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**IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION OF THE *TAO DAN* MAGAZINE  
(1939) FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODERN VIETNAMESE  
CULTURE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Tao Dan* is a cultural magazine of literature and art with great opening contributions, important ideological and academic works. Within the researches, it analyze and explain the national spirit and humanity of Vietnamese culture in *Tao Dan* magazine by studying the manifesto of the magazine – as well as debate. "Art for art or art for human life?" – in modern poetry, prose, and drama.

**Keywords:** Contribute, *Tao Dan* magazine, 1939, Culture Vietnam.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

*Tao Dan* magazine is to continue the work of newspapers and magazines that were born and operated before it, in order to contribute to the completion of the construction of the national culture. The magazine advocates to avoid sectarianism in the name of the organ of a particular sect. It tries to become an open forum, capable of gathering and converging forces that may differ, but have commonalities and promote the national cultural identity, not to fall into the situation of losing its roots and mistress into foreign cultures. Obviously, that is the noble purpose that *Tao Dan* set out, and more importantly, the magazine has endeavored to accomplish this throughout its

existence. In fact, according to the declaration, *Tao Dan* has made great contributions to the Vietnamese press landscape as well as to the national culture.

## CONTENT

### 1. Culture-arts journalism 1930 -1945 in Vietnam

In Vietnam, in the first half of the twentieth century, the press was an updated forum, allowing the opening of debates, polemics discussing current affairs or literary and artistic issues. Journalism to nurture and develop pens for literature and art. Before the August Revolution in 1945, looking back to magazines specializing in literature and art, we saw the contributions of magazines: *Indochina magazine* (1913 - 1917), *Nam Phong magazine* (1917 - 1934), *An Nam magazine* (1926 - 1927, 1930 - 1933), *Tan Thanh magazine* (1931), *Literature Magazine* (1932), *Tan Thieu* (1934), *Hanoi newspaper* (1936), *Tao Dan* (1939), *Tri Tan* (1941 - 1945), *Thanh Nghi* (1941 - 1945).

Among the magazines mentioned above, *Tao Dan* has a special key function. According to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Ngoc Thien, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the only two journals specialized in literature were *An Nam magazine* (only poetry) and *Tao Dan* (culture - literature and art). Prior to the founding of *Tao Dan*, with *Annam magazine, a magazine of literature, as well, already existed: "The first edition appeared on 1 - 7 - 1926 in Hanoi. The chairman and editor was the poet Tan Da -Nguyen Khac Hieu. This is a newspaper specializing in literature."* [4, p. 119].

In the period 1930 - 1945, the typical feature of the Tonkin press was the appearance of the press groups: The independence union with the two contributions: *Phong Hoa* and *Ngay Nay newspaper*; **Tan Dan** group with *Novel Thu Bay* (June 2, 1934); newspaper *Ich Huu* (25-2-1936), the newspaper *Pho Thong* appearing twice a month with a first release dated 1-12-1936, the magazine *Tao Dan* which appeared once every two month (1-3-1939); Thanh Nghi Group with *Thanh Nghi Magazine* (June 1941) and finally the; Han Thuyen group with *Van Moi Magazine* (1941).

In 1932, Vu Dinh Long opened a bookstore and **Tan Dan** opened a publishing house, specializing in printing textbooks, especially swordplay and tragedy mainly translated from Chinese stories. *Tao Dan Magazine* was born in

the right moment as a cultural institution with the purpose is to build a peculiar Vietnamese culture.

*Tao Dan* has 13 numbers (from March to July - two terms / one month; from August to October - one month /one period) and two special numbers (about Tan Da - July – p.134; about Vu Trong Phung - December 1939 – p.88), with a total of 1,374 printed pages. *Tao Dan* Magazine was born in a short time in 1939 and "is considered a pivotal moment of the political and cultural life of each nation around the globe, marked by the outbreak of the second world war in September 1939" (Nguyen Ngoc Thien).

It can be seen that the debate about art in the period of 1935-1939 was closed but its meaning is profound and great, leaving the first lesson of how academic debate is cultural. This is an event of great importance to historical literature and has practical significance for the field of literary theory. It partly reflects the current literary situation and development trends in the direction of progress. *Tao Dan* posted the final stage of the debate. It became a broad forum, on which the opposing views simmered. The way of *Tao Dan* is a fairly unique way showing efforts in preserving and absorbing cultural advances as well as repelling remnants of the old culture.

The special feature of *Tao Dan* magazine in terms of ideology as well as in terms of art is its special focus on the creative works because only they can strongly promote the spirit of the Vietnamese people. *Tao Dan* spent the focus on the *Author of art*, spend the page to sign compositions in each of the authors. The more striking work is, the more precious it becomes. The pages are full of passion, deeply imbued with the Vietnamese national identity. The Vietnamese essence is expressed through *Modern Poetry*, *Modern Prose* and *Theater*.

More significantly, *Tao Dan* was initially launched in the consciousness of our writers at that time, the spirit, the idea of the genre - though not many authors but brought aftertaste for readers.

## **2. Promoting the national literary tradition**

*Tao Dan* Magazine is a continuation of the source of national culture that was initiated from previous newspapers. When promoting the national literary tradition, *Tao Dan* has left a distinctive mark in the cultural process of Vietnam.

## **2.1. About folklore**

This section of folklore consists mainly of genres of myths, myths, legends, myths, legends, ancient folk songs, ancient folk songs and folk proverbs. Notably, during the period of 1939, Tao Dan published folklore works of the "Kinh" and ethnic minorities. Literature of ethnic minorities is an important part of the spiritual heritage of ethnic literature in general. Lam Tuyen Khach (Lan Khai) with "Nhưng cau hatxanh" [5, p. 694] (collection of ancient verses and songs of the Tay ethnic group) consists of 3 parts: Part one, talking about small verses, proverbs, lullabies, and lyrical songs of children. Part two, talking about the song about the ceremony, the verses of the Then ladies. The remaining third part is the "coo" - the lyrics about love, love couples. On Tao Dan No. 8, No. 9 + 10, No. 11, No. 12 have quoted the blue verses I, II, III and IV respectively.

Phan Khoi has the article "Proverbs and its status in literature" posted on Tao Dan No. 9 + 10 and 11. Phan Khoi explains and clearly presents about the two types of proverbs, style and its position. in the country literature. He said that proverbs are meant to teach ordinary morals, handed down by people.

## **2.2. About classical literature and ancient history**

Classical literature on Tao Dan mainly refers to Nom and Han characters, around some authors such as Huynh Thuc Khang, Nguyen Van To, Nguyen Trong Thuat, Tao Trang and Kinh Dinh.

Huynh Thuc Khang has two articles on Le Tac and An Chi Chi Chi. On Tao Dan No. 1, with the title: "About an article written by a historian selling a country, a history of humiliation posted in Tao Dan magazine", Huynh Thuc Khang said, "My grudge against the two books with the Le Tac people in an article which clearly shows the truth like that, because literature is not written in history. " [5, p. 571].

Sharing the same opinion with Huynh Thuc Khang, Mr. Tran Thanh Mai has a series of articles "A history writer selling water - a humiliating history: Le Tac and his An Nam Chi Chi" in Numbers 3 and 6 on Tao Dan. However, Tran Thanh Mai expressed his regret that Huynh Thuc Khang mentioned the name of Le Tac and his book in a disdainful voice, but refused to say what kind of person Le Tac was and what the copy contained.

Besides these two authors, Nguyen Van To also mentioned the date that it is necessary to make historical documents in the article "Is it time to rewrite the Southern history book?". Nguyen Van To said that in order to write a complete history, it is necessary to study all aspects. "Reading through the thousands of thousands of heaven is not necessarily a complete description of the past life, all thanks to the research of experts. So please conclude, there are not enough documents to rewrite Vietnamese history." [5, p. 22]

Thus, it can be seen that Tao Dan has paid attention to classical and ancient literature that most of us have not seen before. Clearly, Tao Dan was very conscious in building a literature that made this magazine from the very beginning bearing the essence of national culture and literature. It is a strong point that the contemporary press in the early twentieth century.

### **2.3. *About modern literature***

Regarding modern literature, the most prominent are two special numbers about the career of Tan Da and Vu Trong Phung. Among the special issue of Tan Da, Tao Dan posted many articles around his career. Notable as: "The influence of Tan Da on later writers" (Nguyen Trieu Luat); "Some memories about love of Tan Da" (Xuan Dieu); "Tan Da, a swordsman" (Nguyen Tuan); "Tan Da went to discuss work to publish An Nam magazine", "Train ticket checker with poet Tan Da" (Nguyen Cong Hoan);

Among special issues of Tan Da, Truong Tuu has an article "Enjoying literature - The beauty of Tan Da poetry" [6, p. 968]. Re-reading Tan Da's poems, he said that Tan Da wrote poems very elaborately and very An Nam in the way of using words, it will remain forever with time. In enjoying literature Tan Da - a magician of words, sounds, melodies, Truong Tuu called Tan Da to be the engineer who controlled the Vietnamese word machine.

Hoai Thanh in "Human view of Vietnam cultural history by Dao Duy Anh" [6, p. 878] that culture consists of the ideals and scholarship of a people. Vietnamese culture takes agriculture as the basic foundation in society, the clan is an important element. Hoai Thanh also studied modern literary author: Mr. Phan Khac Khoan - a newcomer to poetry who had many works worth pondering (In "A poet of great hope: Mr. Phan Khac Khoan").

Stemming from a sense of desire to create, a persistent, enthusiastic attitude, Tao Dan has written really valuable scholarly, theoretical and scientific articles. During its existence, Tao Dan has contributed to the development and promotion of the national language prose of the country. Tao Dan has guided, guided and cheered the prose writers of our country to compose the song.

It can be said that in the trend of our country's integration and integration with the world, it is necessary to review past phenomena and draw out current lessons. Through restoring the entire Tao Dan magazine - the entire collection is honest with the original for the first time present in contemporary journalism. This will satisfy those who want to study a journal or a journal period from 1930 - 1945. Because the entire Tao Dan magazine is the text that allows use with the highest confidence.

Two writers, Nguyen Ngoc Thien and Lu Huy Nguyen, conveyed the message: The generations of ancestors have "produced" national cultural values. Inheritance, promotion and development is the work of descendants today. We need to focus on promoting our own internal strength, preserving, protecting and constantly fostering and promoting our national cultural identity.

Building an advanced and rich culture of national identity is to preserve and promote the national cultural identity on the basis of preserving Vietnamese language, selecting and absorbing it in the new conditions of expansion of exchanges. and international cooperation.

### **3. Promote international exchanges in the construction and development of Vietnamese culture**

#### ***3.1. Researching and acquiring Eastern-West philosophical thought***

Preserving and promoting cultural identity as a basis for the expansion of Vietnamese cultural exchange today has long-term strategic significance on the basis of preserving and promoting the national cultural identity. Adopting Western culture, Vietnamese culture has transcended the scope of regional culture, gradually reaching the level of approaching humanity.

Tao Dan has an important role in cultural exchange. Tao Dan promotes the filter function of national culture chooses to absorb the human, rational, scientific and progressive elements of the world.

Vietnamese culture is a culture with an open tradition. The progress of Vietnamese culture in the tradition of achieving a rich development, inseparable from the process of developing cultural exchanges with surrounding countries, at the same time, asserting its independence and autonomy, along with his beautiful qualities. Cultural exchanges with foreign countries have gradually been expanded. Tao Dan creates conditions for good performance of the task of preserving and promoting the national cultural identity in combination with absorbing the world's cultural elite.

Articles on the materialistic and idealistic universe of Confucius, Trang Tu, and Tan Da by authors Hoai Thanh, Le Chi Thiep, Ngo Van Trien, Phan Khoi, ... promote the quintessence of Asian thought Bronze. The authors introduced and criticized the ancient doctrines of Western Europe from which to combine ideas and theories.

In each translated work, Tao Dan analyzes and cites specific comparisons of detailed content. In the article "Philosophy Bergson" by Le Chi Thiep, Tao Dan quoted: "Professor Le Chi Thiep has done a very commendable thing: introducing to the people in a simple and creative style, the philosophy Study famous around the world. Tao Dan has published all five chapters of this work by Le Chi Thiep. This is a meticulous, thoughtful work that has a great impact on the reader's mind and mind.

Along with Bergson philosophy, surrounding the matter of the universe of Confucius, Tao Dan published a series of articles: "Confucius with the materialist universe" of Ngo Van Trien; "Confucius has a materialistic or idealistic universe" by Bui Cong Trung; "I still say that Mr. Kong has a materialist universe" by Ngo Van Trien; "A universe that is still dim and weak: Confucius is neither materialistic nor idealistic" by Phan Khoi, ....

Acquire the quintessence of human culture to enrich the national cultural tradition. Socio-economic development must be based on the cultural foundation of national identity, at the same time, absorbing the elite values of mankind. However, in the process of acquiring the quintessence of foreign cultures, Tao Dan has distilled to develop in accordance with the needs of his time.

### **3.2. *Introduction of foreign literature***

Communication and information exchange are essential needs of people. Cultural exchanges between nations and peoples have existed since ancient times. The social development of international exchange has further enhanced the need to learn the literature of other countries.

Tao Dan participates in the process of enhancing international cultural exchanges, creating a bridge of information between readers and a constantly changing cultural life around the globe. In an effort to escape Chinese influence, the authors used the hexadecimal, but the seven-syllable, form of translating Tang Rule poetry instead of the whole. This is a hard effort and not easy to make. It proves the identity of the nation, always wants to explore experiments and dares to eliminate the inappropriate.

Tao Dan determined that the translation of foreign literature to enrich the national literature was a necessity. Tao Dan considered it a "noble duty" because the translation of foreign works would add to the literature of the country. At the same time, it also shows a calm and objective consideration.

It can be said that in one year of existence - 1939, Tao Dan magazine made great efforts in the translation and introduction of foreign literature. Doing this, Tao Dan has shown a general tendency to want to expand the artistic perspective for Vietnamese readers; help Vietnamese people enjoy the unique literary works of the world, especially the elite of French Literature and Chinese Classical Literature.

Vietnamese culture is deeply influenced by Chinese culture. In the early twentieth century, classical literature of Vietnam and China, especially the Tang poems, were greatly translated and collected.

A series of translated works such as *The Family and the World* - a publication by the Indian poet - Rabindranath Tagore; *Thuong Binh balance* - Chinese ancient stories; Mach Manh Hoa's novels comment on the era, the status of the War invalids, the nationality of the Qin country and the countries opposed to the Qin country at that time, etc. back to the culture of the country to be sustainable and good, to the new Western literature - we need to see the quintessence of the East. In the prose translations of novels, short stories according to the nature of the simple, rhythmic style.



Not only translating prose, Tao Dan also translates famous Tang and Song poems. This is probably the quite successful and outstanding area of translation on Tao Dan. We meet Dong Ho, Mac Lan, Nguyen Trong Thuat and Tan Da in translations of foreign poetry. And many other articles of great poets of the Tang and Song periods ... have been translated and introduced in Tao Dan magazine.

All have created a cultural exchange and interference right on Tao Dan magazine between the Eastern and Western literary areas has tried to give the country's literary readers the quintessence of literature. learn the world.

Together with a number of other newspapers and magazines, Tao Dan has contributed to the integration of art and literature for our country's readers to the world literary regions from the early years of the twentieth century.

With Tao Dan magazine, the translation of foreign literature has brought clear purposes. Not a pure story, translating foreign literature is just to introduce foreign literary works. This practice of Tao Dan, which has a long-lasting influence on writers in the later period, from 1940 to 1945. Gradually, on the Vietnamese literature arose and a translated literature appeared, not only It helps broaden the vision for readers, but it also integrates Vietnamese literature into the general line of world literature. This is a remarkable thing in Tao Dan.

## CONCLUSION

On the way of development of the press, cultural and literary components are increasingly expanded and increased. In the first step of forming a modern Vietnamese culture, as well as nowadays, the press has a close relationship between culture and literature in two mutual directions. Journalism attracts readers by the power of literature and vice versa, culture and literature through the press reaches the readers in a popular and widespread manner.

The 1935-1939 art debate on *Tao Dan* was closed, but its meaning was profound and immense, leaving the first lesson of how academic debate was cultural. This is an event of great importance to historical literature and has practical significance for the field of literary theory; partly reflect the current literary situation and development trends in the direction of progress. Tao Dan posted the final stage of the debate. It became a broad forum, on which the opposing views simmered. This way of Tao Dan is fairly unique, showing efforts

in preserving, absorbing cultural advances and repelling remnants of the old culture.

*Tao Dan*'s policy and efforts are: building and preserving the national cultural identity, making the culture of the country not "dissolve" in the original way of losing the roots of human culture. This is the right policy, up to now still retains a positive meaning. *Tao Dan* successfully demonstrated the national spirit and the humanity of Vietnamese culture. *Tao Dan* has created an environment to nurture and promote the values of Vietnamese cultural identity, affirming its position and Vietnamese nuance in human culture.

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