

DOCTORAL THESIS IN BRIEF

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION IN
CULTUROLOGY

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museum of intangible cultural heritage
within community in Vietnam*

Speciality: Culturology

Serial number: 62310640

The cultural values of Vietnamese nation, created, preserved and left by the ancestors, are very diverse and have a long history. Having endured the wars, natural disasters and urbanization, the cultural heritage treasure risks being damaged; moreover, the lack of interdepartmental coordination as well as the less awareness in the process of study, management and investment in protection and advance, have caused many intangible cultural heritages to lose and risk to disappear. Previously, most studies only were limited to investigate the intangible cultural heritages but not interested yet in the authors of heritage - that are the individual persons and the community who have created, preserved, practised and transmitted culture from one generation to the other. Beside that, the role of community in preserving and advancing the intangible cultural heritages in Vietnam is limited yet. Thus, the theme of “Making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community in Vietnam” is an effective and practical approach to the problem of preserving the intangible cultural heritage relied on the forces of creation, possession and transmittance of heritage.

Beside the introduction, the conclusions and references, the principal contents of dissertation are presented in 3 chapters.

Chapter 1. Overview of studies and theoretic basis of making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community

Making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community is conceived by author as an activity of preserving and advancing the intangible cultural heritage of various communities just in humano-ecological environment where the heritages were created and continuously transmitted. It is realized by museology method with direct participation of author community of cultural heritage. Ecological and community museums are specific museums of the making museum of intangible cultural heritage through the method of museology, in order to preserve and advance the heritages just within community with the participation and consensus of community. Three examples were chosen by author as case studies of dissertation. The first is the *cultural space of Central Highlands gong*, spreading throughout 5 provinces of Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Đắk Lắk, Đắk Nông and Lâm Đồng. The second is *Giống festival at Phù Đồng and Sóc temples* held by the people from various villages of Hanoi in order to commemorate Thánh Gióng (Saint Giong) - a mythical hero by legend of Viet people who has had the merit of combat against foreign invaders in defending the ancient Vietnamese country in the 6th Hùng king times about 3,000 years ago. The space of Giống festival is associated with the birth and death place of Thánh Gióng in the North of the Red river (Hồng river), with the focus in Phù Đồng festival (of Gia Lâm district) and Sóc temple (of Sóc Sơn district). The third

is *Phước Tích ancient village pottery* in Phong Hòa commune of Phong Điền district of Thừa Thiên Huế province, born about in XVth century.

Chapter 2: Activity of making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community

The author investigates the activities of making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community in 3 typical cases, chosen on the basis of essential goals of activity in making museum: Preserving intangible cultural heritage and cultural diversity; defending the rights of cultural authors; protecting humano-ecological environment; advancing the values of intangible cultural heritage; local socio-economic development.

- As for cultural space of Central Highlands gong

In recent time, making museum of gong heritage began with preservation and embellishment of community cultural institutions. Although not replacing real living space of gong as a coherent entity, but at least these community cultural institutions contributed to reproduce the traditional power so that the gong can continue to be performed in space of community. Here, making museum must be performed by the adequate method of preservation, because “it is impossible to encourage people to sing pounding the rice in face of mill, to sing drawing the woods in face tractor, to sing paddling in the face of machine boat”. With the aid and cooperation of community, the managers and researchers collected documents in order to preserve the practices of gong in festivities of buffalo butchering, of tomb leaving, of wharf worshipping, of longevity celebrating, of ear blowing, of gods worshipping... The

tools of practice and performance of gong are also seen as an important subject to be made museum. The collection and inventory were realized in parallel with advising the people to keep the gong and the related things and tools and artefacts.

The cultural managers and researchers together with community have formed the folk gong performer teams of each ethnic group and each administrative locality. Now most villages of Central Highlands provinces have gong clubs and teams to serve the daily life and belief needs of community, and participate in performance exchanges within and outside the region. In M'ông ethnic community of Đắk Nông province, the Đắk Nông Department of Culture-Sports and Tourism together with community organized many activities like gong cultural festival, mass artistic festival, festival of ethnic folk song and instrumental music, day of nationalities culture, making musical instruments, creating music, setting artistic programs, opening the class of teaching the use of gong, organizing gong competition for the youth... The gong performance in Central Highlands also is taught officially in the provincial schools of arts and informally at the cultural centres. The teaching is focusing on highly technical exercises of gong, especially those exercises that are risking disappear.

Despite this, gongs and cultural space of gongs are not invested adequately yet to become a “cultural product” beside historical, cultural and scientific values of this heritage.

- As for Gióng festival in Phù Đổng and Sóc temples

The space of Gióng festival embraces not only directly relevant tangible and intangible cultural heritages, but also various other heritages of each locality: from customs to rituals, folk knowledges,

traditional handicraft, and composition of village space, of houses or of other valuable material architectures in this space. In recent time, the cultural managers and researchers as well as local communities have made and is making efforts to evaluate properly the values of other heritages in order to connect them with Gióng festival heritage.

In coordination with National Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies and together with community, Hanoi Department of Culture-Sports and Tourism has effectuated the inventory of heritages and compiled the documents (brochures, books, compact disks...) to serve the presentation and diffusion of Gióng festival heritage. Beside the direct practice of festival, the community also participated together with local authority in organization the teaching Gióng festivities such as opening the class of Ải Lao dancing in Hội Xá village (of Phúc Lợi precinct of Long Biên district). The two heritages of Phù Đồng and Sóc temples were ranked as special national vestiges and were the important marks in advancing the values of Gióng festival.

The Phù Đồng temple vestige has become a spiritual destination of local population and pilgrims not only in festival days but also in other times like in the day of Sóc vigil by the lunar new year. Although not having attracted many tourists and not having effectively impacted on local socio-economic development, but the efforts of local population have succeeded in keeping the festival performance environment as well as its procedure quite intact.

- As for Phước Tích ancient village pottery

Phước Tích is an ancient village that fell into "oblivion" long ago, now after being discovered it attracts much interest of researchers and managers. However, the intangible cultural heritages of the village

are being buried in oblivion. The village traditional festivities are less practised, some of them like furnace worship, boat race, tug of war... are not often performed, the others are restricted.

In recent time, even there is not interest of research community and of management bodies, Phước Tích people still made the effort to preserve cultural heritages of village, not renovating nor dismantling the old houses; not selling the furnitures of the living and worship houses of family; voluntarily contributing money and labour to embellish the vestiges; maintaining and developing the traditional fondness for learning, the solidarity and the mutual affection. The religious and belief activities of people at communal house, pagoda, temple, familial worship house... were respected. Some old people in village also expended the effort to collect and compile the traditional cultural history of village; some artisans as well voluntarily contributed money, raised fund in order to restore the traditional pottery of village. The local authority invested money too to restore the pottery by sending many young artisans bearing with them the local soil to learn technology of pottery and porcelain of Bát Tràng, Chu Đậu and Đông Triều villages. Many modern furnaces were built to give birth to Phước Tích pottery products by the new technology. The organization of JICA (of Japan) also aided to test the reproduction of traditional pottery products of Phước Tích with the assistance of Japanese traditional pottery artisans.

The Phước Tích pottery village is introduced in Thừa Thiên Huế tourism route to be exploited. However, in reality the preservation activity is still not connected closely with development, the advantages in natural landscapes and

culture of Phước Tích are still not exploited effectively yet to become the resource of local socio-economic and community development.

In opinion of author, in general up to now the making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community at all 3 case studies have not reached yet the aim of protection of humano-ecological environment; not advanced yet the values of intangible cultural heritage in the local socio-economic development; not satisfied the principle of balance between responsibility and community benefits; not met yet the criteria on tourism infrastructure and destination.

Chapter 3: Making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community in Vietnam - some problems put forth

According to author, in today context, making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community in Vietnam requires two essential factors, namely the practice environment and the cultural author community. Therefore not every intangible cultural heritage would be applied to making museum within community, on the other hand, making museum within community also is not effective for all types of intangible cultural heritage. The needed and sufficient conditions for applying the model of making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community consist of: A territory or region in which the community possesses the representative intangible cultural heritages; A “museum” established on the basis of participation in consensus of community; A coordination between authority, cultural management bodies, researchers, and communities of authors and subjects in operating the “museum”;

Resources of “museum” based on cultural and natural resources on the spot, with knowledges, efforts and aspirations of local community; Developed infrastructure satisfying the conditions for tourism development, becoming attractive destination in order to advance effectively the values of intangible cultural heritage to serve the community development and local socio-economic development.

The overall model of making museum of intangible cultural heritage within community in Vietnam comprises such components: Infrastructure (cultural space, architectural edifices, traffic facilities...); Organization of museum implementation (community of authors and subjects); Selected heritages (for ecological museum, the natural heritages and ecological environment are given importance and priority; for community museum, the natural factor is combined with social factor or only the social environment is chosen); Implementation mode (author community gives the idea; local authority and museum make plan; cultural state administrations give legal and scientific assistance; tourists share responsibility); Effectivity (it must protect the heritages, ensuring the rights of cultural authors and the community development). Hence the author proposed: The effective model for cultural space of Central Highlands gong is community museum; The effective model for Gióng festival is ecological museum; The effective model for Phước Tích ancient village pottery is making museum of village cultural heritage.

The dissertation was successfully defended at university jury under Hanoi University of Culture in 2016.

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