

THE ROLE OF THE DAN DAY¹ IN THE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE CA TRU ART NOWADAYS

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ABSTRACT

Ca Tru is a unique musical art form of the Vietnamese people, recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage in need of urgent protection. Dan Day, an important instrument in the Ca Tru performance system, plays an irreplaceable role in maintaining and promoting traditional musical identity. This article analyzes the role of Dan Day in preserving Ca Tru art today, thereby proposing solutions to preserve Dan Day in the modern context.

Keywords: Dan Day, Ca Tru, cultural preservation, traditional musical instrument, performing art.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ca Tru - a unique traditional art form of Vietnam - was recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (2009). In the performance structure of Ca Tru, the Dan Day plays a pivotal role, creating a solid and characteristic musical foundation that contributes to affirming the aesthetic value of this art form. However, in the current context, the preservation and development of Ca Tru art faces many challenges due to changes in musical tastes, a lack of successors and the risk of commercialization. Researching the role of the Dan Day in the preservation and development of Ca Tru art not only contributes to restoring traditional values, but also helps raise awareness and consciousness of preserving heritage in the community.

2.0 THEORETICAL BASIS AND RESEARCH METHODS

The paper uses a comprehensive research method, combining theoretical and practical research, including research documents on the art of Ca Tru, Dan Day, scientific articles, and interviews with artisans, Dan Day players and experts on traditional music. Data collected from performance and teaching practice will also be used to analyze the role of Dan Day in preserving the art of Ca Tru.

¹ Dan Day ("Vietnamese long-necked lute") is a Vietnamese plucked lute with three strings, a trapezoidal wooden body, and a very long wooden neck with ten raised frets



3.0 RESEARCH RESULTS

The Dan Day has a special shape with a long neck, the instrument uses three strings (Hang string, Trung string, Lieu string) with correct 4th interval relationship - according to Western music theory. The sound box is an isosceles trapezoid, combined with a warm tone, suitable for the elegant and academic Ca Tru space. The sound of the Dan Day contributes to creating a "luxurious" and poetic space - which is a characteristic of the art form once associated with the intellectual class and the literati in feudal times. In Ca Tru performance, the Dan Day not only plays the role of accompanying the singing but also has a musical dialogue with the singing voice and the clapper (performed by the clapper). The technique of playing the Dan Day directly affects the rhythm, emotions and pronunciation of the singers.

3.1 The role of the Dan Day in Ca Tru performance

The Dan Day is the main accompaniment instrument in Ca Tru, with a characteristic, deep and powerful sound. The Dan Day not only supports the singer's voice but also creates harmony with the clapper, enhancing the artistic value of each Ca Tru performance. The Dan Day helps to shape and clearly express the characteristics of Ca Tru melodies, from folk songs to classical works, thanks to the flexible transformation ability of the player.

3.2 The role of the Dan Day in preserving and promoting the art of Ca Tru

To preserve the art of Ca Tru, preserving the Dan Day is an inseparable part. The Dan Day helps maintain the connection between generations of artisans and protect traditional musical values. In particular, in the teaching of Ca Tru, the Dan Day is an effective tool to convey the techniques and emotions of each melody to students. Moreover, the Dan Day also helps enhance the performance value in Ca Tru programs, preserving the original image of this art.

3.3 Current status of Dan Day conservation

Although Dan Day plays an important role in preserving the art of Ca Tru, the number of skilled Dan Day players is decreasing. Dan Day playing technique requires high expertise and a delicate musical perception, which makes many young people not very interested in learning and approaching this instrument. Along with that, making Dan Day is also becoming more difficult as fewer and fewer artisans can make instruments according to traditional standards.

4.0 DISCUSSION

The role of the Dan Day in preserving the art of Ca Tru is not only theoretical but also cultural. The Dan Day is a symbol connecting tradition and modernity, between scholarly art and contemporary life. However, the number of artisans who know how to make and perform the Dan Day is decreasing. Training young artists to play the Dan Day has not been properly invested in, and the dissemination of knowledge about the Dan Day to the public is still limited. There needs to be specific policies from cultural agencies to encourage the preservation of the Dan Day in parallel with the preservation of the art of Ca Tru. Digitizing sounds, building a data library, organizing competitions and festivals about the Dan Day are directions that need attention in the current context.

5.0 SOLUTIONS FOR PRESERVING THE DAN DAY

5.1 Training artisans and restoring the craft of making Dan Day

It is necessary to expand the training courses for artisans playing Dan Day and making Dan Day. Training facilities need to create an ideal learning environment so that students can have direct access to musical instruments and the art of Ca Tru performance. At the same time, it is necessary to restore the traditional craft of making Dan Day to ensure the quality of the instrument, in accordance with the technical and aesthetic requirements of Ca Tru.

5.2 Encourage research and composition of new works for the Dan Day

Composing new works for the Dan Day not only helps enrich the Ca Tru musical treasure but also attracts the interest of the younger generation in this instrument. These works need to be built on the foundation of traditional values but also need to be expanded and innovated to suit modern music trends.

5.3 Strengthening the propaganda and promotion of Ca Tru art

Activities to promote and propagate Ca Tru, especially the Dan Day, need to be strengthened through the media, art programs and Ca Tru festivals. Organizing Ca Tru performances and traditional musical instrument festivals can create opportunities to introduce the unique cultural values of the Dan Day to the public.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The Dan Day plays an important and pivotal role in preserving and developing the art of Ca Tru in Vietnam, not only thanks to its ability to create unique sounds but also because of its subtle interaction with the voice and clappers during the performance. Maintaining and promoting the features of the Dan Day is an indispensable part of the process of protecting and developing the art of Ca Tru in the modern context. To ensure the survival of Ca Tru art, comprehensive solutions are needed, including training artisans, restoring the craft of making Dan Day, and encouraging the creation of new works. These efforts will not only protect the nation's musical heritage but also enrich the value of Ca Tru art, bringing it closer to modern audiences and future generations.

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