



PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE VALUE OF TRADITIONAL RITUALS OF THE DAO QUAN CHET PEOPLE IN LA BANG COMMUNE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THAI NGUYEN

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Abstract

This article examines the current state of and solutions for preserving and promoting the traditional rituals of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang Commune, Thai Nguyen Province, within the context of sustainable development. The Dao Quan Chet possess a rich repertoire of rituals. These are not merely acts of faith but also serve as mechanisms for regulating social relationships, fostering moral education, and cultivating environmental awareness at the foot of the Tam Dao mountain range. However, due to urbanization and strong trends of cultural integration, many of these rituals face the risk of fading away or becoming distorted. The findings confirm that preserving the cultural values of the Dao Quan Chet people not only safeguards their ethnic identity but also drives the creative economy, contributing to the realization of green growth and sustainable prosperity for the northern midlands and mountainous region.

Keywords:

Dao Quan Chet people, La Bang, Traditional rituals, Heritage preservation, Sustainable development.

1. Introduction

Amidst the era of innovation and international integration, culture is no longer viewed merely as a "legacy of the past"; rather, it has become a vital endogenous resource that contributes directly to the sustainable development of each locality. For Thai Nguyen province- a region characterized by diverse ethnic identities-preserving and promoting traditional cultural values has become an urgent necessity for building a regional brand and fostering the creative economy. In this context, the ritual system of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang Commune, Dai Tu District, stands out as a unique repository of intangible cultural heritage, embodying invaluable indigenous knowledge.

The Dao Quan Chet people of La Bang have long been deeply connected to the buffer zone of the Tam Dao forest, developing an extensive system of life-cycle and agricultural rituals-such as the Cap Sac (rite of passage/initiation) ceremony, the Tet Nhay (Leaping Festival), and forest worship rituals. These ceremonies are not merely spiritual activities; they serve as a powerful bond uniting the community and act as a medium for instilling moral values, a philosophy of life, and an awareness of ecological conservation. Notably, as La Bang

Commune strives to build a "model new rural area" integrated with tea-based ecotourism, these traditional rituals serve as the "soul" that distinguishes the locality, helping it avoid the pitfalls of formulaic regional economic development.

2. Literature Review

This subject has attracted the interest and research efforts of numerous scholars, with notable works including the following:

In the study *"Preserving and Promoting the Value of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ethnic Minority Groups in Thai Nguyen Province Today"* author Nguyen Van Bach analyzes the current state of intangible heritage including languages, writing systems, coming-of-age rituals, and harvest praying ceremonies among ethnic groups in Thai Nguyen, noting the significant impact of urbanization and modernization [1]. Authors Le Thi Thu Ha and Nguyen Minh Ngoc, in their article *"Developing Community-Based Tourism Linked to Preserving the Cultural Identity of the Dao People in Dai Tu District"* highlight the practical connection between cultural preservation (encompassing rituals and performing arts) and the creation of sustainable livelihoods for local residents through homestay and tea-region ecotourism models, thereby proposing solutions to promote cultural value within the framework of sustainable development [2]. In the study *"Preserving and Promoting the Value of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ethnic Minority Groups in Vietnam in the Context of Sustainable Development"* author Nguyen Thi Hien establishes a theoretical basis linking sustainable development with heritage preservation and provides scientific arguments for safeguarding the traditional rituals of Vietnam's ethnic minority groups [3].

In the monograph *"The Dao People in Thai Nguyen Province"*, author Nguyen Thi Ngan conducted a comprehensive study of the various Dao groups (including the Dao Quan Chet) residing in the province. The research provides systematic data on migration history and socio-economic characteristics, with a particular focus on belief systems, customs, and traditional rituals. This work offers a broad overview of the Dao community in Thai Nguyen. [4]

In the study *"The Role of Tao Priests and Prestigious Figures in Preserving Traditional Rituals Among the Dao People Today"*, author Ban Tien Si examined the "cultural agents"-the core force behind heritage preservation and proposed policy solutions for ritual conservation, as well as measures to support and enhance the roles of local artisans and Tao priests. [5]

In the monograph *"Culture of the Dao Quan Chet People in Hoa Binh"*, author Bui Chi Thanh elucidates the system of life-cycle rituals, offering a profound analysis of the spiritual mindset and customary laws of the Dao Quan Chet people. Although the study focuses on the Hoa Binh region, the core values regarding the ethnic group's identity remain highly consistent, thereby providing valuable material for regional comparative analysis [6]. In her study *"Life-cycle Rituals of the Dao Quan Chet People in Ba Vi District, Hanoi"*, author Vu Thi Uyen systematizes the traditional rituals—ranging from childbirth, weddings, and initiation ceremonies (Cap Sac) to funerals of the Dao Quan Chet subgroup in Hanoi. This work contributes a theoretical framework regarding ritual structures and cultural symbols, serving as a basis for examination and comparison with the situation in La Bang Commune, Thai Nguyen Province [7]. Meanwhile, in her study *"Transformation of Dao Quan Chet Life-cycle Rituals under the Impact of Modern Life"*, author Nguyen Thi Hong Van directly analyzes the current state of these traditional rituals, examining how they are being simplified, transformed, or placed at risk of fading away in the face of modernization [8].

The aforementioned studies have provided an overview and addressed various issues regarding the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and traditional rituals of ethnic minorities in general, and the Dao people in Vietnam in particular. However, there has been no in-depth research specifically focused on preserving and promoting the traditional ritual values of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang Commune, Thai Nguyen Province. In reality, the growth of the market economy, urbanization, and the influx of modern forms of entertainment are creating unprecedented challenges for the preservation and promotion of these traditional rituals. The pool of ritual practitioners is dwindling, the younger generation is increasingly drifting away from tradition, and some rituals are becoming commercialized or gradually fading into oblivion. Without preservation strategies rooted in innovative thinking, these values risk becoming "dead heritage" confined to museums rather than serving as a driving force for development.

Based on the above, this study focuses on analyzing the role and current state of traditional rituals practiced by the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang. It proposes solutions to preserve and promote the value of this heritage in harmony with sustainable development goals, thereby transforming culture into a competitive advantage for Thai Nguyen province in the new era. Furthermore, the study provides a documentary basis and proposes solutions for nurturing and developing the local workforce of teachers and educational officials, thereby contributing to the advancement of education and the preservation and promotion of traditional ritual values.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs an interdisciplinary research approach integrating ethnography, cultural studies, and sociology. Through fieldwork, the study objectively and meticulously documents sacred spaces, ritual props, costumes, incantations, and the mindset of the ritual practitioners; it delves into the spiritual significance, historical evolution, current state of decline, and the concerns of local people regarding ritual preservation. Furthermore, it gathers diverse perspectives to identify points of consensus or conflict between preserving the authenticity of spiritual rituals and commercializing them for sustainable tourism development.

Methods of document analysis and synthesis facilitate the construction of a robust theoretical framework regarding preservation, value promotion and sustainable development while also incorporating accurate statistical data on demographics, poverty rates, and the local cultural landscape.

Historical and logical methods enable an analysis of how rituals evolve and transform over time-identifying what has been lost, what has emerged, and what has been simplified under the influence of varying historical and social contexts.

Complementary interdisciplinary analytical methods assist in formulating practical and feasible solutions, avoiding top-down impositions by management agencies that fail to align with the sentiments, aspirations, and spiritual lives of the local community.

4. Research results and discussion

4.1 The ritual system of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang Commune, Thai Nguyen Province.

The ritual system of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang Commune, Thai Nguyen Province, is not merely a collection of isolated spiritual practices; rather, it constitutes an

"ecosystem" of sustainable living values. It is a realm where the past, present, and future converge, serving as a vital bond connecting humanity with nature, ancestors, and the community.

In the worldview of the Dao Quan Chet, every ritual serves as a crucial link in maintaining the cosmic order. From communal rites-such as village and forest offerings to family ceremonies like the Leap Dance (Nhiang chàm đạo), all embody a philosophy rooted in origins. These rituals instill gratitude toward ancestors (such as Ban Vuong) and the deities who offer protection, serving as a vivid, practical lesson in the moral principle of remembering the source when drinking the water. Through the sounds of drums and bells and prayers chanted in Dao Nom script, older generations pass down to the young not just rituals, but a rich legacy encompassing the history of both their lineage and their people.

If the ritual system were viewed as a body, the Cap Sac (Rite of Passage/Ordination) ceremony would be its backbone. For the Dao Quần Chet men of La Bang, this marks the most significant milestone of adulthood. The ceremony is not merely about having one's name "recorded in the heavens" or gaining recognition as a mature adult; more importantly, the initiate is instructed in the Ten Prohibitions and Ten Vows strict ethical standards regarding filial piety, honesty, and community responsibility. This establishes a hierarchy based on virtue and wisdom, helping to maintain social order within the village without the need for coercive measures.

The Dao people's way of life in La Bang is inextricably linked to the foothills of Tam Dao Mountains. Their rituals honoring the spirits of the forest and mountains are not merely acts of superstition but represent a primitive yet effective form of resource management. Guided by the belief that all things possess a spirit, the Dao pledge to protect water sources and greenery during these forest ceremonies. This fosters a lifestyle in harmony with nature, enabling the La Bang region to remain lush and sustainable over the centuries. Festival days serve as occasions for villagers to gather, set aside grievances, share cups of corn wine, and discuss the harvest, thereby strengthening the bonds of community and neighborly solidarity.

Driven by tourism and urbanization, the ritual system of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang has not become "fossilized"; instead, it is evolving to adapt. These rituals have now become a "soft asset" for cultural tourism, enabling the community to preserve their identity while improving their economic well-being. Amidst the wave of integration, the values embodied in these rituals such as traditional attire, language, and the bell dance serve as a distinct identity that prevents the La Bang Dao people from losing their cultural uniqueness. The ritual system of the Dao Quan Chet in La Bang is a living museum. It is not confined to a glass display case but flows through the veins of every resident, nurturing their souls and guiding their behavior. Preserving these rituals means preserving the very "roots" of a vibrant, colorful human ecosystem nestled at the foot of the majestic Tam Dao Mountains.

4.2. The transformation of rituals among the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang Commune, Thai Nguyen Province, in the era of regional innovation

The Dao Quan Chet people in Thai Nguyen-particularly in the La Bang area (Dai Tu District) and the districts of Dinh Hoa and Phu Luong possess a vast repertoire of rituals, such as the Maturity Ritual (Cap Sac), the Jumping Festival (Tet Nhay), and the Ban Vuong Worship Ceremony. Historically, these rituals served primarily as internal spiritual practices within the

community. However, in the era of regional innovation, perceptions of heritage have shifted: rituals are no longer viewed as static "fragments of the past" but have become cultural assets driving sustainable socio-economic development. This transformation does not alter the core of their faith; rather, it changes the modes of expression and the functional value of these rituals in modern life.

Innovation does not mean discarding tradition; rather, it involves finding ways for tradition to thrive within the rhythm of modern life. The Dao people have proactively streamlined rituals that once spanned days and nights such as the traditional "12-Lamp Initiation Ceremony" by removing cumbersome and costly procedures while fully preserving the essential, spiritually significant steps. This adaptation aligns the rituals with the lifestyles of the younger generation, who are active in the market economy and have limited free time. The most significant breakthrough lies in the application of technology. Many Dao clans in Thai Nguyen have established social media groups to connect and discuss the organization of ceremonies. Ritual chants written in Dao Nom script have been digitized, stored in the cloud, and shared via online platforms, ensuring that learning and transmission are no longer constrained by geographical distance.

The Dao people of Thai Nguyen have demonstrated great insight by transforming their rituals into components of regional tourism products. In villages such as La Bang, these rituals are no longer confined to the privacy of the home; specific elements of the Jump Dance Festival (Tet Nhay) and the Bell Dance have been brought into public spaces, evolving into artistic performances for tourists. This approach using heritage to sustain heritage" generates income that provides the community with the funds needed to preserve their authentic cultural values. Dao rituals have become a highlight of Thai Nguyen province's major tea festivals. The fusion of tea culture (a driver of the regional economy) and folk rituals (an expression of regional culture) creates a unique identity that attracts both investment and visitors from far and wide.

In this era of innovation, the most significant shift lies in how people engage with culture. Rather than remaining passive, young Dao people in Thai Nguyen are actively "restructuring" their ethnic pride. They use short-form videos (on platforms like TikTok and Reels) to document rituals such as the Cap Sac (rite of passage) or the process of embroidering traditional garments. They transform the dry moral precepts found in these rituals into inspiring messages about green living and harmony with nature. These rituals evolve into genuine "extracurricular" sessions where artisans act as creative mentors, helping the younger generation grasp the value of discipline, gratitude, and honesty—soft skills that are crucial in the digital age. Despite these positive transformations, excessive commercialization remains a potential risk that could erode the sacred nature of the rituals. To ensure this ecosystem of values thrives sustainably in the era of innovation, it is essential to clearly distinguish between "spiritual rituals" (conducted within the family) and "performance rituals" (geared toward tourism); to view artisans as "creative incubators" and provide them with the legal and financial support needed to maintain classes teaching the Nom Dao script and ritual practices; and to encourage creative presentation methods while strictly avoiding any distortion of the essence and humanistic significance of these traditional rites.

The evolution of the rituals of the Dao Quan Chet people in Thai Nguyen stands as a testament to the enduring vitality of ethnic culture. In this era of innovation, these rituals are no longer a burden of the past; instead, they have become a driving force—a distinctive "brand identity" that helps Thai Nguyen assert its position on the nation's cultural and economic map.

4.3. Strategy for promoting the value of Dao Quan Chet rituals in La Bang Commune, Thai Nguyen Province, towards sustainable development

In La Bang Commune, Dai Tu District, the Dao Quan Chet people are not only the custodians of lush green tea hills but also the guardians of a unique treasury of rituals. In the context of sustainable development, these rituals hold not only spiritual significance but also serve as distinctive cultural assets, creating a local competitive advantage for tourism development and strengthening national unity. To ensure that the traditional rituals of the Dao Quan Chet in La Bang do not remain merely "frozen" heritage but instead become a driving force for development, a multi-layered strategy integrating authentic preservation with creative utilization is required. The strategic pillars for the sustainable development of Dao Quan Chet ritual values in La Bang Commune include:

First, community-based conservation.

The most sustainable strategy is to empower the people to safeguard their own heritage. Rather than limiting activities to individual households, establishing clubs dedicated to preserving the Dao Nom script, the bell dance, and Pao Dung singing will create spaces for regular practice. The Dao community in La Bang must serve as the central agents and direct beneficiaries of this heritage. Timely policies are needed to provide financial support and recognition to artisans and ritual practitioners the "living libraries" who hold the knowledge of ancient scripts and rituals. They are the ones who lead the transmission of this knowledge to the next generation. Furthermore, young people should be encouraged to learn the Dao Nom script, Páo Dung singing, and traditional dances through community activities. When young people recognize the economic value and sense of ethnic pride involved, they will voluntarily become "cultural ambassadors."

Secondly, implementing controlled "stage-based presentation" linked to green tourism.

The rituals of the Dao Quan Chet people embody profound knowledge regarding environmental protection (specifically, the worship of the Forest Spirit). Local authorities should integrate the customary laws concerning forest and water source protection found within these rituals into the official regulations and village conventions of La Bang Commune. This fosters strong community consensus on developing clean agriculture and protecting the biodiversity of the Tam Dao buffer zone, thereby directly contributing to Thai Nguyen Province's green growth objectives. Promoting the value of traditional rituals in a sustainable manner is not merely about preserving a facet of ethnic culture; it is an investment in "cultural capital" that creates a distinctive competitive advantage. A harmonious blend of authentic preservation and creative development will enable the Dao Quan Chet people of La Bang to confidently enter a new era while fully preserving the spirit of their ancestors. Dao Quan Chet rituals are highly esoteric in nature, particularly the segments performed indoors. Consequently, the strategy requires a clear distinction between the following two aspects:

The "Static" Component (Preserving the Core): Sacred rituals (the ceremonial aspect) within families and clans are maintained in their original form to ensure that spiritual practices remain free from commercialization.

The "Dynamic" Component (Tourism Development): Lively festive elements such as the Bell Dance and dances from the "Leap Festival" (Tết Nhảy) are selected for performance at

homestays or community-based tourism sites. This allows tourists to experience Dao culture firsthand without intruding upon the local community's sacred spiritual spaces.

Third, integrate the values of rituals into local education.

For sustainable development, heritage requires "successors." Strategies should incorporate the ethical values found in rituals into the school curriculum by organizing field trips and educational sessions that explore the significance of the "Ten Prohibitions" and "Ten Vows" associated with the Cap Sac (Rite of Passage) ceremony. Such initiatives help cultivate character, filial piety, and environmental awareness among students from an early age. Additionally, virtual reality (VR) technology or documentary videos can be used to recreate these rituals, making it easier for young people to engage with and take pride in their ethnic identity via smart devices. To effectively implement these strategies, local authorities need to combine economic and cultural elements; for instance, by developing and launching a "Thai Tea – Dao Culture" model.

La Bàng is renowned for its tea; visitors coming to enjoy the brew not only admire the scenery but also hear tales of the legend of Bàn Vương and the forest and mountain deities revered by the Dao people. This elevates the tea plant from a mere agricultural commodity to a "cultural product." Furthermore, economic opportunities arise from ritual-related goods; for instance, commercializing Quan Chet (Tight-Trouser Dao) costumes featuring the intricate hand-embroidered patterns that lie at the heart of their ceremonies can transform the embroidery craft into a source of high-end souvenirs while creating local employment for women. Additionally, the Dao Quần Chẹt possess a wealth of traditional medicinal knowledge linked to health rituals; standardizing and commercializing their herbal bath packets can generate a sustainable income stream to support the community and preserve their heritage.

Sustainable development relies on the support of technology and modern management practices. Comprehensive digitization of intangible heritage is essential; for instance, creating digital maps of the Dao Quan Chet people's rituals and festivals and utilizing Augmented Reality (AR) to allow visitors to experience the atmosphere of the Cap Sac (Coming-of-Age) ceremony outside of the actual festival season—represents an effective technological approach to heritage management and promotion. Furthermore, leveraging social media and cultural influencers (KOLs) to share the moving, meaningful stories behind these rituals—thereby capturing the interest of young people and international tourists—is a fitting strategy that greatly aids in sharing this heritage with a broad domestic and global audience. The strategy to promote the value of Dao Quan Chet rituals in La Bang extends beyond merely preserving prayers or dances; it is a journey to redefine cultural value within a market economy. When these rituals become a source of livelihood, a point of pride, and a humanistic tourism product, they will become self-sustaining and enduring, contributing to the overall development of Thai Nguyen province in a truly sustainable and brilliant manner.

4.4. Challenges and adaptation in a new context

As they enter the era of innovation, the traditional rituals of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang inevitably face a clash between old and new values. Accurately identifying these challenges will help the community devise appropriate adaptation strategies.

The greatest challenge lies in the "key" to unlocking this heritage treasure trove. Key rituals such as the Cap Sac (rite of passage) and the Tet Nhay (Leap Festival) are conducted

using Nom Dao script and ancient liturgical chants. While the younger generation is fluent in the national language, they are unfamiliar with Nom Dao characters and the profound layers of meaning found in the archaic Dao language. A generational gap in knowledge transmission has emerged; driven by economic pressures or the allure of pop culture, many young people have lost interest in mastering these lengthy and rigorous rituals. As elderly ritual masters pass away, the lack of qualified successors risks reducing rituals to mere performances devoid of their true essence, ultimately leading to a distortion of their values. Furthermore, today's youth are more drawn to social media platforms and modern music than to the traditional bell dances or the deep, resonant drumbeats of the Tet Nhay festival. This creates a "cultural gap" within Dao families themselves.

Traditional rituals of the Dao people are often lengthy and elaborate. In the past, a "12-lamp" initiation ceremony (Cap sac) could last for weeks, consuming significant financial and material resources. As the community shifts toward commercial-scale tea production, halting work to participate in prolonged rituals creates an economic burden. Meanwhile, rural urbanization and "New Rural Area" development have altered traditional housing structures—shifting from single-story dwellings to multi-story houses—thereby complicating the arrangement of worship spaces and the performance of characteristic ritual dances. Furthermore, the pressure to commercialize rituals for tourism risks "over-theatricalizing" the heritage, potentially stripping away its sacred nature and core significance. Commercial influences may lead to the simplification of crucial stages, reducing the ritual to a mere empty formality. Rural urbanization and modernization have also transformed housing layouts and community spaces. Consequently, performing rituals that require vast areas or a profound connection with nature (such as forest worship ceremonies) has become increasingly difficult amidst shrinking land availability and a diminishing ecological environment.

To overcome challenges, the Dao community in La Bang has opted for "selective adaptation" rather than rigid adherence to tradition. Major ceremonies have been streamlined by removing cumbersome procedures to focus on the core rituals—the spiritual essence of the event. A "Cap Sac" (rite of passage) ceremony now typically lasts one to two days instead of the previous three to five, making it easier to align with the schedules of both the initiates and the community. Clans have agreed to simplify contribution requirements and curb waste, ensuring the rituals regain their true spiritual significance rather than becoming a financial burden. Artisans and ritual masters have begun using smartphones to record prayers and procedural details, while clan-based Zalo and Facebook groups serve as platforms for coordinating schedules and organizing ceremonies. Additionally, classes teaching the Dao language and Nom Dao script have been introduced via new instructional methods, allowing those working far from home to stay connected to their cultural roots.

The Dao Quan Chet people are learning to use modern tools such as livestreams and documentary filming to tell their own stories. Their heritage is no longer confined to books but comes alive on digital platforms, projecting an image of the Dao people that is both ancient and modern. Mechanisms are needed to honor and provide financial support to Thay Tao (ritual masters) and artisans who serve as "living archives" and to integrate ritual excerpts and moral values (such as filial piety and honesty, drawn from the Cáp Sắc initiation ceremony) into extracurricular activities at schools in La Bang Commune. Local authorities must also clearly distinguish between "performance rituals" (for tourism) and "spiritual rituals" (conducted within the clan) to avoid trivializing sacred values. Bell dances and Pao Dung songs originally part of religious rites are now incorporated into community performance troupes to entertain

tourists at homestays within the tea-growing region. Ritual culture has become a compelling story shared over a cup of tea, thereby enhancing the brand value of local agricultural products. When culture generates economic value, the community's own drive to preserve it is significantly strengthened.

Challenges are inevitable, yet with their resilient spirit and innovative mindset, the Dao Quan Chet community in La Bang is transforming difficulties into opportunities for cultural revitalization, ensuring their traditional rituals shine brightly within the vibrant tapestry of the new era.

Through extensive research and analysis, it is evident that the ritual system of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang Commune is not merely a collection of fragmented relics from the past, but a "vibrant cultural ecosystem" serving as a cornerstone of Thai Nguyen province's sustainable development strategy. In this new era, these values are not being extinguished; rather, they are actively evolving to harmonize the sanctity of heritage with the dynamism of modern times.

The new landscape presents significant challenges regarding language erosion and shifting livelihoods, yet the Dao Quan Chet community has demonstrated remarkable adaptability. The streamlining of rituals, the use of technology for archiving, and the selective "staging" of heritage serve as testaments to the enduring vitality of Dao culture. This adaptation does not signify a loss of identity; rather, it represents a strategic step back to enable greater progress within the currents of modern civilization.

For this ritual system to truly serve as a guiding force for sustainable development, a comprehensive approach is required. Authorities must position ritual heritage as the "core" of regional tourism development plans rather than a mere accessory and implement fitting incentive policies to support the artisans and Thay Tao (ritual masters), who act as the ethnic group's "living libraries." The community needs to ignite a desire for heritage preservation among the younger generation through creative educational models, transforming Nom Dao script and ancient ritual chants into sources of pride rather than academic burdens. Finally, the scientific community must continue conducting in-depth research to decipher the humanistic values embedded within these rituals, thereby establishing a scientific foundation for preserving and promoting heritage values in this new context.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The rituals of the Dao Quan Chet people in La Bang serve as a multi-layered message regarding their philosophy of life and worldview. Through major ceremonies such as the Cap Sac (rite of passage/initiation) and the Tet Nhay (Leaping Festival), a rigorous moral code is clearly transmitted, helping to maintain social order and strong community bonds. This constitutes a vital form of "social capital" that enables the Dao village to remain resilient against the negative impacts of urbanization. Such resilience stems, first and foremost, from the steadfast mindset and ethnic pride of each individual within the community.

As part of Thai Nguyen's sustainable development strategy, the rituals of the Dao people in La Bang have transcended the confines of sacred spaces to become a unique economic resource. The transformation from "static heritage" to "living heritage" facilitated by a cultural tourism model linked to the region's specialty tea industry has opened up a new path forward. These rituals captivate visitors not only through the visual appeal of traditional costumes and

dances but also through the profound philosophy of living in harmony with nature. Indeed, the spiritual reverence for forest and mountain deities inherent in these rituals directly fosters an awareness of environmental protection, water conservation, and the preservation of the ecosystem at the foothills of the Tam Dao range all of which are prerequisites for the sustainable development of the La Bang tea region.

In this era of innovation, culture is not a hindrance to development but rather a launchpad. Preserving and promoting the traditional ritual values of the Dao Quan Chet people is not merely a duty toward their ancestors; it is a strategic move to build a prosperous La Bang commune and a Thai Nguyen province that is rich in cultural identity and committed to sustainable development. This serves as a model for harmoniously blending the preservation of ethnic heritage with the pulse of the modern era. As we move toward the future, if this cultural wellspring is properly tapped and cherished, it will forever remain a nourishing source for the community's soul and a powerful driving force propelling La Bang, and Thai Nguyen at large, toward sustainable growth rooted in cultural identity and humanistic values. This heritage belongs not only to the Dao people but has become a precious part of the legacy of the entire Vietnamese nation in this era of innovation.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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