the pass and stream</i>

The cooperation and contribution of the people in propagating the ethnic language and spreading Pa Dung melodies to the community also brings very high efficiency. Those who know Dao language will teach those who do not know, and those who know a lot will teach those who know little. This will serve as encouragement, motivation, and attraction for each person to learn, understand, and contribute to preserving and maintaining the unique cultural values of their community.

Local leaders, departments, sectors, and organizations need to strengthen communication and mobilization efforts from cadres, union members, youth to the community to recognize the importance and necessity in preserving and conserving the nation's traditional cultural values of the nation. At the same time, it is necessary to create favorable conditions and provide guidance for the establishment of associations, groups, and Pa Dung singing clubs so that everyone is able to live, learn, study, and perform Pa Dung singing in their spare time. In promoting activities to preserve and uphold cultural identity, these efforts should be closely integrated with economic development, hunger eradication and poverty reduction programs because only when people have enough to live will they have time to preserve and develop cultural heritage.

At the local level, each cultural officer must play a central role in preserving the value of national identity. They should act as pioneers, advising the Party Committee and the government in building and promulgating policies and strategies for cultural development, thereby ensuring alignment with the Party and State's orientations and goals. For this reason, greater attention needs to be given to discovering, training, fostering, and selecting cultural cadres with dedication, vision, integrity, competence, and prestige. Such a team is a vital foundation for effective leadership and management in the cultural sector, particularly in making favorable conditions to nurture and develop Dao cultural officers so they can fully realize their capacity and responsibilities.

In the current era of Information Technology, bringing the beauty and identity of national culture to the community is very easy and convenient. However, to do that, all levels need to direct the expansion of recording and archiving systems such as: collecting Pa Dung lyrics and establishing digital data warehouses; publishing books, newspapers, and publications in the language of the Dao people. Promote multimedia communication (video, livestream, fanpage about Pa Dung melodies; restore cultural activities and activities, integrate folk songs into traditional festivals and community events. The State needs to have policies to support the preservation of the Dao people's language and writing, develop a project for each ethnic group to have a cultural village; periodically organize festivals, festivals, competitions, performances, cultural and sports exchanges and tourism of ethnic minorities (including the Dao people) in each region, area and each ethnic group. From this foundation, it is essential to establish a sustainable framework for cultural preservation, including specialized research, inter-sectoral coordination, and active community participation.

Second, focus on performance activities:

The setting where Pa Dung tunes are preserved the most is during the Cap Sac ceremony. As a result, local authorities or functional agencies can come to record or broadcast live during the Cap Sac ceremony so that everyone is aware of this cultural feature and help preserve the Dao people's important rituals, including the Pa Dung singing.

During Dao festivals or festivals of other ethnic groups in Thai Nguyen, the Pa Dung melody should be performed, practiced, performed and exchanged with other melodies to evoke its vitality in the hearts of the people. In addition, it is necessary to organize folk song competitions (including the Pa Dung melody), ethnic costume performances (including the Dao ethnic group), and folk song festivals of ethnic minorities to create a playground, contributing to promoting folk melodies to the majority of people.

Currently, although attention has been given to preserving and promoting the value of Pa Dung melodies among the Dao people, the absence of comprehensive strategies and sufficient resources for implementation has limited the effectiveness of these efforts. As the artisans grow older, research, preservation, teaching, and the creation of a supportive environment for folk songs continue to encounter numerous challenges, resulting in the gradual loss of many melodies.

The collective efforts and coordination of departments, organizations, and unions at all levels of leadership - from villages and hamlets to communes and districts - as well as the active participation of Dao students, teachers, and community members across generations, will create a powerful force if each individual is determined to preserve, sustain, promote and make the Pa Dung melody resonate forever.

5.2. In educational activities in general schools:

First: Open Dao language classes.

The Dao people have a rich treasure of folk literature and poetry, contributing to the creation of unique humanistic values. In order to be able to perform Pa Dung singing and spread Dao culture, first of all, people, especially the young generation, need to know Dao language. Therefore, the Central and local governments need to research, carry out assessments, and formulate specific policies to open Dao language classes, or integrate this content into the Local Education subject and Experiential and Career Guidance Activities. To ensure effectiveness, the teaching staff should include artisans and individuals with deep knowledge of the Dao language and culture.

Second: Establish and maintain Pa Dung singing clubs in schools.

Schools can coordinate with artisans to organize folk song clubs, including Pa Dung singing, creating opportunities for students to practice, rehearse and participate in exchanges. In reality, schools have deployed these Club models but only as a project. For this activity to become sustainable, it is necessary to ensure a source of

funding support, a diverse and attractive form of organization. In addition, it is necessary to encourage exchanges between the Pa Dung Singing Club and other folk song clubs to broaden students' exposure to multi-ethnic cultural identities.

Third: Integrating experiential activities and competitions to learn about Dao culture into the subject of Local Education.

In the 2018 General Education program of Vietnam, the subject of Local Education has been included in the curriculum as a subject with a significant amount of time, in which, Pa Dung singing of the Dao people is introduced and taught to students at both secondary and high school levels. To improve effectiveness, teachers can design learning topics that are linked to practice: let students listen to and feel the Pa Dung tune, practice performing, organize competitions to learn about Dao culture, folk song performance competitions and propaganda activities. At the same time, it is possible to organize practical experiences in the Dao community so that students can directly interact and learn from artisans and locals, thereby both consolidating subject knowledge and nurturing love for national culture.

The proposal to preserve Pa Dung singing of the Dao people in the multicultural educational environment in Vietnam is only feasible when all levels and sectors are interested, directed and organized. Therefore, each department, sector, organization and each individual in the educational environment also need to have consensus and determination to implement.

6. Conclusion:

Pa Dung singing of the Dao people is not only a form of belief but also an expression of a culture and identity. Learning about the Pa Dung melody in the cultural life of the Dao people, we gain deeper insights into their lifestyles, thoughts and feelings. With this article, we hope to contribute a small part in the preservation and introduction of this unique form of folk art within the lives of Vietnam's ethnic minorities. Through the

collecting and study of Pa Dung lyrics, we hope that the article will serve as a source of materials for researching and teaching the literature of ethnic minorities in Vietnam. We especially want to promote a better knowledge and appreciation of Dao folk songs, which would nurture pride in Vietnam's rich and diverse culture.

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