

**GENERAL REPORT ON SCIENTIFIC INVENTORY OF
VIỆT BELIEFS IN THE MOTHER GODDESSES OF THREE REALMS**

Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies

Research Survey Timeline

+ Phase 1 - from December 25 to December 30, 2013

+ Phase 2 - from February 11 to February 22, 2014

A. Elements Surveyed and inventoried

1. Name of the element:

- The Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses;
- Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses;
- Mother Goddess Religion

2. Area surveyed:

a. Specific characteristics of the residential areas and belief and festival activities associated with Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms:

- The practise of rituals and festivals associated with the Beliefs of Mother Goddess in Nam Định extends across nearly the entire province, spreads through hundreds of villages/hamlets of 230 communes/towns/wards in 10 districts/towns and is particularly concentrated in two central areas of the Vụ Bản and Ý Yên districts.

- Places of worship (communal houses, temples, pagodas, shrines, palaces, hermitages, joss-houses, temples of Confucius and worship halls) in the 10 districts of Nam Định province are for a diversity of legendary figures such as the Hùng kings, Man Nương, mythical gods, or historical figures who became deified for founding villages and fighting foreign invaders. Traditionally a shrine or other place of worship would be maintained for each spirit, but due to historical upheavals and acculturation in the region, certain figures have become grouped together, making ceremonies more complex and cultural activities more lavish.

The elements inventoried from villages with temples, pagodas, palaces, sanctuaries are the faith in the Mother Goddesses and forms of ritual practice, singers of Songs for the Spirits (hát vãn) and spirit possession ritual (lên đồng) and participants in the activity centers of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms

in the districts of Vụ Bản and Ý Yên; the other people will be considered as reference to identify the scale in the same cultural and spiritual spaces.

3. Criteria for selecting a village to be inventoried:

- Villages with a location for worshipping the Mother Goddesses or having ceremony leaders who are practised in the activities of singing Songs for the Spirits or spirit possession ritual;

- Villages without a current location for the Mother Goddesses worship but its people have participated in Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in other localities, especially singing Songs for the Spirits or mediums in ritual activities;

- Previously known places of worship (1975 and earlier), which no longer have relics or are becoming ruins, yet are still identified as a cultural and spiritual space for Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms.

The villages/residential areas surveyed and inventoried were for the most part limited to the central space areas of the Vụ Bản and Ý Yên districts. The remaining areas in Nam Định Province were only generally surveyed (from statistical perspective the relics associated with Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and list of practitioners). The data collected will be the important scientific and practical basis for the following comprehensive inventory.

B. Results of survey - inventory:

Based on the advantages and overcoming these difficulties, the research team has obtained certain results. Resources of data and information provided by the group representing the community through questionnaires had been collected and shown that: These are relatively rich resources with new information and system of Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in history and contemporary time.

a. Locations of religious practice:

The locations for practising Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms primarily occur in temples, pagodas, palaces and sanctuaries.. Mother Goddess altars are also found in communal houses or shrines due to unsatisfactory physical conditions of the dedicated temples, palaces or pagodas. Following is a listing of places which are considered centers of Mother Goddess worship in Vụ Bản and Ý Yên districts of Nam Định province:

- In Vụ Bản district: Vân Cát palace, Long Vân pagoda, Tổ Vân Cát palace (Vân Cát village, Kim Thái commune), Tiên Hương palace, Bà Châu Đệ Tứ Khâm Sai palace, Tổ Tiên Hương palace, Tiên Hương pagoda, Đức vua Tiên Hương temple (Tiên Hương village, Kim Thái commune), Bồng palace (hamlet 3, Kim Thái commune), Quan lớn temple (hamlet 4, Kim Thái commune), Mẫu Đông Công temple (hamlet 3, Kim Thái commune), Giếng – Mẫu Thoải temple (hamlet 3, Kim Thái commune), Mẫu Thượng Ngàn temple (hamlet 2, Kim Thái commune), Công Đồng temple (hamlet 2, Kim Thái commune), Cay Đa Bồng temple (Tiên village, Kim Thái commune), Linh Sơn pagoda (Kim Thái commune), Đức vua Vân Cát temple (Trại hamlet, Kim Thái commune), Giáp Nhất temple (Giáp Nhất village, Quang Trung commune), Giáp Ba palace (Phủ hamlet, Quang Trung commune), Đoàn communal house (Nhất village, Quang Trung commune), Thông Khê palace (Thông Khê village, Cộng Hòa commune), Bồi La communal house (Bồi La village, Cộng Hòa commune), Võng Cỏ temple (Võng Cỏ village, Đại An commune), Trung Linh temple (Trung Linh village, Đại An commune), Thiện Đãng temple (Thiện An village, Đại Thắng commune), Thi Liệu temple (Thái Hưng village, Đại Thắng commune), Vũ Hầu temple (Tiên hamlet, Đại Thắng commune), Hồ Sen temple (Hồ Sen village, Vĩnh Hào commune), Vĩnh Lại temple (Vĩnh Lại village, Vĩnh Hào commune), Trạng Lường – Lương Thế Vinh temple (Cao Phương village, Liên Bảo commune), Hồ Sơn pagoda (Hồ Sơn village, Liên Minh commune), Hướng Nghĩa communal house (Hướng Nghĩa village, Minh Thuận commune), Văn Chỉ communal house (Phú Thứ village, Tam Thanh commune), Phạm communal house (Phạm village, Trung Thành commune), Hậu Nha pagoda (Hậu Nha village, Hiền Khánh commune), Vụ Nữ temple (Vụ Nữ village, Hợp Hưng commune), Đông temple (Quả Linh village, Thành Lợi commune), Bách Cốc temple, Cốc Thành village, Thành Lợi commune, An Nhân temple, An Nhân village, Thành Lợi commune.

- In Ý Yên district: Quảng Cung palace (Tiền Thắng village, Yên Đồng commune), Ngạn temple (La Ngạn I village, Yên Đồng commune), Đồi temple (Đồi village, Yên Đồng commune), Ông Cầu temple (hamlet 28, Yên Đồng commune), Sú palace, Lũ Phong village, Yên Ninh commune, Ninh Xá temple, (Ninh Xá village, Yên Ninh commune), Trục Mỹ palace (Trục Mỹ village, Yên Cường commune), Tổng Xá palace (Tổng xá village, Yên Cường commune), Mẫu palace (Nhân Lý village, Yên

Cường commune), Nội Thôn pagoda (Nội village, Yên Phong commune), Kim Trang pagoda (Trang Khu village, Yên Phong commune), Phúc Lâm pagoda, Yên Phong commune), Ninh Thôn pagoda (Ninh Thôn village, Yên Phong commune), Lưu Ly pagoda (Phú Giới village, Yên Phong commune), Bồng Quĩ pagoda (Bồng village, Yên Phong commune), Bích Phúc pagoda (Hung Xá village, Yên Phong commune), Phú Giáp communal house (Phú Giáp village, Yên Phong commune), Uy Bác palace (Uy Bác village, Yên Khang commune), Hòa Cự palace (Hòa Cự village, Yên Khang commune), Quảng Mạnh palace (Quảng Mạnh village, Yên Khang commune), Cát Đẳng palace, Cát Đẳng village, Yên Tiến commune), Đẳng Chương palace (Đẳng Chương village, Yên Tiến commune), Văn Tiến palace (Văn Tiến village, Yên Tiến commune), Cộng Hòa palace, Cộng Hòa village, Yên Tiến commune), Đông temple (Đông Hưng village, Yên Tiến commune), Mẫu palace (Thanh Khê village, Yên Lợi commune), Vạn Điểm pagoda (ward D, Lâm town), Thanh Lịch pagoda (Ward E, Lâm town).

Synthesis of the above listing indicates that, in Vụ Bản district, people have been practising Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in 5 pagodas, 19 temples, 5 communal houses, 3 sanctuaries and 8 palaces; in Ý Yên district, people have been practising Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in 9 pagodas, 12 temples, 1 communal house, 26 palaces and 2 shrines.

Survey results for locations of remaining districts of Nam Định province are as follows: In Nam Định city, 4 communes/wards have four temples and one communal house practising the Mother Goddess worship;

For the following districts, Beliefs of the Mother Goddesses is practiced in the following places:

In Mỹ Lộc district, three communes have seven palaces, five temples and two communal houses; In Nam Trực district, there are 18 communes/ towns have 71 palaces, 5 temples, 2 shrines and 3 pagodas ; In Trực Ninh district, there are 4 communes have 7 palaces and one temple; In Xuân Trường district, there are 10 communes/towns where 5 palaces, 3 temples, 22 shrines, 1 pagoda, 5 joss- houses; In Giao Thủy district, there are 3 communes have 3 palaces, 1 temple, 3 pagodas and one shrine; In Hải Hậu district, there are 24 communes/towns have 14 palaces, 17 temples,

6 shrines, 10 pagodas and 2 joss- houses; in Nghĩa Hưng district have been practising Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms.

According to the survey and inventory of the sites relating to Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in Nam Định province conducted by researchers of Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies and Nam Định Museum, as of March 2014, there are 100 communes/wards/towns where Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms is practised in 130 palaces, 67 temples, 30 shrines, 10 communal houses, 36 pagodas, 10 joss- houses and 3 other locations. The total number of locations for practising Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms is 288.

b. Owners of Cultural heritage

The subject of cultural heritage in the creation, practice, safeguard and promotion of Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in Nam Định includes the community and individuals in specific cultural and spiritual spaces.

- *Community*: The survey found that the owners of the heritage associated with Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms is villages (villages/hamlets, resident areas). In the last ten years, Songs for the Spirits singing clubs, groups of spirit possession mediums and adherents from different localities have been created. According to the statistics gathered, at present in Nam Định province, the community of 100 communes/wards/towns in 10 districts, in which the villages/hamlets/residential areas directly practise Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms, is considered as cultural heritage.

- *Individuals*: The individuals who practise Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms can be divided into two groups as follows:

+ The first group makes up majority and practise the rituals and festivals as individuals, with varying frequency and depending on the spiritual demands or events in need of the Mother Goddesses' and spirits' help and support as well as time and economic conditions.

+ The second group includes professional and regular practitioners of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms with different roles and functions (ritual practice, singing Songs for the Spirits, mediumship, playing instruments for singing Songs for the Spirits,...). The practitioners in Nam Định province are shown in the following statistical table:

**THE NUMBER OF PRACTITIONERS OF “VIỆT BELIEFS IN THE MOTHER GODDESSES
OF THREE REALMS ” IN NAM ĐỊNH PROVINCE
(As of February, 2014)**

| No | District, City | Number of Practitioners | Activities practised | | | | Organizers | | |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| | | | Spirit Medium | Spirit Medium's Assisstant | Singers of the Songs for the Spirits) | Musicians | G r o u p | Clu b | Freelance |
| 1 | Nam Định city | 5 | 2 | | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | |
| 2 | Vụ Bản district | 58 | 40 | | 58 | 31 | 3 | 24 | 41 |
| 3 | Mỹ Lộc district | 27 | 10 | | 15 | 6 | 5 | 2 | |
| 4 | Ý Yên district | 50 | 14 | | 19 | 12 | 2 3 | 17 | 8 |
| 5 | Nam Trực district | 127 | 59 | | 60 | 42 | 4 5 | | 77 |
| 6 | Trực Ninh district | 86 | 59 | 15 | 22 | 20 | 2 2 | 10 | 24 |
| 7 | Xuân Trường district | 49 | 37 | 1 | 20 | 13 | 2 4 | 2 | 23 |
| 8 | Giao Thủy district | 13 | 9 | | 4 | 4 | 2 | | 11 |
| 9 | Hải Hậu district | 39 | 16 | | 23 | 20 | 1 1 | 6 | 22 |
| 10 | Nghĩa Hưng district | 31 | | | 21 | 13 | | 31 | |
| Total | | 485 | 246 | 16 | 245 | 162 | 1 3 7 | 93 | 206 |

Survey, inventory and statistics in two largest centers of the Mother Goddess worship in Nam Định province list individuals who perform in Vụ Bản district.

**LIST OF PRACTITIONERS OF
"VIỆT BELIEFS IN THE MOTHER GODDESSES OF THREE REALMS"**

| No | Full name | Age | Home address Telephone number, email) | Activities | Performing Venue | Amount of old songs known | Transmitting (Yes or No) | Organizer | Musical instruments played (Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum, castanets...) |
|----|------------------|-----|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 1 | Trần Viết Trường | 48 | 0912828182 | Musician, singing, cadence | Tiên Hương palace | 50 songs | Yes | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum, castanets |
| 2 | Trần Viết Hưng | 34 | 0914845304 | Musician, singing, cadence | Tiên Hương palace | 45 songs | Yes | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, castanets |
| 3 | Hà Đình Bình | 34 | 0948779366 | Musician, drumming, singing | Tiên Hương palace | 44 songs | Yes | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 4 | Trần Ngọc Tuấn | 34 | 0915303827 | Musician, drumming, singing | Tiên Hương palace | 43 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 5 | Trần Xuân Tú | 31 | 0912171797 | Musician, drumming, | Tiên Hương palace | 45 songs | Yes | Thiên Hương | Vietnamese two chord |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|----------|-----|--------------------|---|
| | | | | singing | | | | palace | guitar, drum, castanets |
| 6 | Trần Thị Khanh | 44 | 0125594690 2 | Singing, cadence | Tiên Hương palace | 38 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Cadence, castanets |
| 7 | Trần Văn Thao | 34 | 0973973589 | Singing, cadence | Tiên Hương palace | 39 songs | Yes | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, cadence, castanets |
| 8 | Phạm Văn An | 29 | 0915950123 | Singing, cadence, drumming | Thiên Hương palace | 41 songs | Yes | Thiên Hương palace | Drum, castanets |
| 9 | Trần Ngọc Hùng | 32 | 0948343120 | Singing, cadence, drumming | Tiên Hương palace | 43 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, castanets |
| 10 | Trần Công Tú | 20 | 0915091404 | Singing, cadence, drumming | Tiên Hương palace | 40 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, castanets, drum |
| 11 | Trần Văn Thuyết | 50 | 0912627854 | Singing, cadence, drumming | Tiên Hương palace | 38 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Drum |
| 12 | Nguyễn Hữu Mong | 27 | 0350350258 7 | Singing, cadence, drumming | Thiên Hương palace | 38 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Drum, castanets |
| 13 | Trần Văn Tiến | 25 | 0912921887 | Singing, cadence, | Tiên Hương palace | 37 songs | | Thiên Hương | Drum, castanets |

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|----|---------------------|----|--|--|----------------------|-------------|-----|--------------------------|---|
| | | | | drumming | | | | palace | |
| 14 | Trần Văn Thịnh | 18 | 0946766366 | Singing, cadence, drumming | Tiên Hương palace | 37 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Drum, castanets |
| 15 | Trần Quốc Cường | 26 | 0919556388 | Singing, cadence, drumming | Tiên Hương palace | 37 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Drum, castanets |
| 16 | Chu Văn Lân | 59 | 0912138347 | Playing the flute, Vietnamese two chord guitar, castanets | Tiên Hương palace | 42 songs | Yes | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar , flute |
| 17 | Trần Việt Nghĩa | 31 | 0913099808 | Musician, singing, cadence | Phủ Tiên Hương | 40 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 18 | Huỳnh Văn Dũng | 48 | 0975435989 | Musician, singing, cadence | Tiên Hương palace | 43 songs | Yes | Thiên Hương palace | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 19 | Phạm Thị Hường | 34 | 0988783835 | singing, cadence | Tiên Hương palace | 40 songs | | Thiên Hương palace | castanets |
| 20 | Bùi Văn Quang | 45 | Kim Thái commune- Vụ Bản district | Singing Songs for the Spirits | Công Đồng temple | 36 songs | | | |
| 21 | Nguyễn Thị Thành | 40 | Kim Thái coomune- Vụ Bản | Singing Songs for the Spirits | Công Đồng temple | 36 songs | | | |

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|----|----------------|----|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------|----------|-----|-----------------------|--|
| | | | district | | | | | | |
| 22 | Lê Văn Phụng | | Ý Yên district- Nam Định province | All activities | Mẫu Thượng temple | | | | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 23 | Trần Thị Vũ | | Hamlet 2 - Kim Thái commune | Musician | Mẫu Thượng temple | | | | |
| 24 | Trần Giang Nam | | Hamlet 2 - Kim Thái commune | Musician drumming | Mẫu Thượng temple | | | | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 25 | Trần Thị Dân | | Hamlet 3 - Kim Thái commune | Musician, drumming | Mẫu Thượng temple | | | | Drum |
| 26 | Trần Thị Hương | | Hamlet 2 - Kim Thái commune | Castanets, Vietnamese two – chord fiddle | Mẫu Thượng temple | | | | Drum |
| 27 | Trần Thị Việt | | Hamlet 3 - Kim Thái Commune | Castanets, Vietnamese two – chord fiddle | Mẫu Thượng temple | | | | Drum |
| 28 | Trần Văn Dung | 27 | Xóm 4 - Kim Thái | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits | Bà Châu Đệ Tứ palace | 36 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar, percussion, flute |
| 29 | Trần Văn Thiều | | Kim Thái commune - | Hát văn Singing Songs | Giếng temple | | | | Vietnamese two chord |

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|----|----------------|----|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|----------|-----|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | | Vụ Bản district | for the Spirits, Musician | | | | | guitar, percussion, flute |
| 30 | Trần Văn Nam | 37 | Hamlet 4 - Kim Thái commune | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits | Mẫu temple | 36 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Drum, castanets |
| 31 | Trần Văn Dương | 27 | Nam Trực district - Nam Định province | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits | Đông Công temple | 36 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar, flute |
| 32 | Trần Thị Thủy | | Hamlet 1 - Kim Thái commune | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits | Quan lớn temple | 36 songs | Yes | Group of Mrs Tám | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 33 | Trần Thị Oanh | | Hamlet 4 - Kim Thái commune | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits | Quan lớn temple | 37 songs | Yes | Group of Mrs Tám | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 34 | Trần Ngọc Diệp | | Xóm 4 - Kim Thái | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits | Quan lớn temple | 37 songs | Yes | Group of Mrs Tám | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 35 | Trần Ngọc Hân | 37 | Kim Thái commune- Vụ Bản district | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits | Nguyệt Du palace | 30 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 36 | Trần Thế Lợi | 38 | Kim Thái commune - Vụ Bản | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits | Nguyệt Du palace | 18 songs | | Nam Định Hát | Drum |

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|----|----------------|----|---------------------------------------|---|------------------|----------|-----|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | district | | | | | văn club | |
| 37 | Phạm Văn Cường | 30 | Kim Thái commune- Vụ Bản district | Drumming | Nguyệt Du palace | 9 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 38 | Nguyễn Văn Nam | 40 | Kim Thái commune - Vụ Bản district | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Nguyệt Du palace | 25 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 39 | Trần Đức Văn | 41 | Nam Định city | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 20 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 40 | Lê Thanh Hiền | 55 | Nam Định city | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 21 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 41 | Trần Văn Nam | 40 | Kim Thái commune - Vụ Bản district | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 21 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 42 | Phạm Văn Dương | 30 | Kim Thái commune- Vụ Bản | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 21 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |

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|----|------------------|----|------------------------------------|---|----------------|----------|-----|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | district | | | | | văn club | |
| 43 | Trần Duy Hưng | 30 | Nam Định city | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 21 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum |
| 44 | Trần Xuân Luân | 55 | Vân Cát village - Kim Thái commune | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 21 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Castanets |
| 45 | Trần Thị Ninh | 50 | Vân Cát village- Kim Thái commune | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 21 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 46 | Trần Xuân Quân | 30 | Vân Cát village - Kim Thái commune | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 15 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Castanets |
| 47 | Đoàn Xuân Kiên | 30 | Nam Định city | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 15 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Castanets |
| 48 | Nguyễn Đức Cường | 35 | Nam Định city | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 20 songs | | Nam Định Hát | Vietnamese two chord guitar, |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|------------------------------------|---|----------------|----------|-----|-----------------------|---|
| | | | | | | | | văn club | castanets |
| 49 | Giáp Văn Cử | 55 | Nam Định city | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 30 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar, flute, Vietnamese two chord fiddle |
| 50 | Bùi Như Hùng | 32 | 0912432152 | Hát văn Singing Songs for the Spirits, playing | Giáp Ba palace | 12 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 51 | Vũ Xuân Toàn | 29 | Kim Thái commune - Vụ Bản district | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Bóng palace | 36 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 52 | Nguyễn Văn Nam | 40 | Kim Thái commune - Vụ Bản district | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 36 songs | Yes | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 53 | Phạm Quang Diệm | 30 | Kim Thái commune - Vụ Bản district | Hát văn (Singing Songs for the Spirits) | Vân Cát palace | 36 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 54 | Trần Ngọc Thuần | 40 | Kim Thái - Vụ Bản | Hát văn (Singing Songs | Thiên Hương | 36 songs | | Nam Định | Vietnamese two chord |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--------------------|----|---|---|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| | | | | for the Spirits), playing Vietnamese two chord guitar | palace | | | Hát văn club | guitar, castanets |
| 55 | Trần Xuân Cường | 39 | Kim Thái commune - Vụ Bản district | Singing Songs for the Spirits, playing Vietnamese two chord guitar | Thiên Hương palace | 36 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Vietnamese two chord guitar, castanets |
| 56 | Trần Văn Lãng | 44 | Kim Thái commune- Vụ Bản district | Singing Song for the Spirits | Đức Vua temple | 36 songs | Transmittin g for children | | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 57 | Trần Thị Hương | 40 | Kim Thái commune- Vụ Bản district | Musician, Drumming | Đức Vua temple | 36 songs | Transmittin g for children | | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 58 | Vũ Xuân Toàn | 29 | Kim Thái commune- Vụ Bản district | Singing Songs for the Spirits | Bóng palace | 30 songs | | Nam Định Hát văn club | Drum |
| 59 | Trần Thị Huệ | 50 | Kim Thái commune | Medium | Tiên Hương palace | 50 songs | Yes | Incense | |

Listing of individual performers in Ý Yên district:

Sample 2

**LIST OF PRACTITIONERS OF
"VIỆT BELIEFS IN THE MOTHER GODDESSES OF THREE REALMS"**

| No | Full name | Age | Home address Telephone number, email) | Activities | Performing Venue | Amount of old songs known | Transmitting (Yes or No) | Organizer | Musical instruments played (Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum, castanets...) |
|----|-----------------|-----|---|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 1 | Đỗ Thị Ký | 47 | Đ10 - Đồng Tiên - Yên Cường | Spirit Possession Ritual | Temple, palace | | | | |
| 2 | Trần Thị Ngu | 58 | Tổng Xá - Yên Cường | Singing sSongs for the Spirits | Temple, palace | 36 | Yes | | Drum, castanets |
| 3 | Đình Thị Ngọc | 46 | Tổng Xá - Yên Cường | Singing song for the Spirits | Temple, palace | 36 | Yes | | |
| 4 | Trần Ngọc Thuận | 55 | Quảng Nạp - Yên Khang | Spirit Possession Ritual | Quảng Nạp palace | | | | |
| 5 | Vũ Thị Ngần | 75 | Quảng Nạp - Yên Khang | Spirit Possession Ritual | Quảng Nạp palace | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|----|-----|------------------------|--|
| 6 | Nguyễn Thị Chè | 75 | Quảng Nạp - Yên Khang | Spirit Possession Ritual | Quảng Nạp palace | | | | |
| 7 | Trần Thị Mùi | 75 | Quảng Nạp - Yên Khang | Spirit Possession Ritual | Quảng Nạp palace | | | | |
| 8 | Bùi Văn Chung | 55 | Quảng Nạp - Yên Khang | Spirit Possession Ritual | Quảng Nạp palace | 36 | | | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum, castanets |
| 9 | Nguyễn Thị Hà | 48 | Văn Tiên - Yên Tiến | Spirit Possession Ritual | Văn Tiên - Yên Tiến palace | 10 | No | Group of disciples | Vietnamese two chord fiddle, drum |
| 10 | Phạm Thị Ngìn | 59 | Đông Hưng - Yên Tiến | Spirit Possession Ritual | Đông Hưng - Yên Tiến temple | 7 | No | Group of disciples | Vietnamese two chord fiddle, drum |
| 11 | Phạm Văn Thành | 52 | Đông Hưng - Yên Tiến | Spirit Possession Ritual | Đông Hưng - Yên Tiến temple | 7 | No | Group of disciples | Vietnamese two chord fiddle, drum |
| 12 | Đình Đức Dậu | 42 | Vòng village - Yên Bình | Singing song for the Spirits, playing of Vietnamese two chord guitar | Requirement-based service | 36 | Yes | Club of Ý Yên district | Vietnamese two chord guitar, mono chord, flute |
| 13 | Trần Thanh Xuân | 68 | Hamlet A – Lâm town | Musician | Dầy palace | 20 | Yes | Group | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 14 | Phạm Văn Liệu | 55 | Hamlet A – Lâm town | Musician | Sòng palce | 10 | No | Group | Vietnamese two chord guitar |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------|----|-----|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 15 | Trương Công Phòng | 60 | Trại Chùa – Lâm town | Singing song for the Spirits Hát văn | Dây palace | 36 | No | Group | Drum |
| 16 | Nguyễn Văn Đông | 49 | Long Chương - Yên Lợi | Singing song for the Spirits, playing of Vietnamese two chord guitar | Requirement-based service | 5 | Yes | Group | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 17 | Dương Thị Thịnh | 51 | Long Chương - Yên Lợi | Singing song for the Spirits, playing of Vietnamese two chord guitar | Requirement-based service | 5 | Yes | Group | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 18 | Nguyễn Văn Đạt | 25 | Long Chương - Yên Lợi | drumming | Requirement-based service | 2 | Yes | Group | Drum, wooden bell |
| 19 | Nguyễn Thị Thêm | 49 | Long Chương - Yên Lợi | Hát văn Singing song for the Spirits | Requirement-based service | 7 | Yes | Group | Castanets |
| 20 | Đỗ Văn Sơn | 35 | Bình Điền - Yên Lợi | Singing song for the Spirits, playing of Vietnamese two chord guitar | Requirement-based service | 5 | Yes | Group | Vietnamese two chord guitar, fiddle |
| 21 | Đoàn Đức Sinh | 73 | Khả Long - Yên Dương | Singing song for the Spirits, playing of Vietnamese two chord guitar | Requirement-based service | 32 | Yes | Group | All instruments |
| 22 | Đào Thị Sại | 99 | Hamlet 33 - Yên Đồng | Hát văn Singing song for the Spirits | Nấp palace - Yên Đồng | 36 | Yes | Group | Drum |
| 23 | Đào Thị Phóng | 72 | Hamlet 33 - Yên Đồng | Hát văn Singing song for | Nấp palace and other venues | nt | Yes | Group | Drum, Instrument |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|----|-----|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | commune | the Spirits | | | | | |
| 24 | Nguyễn Thị Ín | 66 | Hung Xá - Yên Phong | Hát văn Singing song for the Spirits , Spirit Possession Ritual | Requirement-based service | 72 | No | Group | |
| 25 | Nguyễn Thị Bằng | 79 | Phú Khê - Yên Phong | Hát văn Singing song for the Spirits , Spirit Possession Ritual | Requirement-based service | 72 | No | Group | |
| 26 | Nguyễn Đắc Công | 60 | Hung Xá - Yên Phong | Hát văn Singing song for the Spirits , Spirit Possession Ritual | Requirement-based service | 73 | No | Group | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 27 | Trần Văn Điều | 65 | Hung Xá - Yên Phong | Hát văn Singing song for the Spirits , Spirit Possession Ritual | Requirement-based service | 73 | No | Group | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 28 | Dương Thị Lúng | 76 | Yên Đồng - Ý Yên district | Spirit Possession Ritual | Nấp palace | 36 | No | Group of mediums | Vietnamese two chord guitar |
| 29 | Hoàng Thị Lương | 84 | Yên Trị - Ý Yên district | Hát văn Singing song for the Spirits | Nấp palace | 36 | Yes | Quảng Cung palace | Castanets |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|---------------------|--|------------|----|-----|-----------|--|
| 30 | Phạm Văn Giang | 31 | Nam Chấn - Nam Trực | Hát văn Singing song for the Spirits, playing of Vietnamese two chord guitar | Nấp palace | 30 | Yes | Group | Vietnamese two chord guitar, drum, flute |
| 31 | Nguyễn Văn Thao | 35 | Thái Bình city | Hát văn, Singing song for the Spirits, playing of Vietnamese two chord guitar | Nấp palace | 31 | Yes | | Flute |
| 32 | Hoàng Thị Ngát | 38 | Nam Toàn - Nam Trực | Hầu đồng Spirit Possession Ritual | Nấp palace | | No | Group | |
| 33 | Nguyễn Tiến Nghĩa | 51 | Huế street-Hanoi | Hầu đồng Spirit Possession Ritual | Nấp palace | | No | Group | |
| 34 | Trần Văn Hóa | 46 | Nam Giang town | Hát Văn Singing song for the Spirits | Nấp palace | | No | Group | |
| 35 | Đỗ Thị Nga | 63 | Hải Dương city | Hầu đồng Spirit Possession Ritual | Nấp palace | | No | Group | |
| 36 | Trần Thị Vân | 69 | Yên Đồng commune | Hầu đồng Spirit Possession Ritual | Nấp palace | 50 | Yes | Thủ nhang | |

The inventory table shows that in Nam Định province there is a total of 485 people directly participating in the “professional” practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms. This includes 246 mediums (hầu đồng) or 52,34%; 245 singers of Songs for the Spirits (Hát văn/cung văn) or 52,12%; 162 musicians or 34,46%, 16 assistants of medium (hầu dâng) or 3,40%. Of these people 137 belong to groups, 78 to clubs and 206 are freelance.

Along with the participants in the practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms, who mainly focus on singing Songs for the Spirits and spirit possession ritual, there are individuals from the groups of practitioners – mediums, adherents, pilgrims and musicians from neighboring areas. In Quảng Cung palace (Ý Yên), in recent years, participants also include many parishioners of the Catholic diocese in the same or neighboring villages.

c. Characteristics of heritage (forms, practice procedures, relevant cultural space, physical and moral products created in the practice of intangible cultural heritage):c.1. Occasions for activities and practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms:

- Popular occasions to practise Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms are on the first and fifteenth day of every lunar month and annual holidays (Double Five Festival, Buddhist festival in memory of all souls, farm-work initiation ceremony, harvest festival, new rice ceremony...). People participate by offering gifts to the Mother Goddesses and praying for peace and good luck.

- Birth days of spirits, sanctification or the solemnity days of the year are considered ceremonious times for beliefs of the Mother Goddesses. On those days, in addition to the usual rituals, there is always singing Songs for the Spirits and the spirit possession ritual. The temple master (male medium) performs his role on the following occasions throughout the year: Temple first-foot spirit possession ritual (after New Year’s Eve), first full moon festival (the fifteenth day of the first lunar month), beginning of summer spirit possession ritual (April), ending of summer spirit possession ritual (July), New Year’s Eve spirit possession ritual (December), and the seal closing ceremony (the 25th of December). As for the young and female mediums, there are spirit possession rituals on the feast of the spirits they follow, such as Cô Bơ feast (the 12th of June), and Quan Tam Phủ (the Third Mandarin of the Water palace (the 24th of June)... Spirit possession rituals are performed annually in March in observance of the Mother Goddess’ death anniversary and in August in observance of the Father’s (Jade Emperor, the King Bát Hải and Spirit Trần) death anniversary.

c.2. Forms of practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms:

According to the survey carried out in Vụ Bản and Ý Yên districts (January 2014), Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms of the Viet is practised to varying degrees:

The scope of the daily rituals practised throughout a community is dependent on the demands, conditions and circumstances of those individuals and groups who meet for spiritual worship. Basic worship mainly involves votive offerings and prayers in places of worship or at alters. Practitioners do not need to wear any special costumes but their clothing should reflect their lives and be clean and demure.

More devout forms of worship involve singing Songs of the Spirits and spirit possession ritual in places of worship where relics are enshrined. Many components contribute to the rituals: Rituals are performed by singers, musicians and mediums; other participants include assistants and attendants, votive offerings as conduits to the spirits, and followers.

Traditionally, in most temples and palaces which have a Mother Goddess altar, spirit possession rituals (hát hầu đồng) and singing Songs of the Spirits (hát thờ) are performed on festival days, at the spring equinox, at the beginning of month and on full-moon days. The spirit possession ritual for Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms characterizes the unique cultural identity of their most profound spiritual practise.

c.2.1. Tunes (style and way of singing) of the singing Songs for the Spirits

+ *Tunes of singing songs for the spirits*

Singing songs for the spirits uses many tunes (or called style or way of singing). The basic tunes of singing songs for the spirits include: Bỉ, Miếu, Thông, Phú, Kiều Dương, Dọc, Cờn...

+ Bỉ tune: is solemn, a prelude to the worship singing. The Bỉ tune is often in the worship singing (community or mother goddess singing).

+ Miếu tune: is very grave and poised, only used in competition singing and worship singing and taken by slanting chord and duple time.

+ Thông tune: is only for worship and competition singing, and taken by flat chord, triple time.

+ Phú tune includes Phú nói (conversational prose) (often used in worship singing, competition singing and singing at the spirit possession rituals, by flat chord and triple time); Phú Bình (only for worship singing to extol the spirits, by slanting chord and triple time); Phú Rầu is taken by flat chord but sung by duple time; Phú Dầu, Phú Dàn; Phú Hạ; Phú Chúc rượu; Phú Cửa đình; Phú Văn đàn; Phú Giày lệt; and Phú Tỳ Bà (use triple time only).

+ Kiều Dương tune includes Kiều Dương hạ and Kiều Dương thượng.

+ Dọc tune: is taken by flat chord and duple time, sung in seven-seven-six-eight word manner and the principle of borrowing and returning, if singing each verse is called one verse. If two seven-seven-six-eight word sentences are sung consecutively, it is called Dọc gói hạc or Dọc nhị cú.

+ Còn tune: Còn oán, còn xuân, còn nam (slanting chord), còn luyện and còn Huế. This tune is used to praise the beauty of spirits, còn is repeated by slanting chord and duple time, may be sung by flat chord but mostly by slanting chord.

+ Xá tune: is one of the most important tunes of singing at the spirit possession ritual (along with Còn, Dọc and Phú nói). Xá tune characterizes the goddesses in the upper area. Xá tune includes Xá bằng (prelude dance, after consideration), xá Bắc, xá Thượng, xá vào làng, xá quảng...

In addition to the above basic Xá tunes, there are also other tunes such as: hãm, nhịp một, chèo đò, chinh phụ đồng (warrior's wife), văn trình nguyên, song thất (double seven), lưu thủy (name of an old musical air), kim tiền, sai and đồn.

Besides, singing Songs for the Spirits also borrows other traditional music tunes such as ca trù, quan họ (folk songs), hò Huế (Huế songs) and tunes of ethnic minorities.

+ *Rhythm of singing Songs for the Spirits*

The cadence of singing Songs for the Spirits is very unique. Most tunes use dichotomous rhythms. Therefore, its tempo is very close to the rhythm of rice pounding. This is consistent with some researchers' viewpoint that: The Beliefs of Four Palaces appear in most resident areas of farmers in the Northern delta.

The rhythm of singing Songs for the Spirits is very plentiful and diversified based on the development of following basic rhythms:

Secondary rhythm is close to the five-drumbeat rhythm. The percussionist uses three sticks, two for small drums and one for cymbal, creating the "double".

Double rhythm: There are many variations, but all have a basic rhythm that is called "candy counting rhythm". The variant double rhythms have "mixed" rhythm and "pattern" rhythm. The following singing songs for the spirits often use double rhythm: Miếu (double rhythm), Dọc còn, Hãm, Văn, Văn đàn, Luyện tam tầng (special double rhythm)....

+ *Tune of music of singing Songs for the Spirits*

Music of singing Songs for the Spirits is very rich in tune which is corresponding to a number of sessions, showing personality characteristics of the spirit that the singing describes.

Tunes used in singing Songs for the Spirits are fairly complete, diverse and rich. Some Songs for the Spirits have combination of the two tunes making them plentiful and diversified.

The method of changing tunes in singing Songs for the Spirits is simple and usually a prelude is sung as a transition to the next tune.

+Lyrics of singing songs for the spirits:

Singing Songs for the Spirits, also known as hát vãn or hát bóng, consists of three main forms, including *hát thi* (competition singing), *hát thờ* (worship singing) and *hát hầu* (singing at the spirit possession ritual).

Competition singing is often performed by an individual singer at competitions, before a celebration, the first day of the New Year, New Year's Eve. The singer accompanied by musicians show off their talents for the enjoyment of their audience. In Nam Định Dầy palace, singing Songs for the Spirits has been organized and maintained since its restoration in 1995, however remains less popular than worship singing and singing at the spirit possession ritual.

Worship singing is performed before going into a trance, on holidays days, birthdays, and sanctification days of the spirits.

Singing at the spirit possession ritual is performed in the trance ritual when mediums incarnate the spirits of spirits. . Each spirit has its songs and each song relates the legend and virtues of the spirit being celebrated.

Singing Songs for the Spirits is a religious music genre and follows a strict performance protocol during the spirit possession ritual. Tunes, costumes, props, as well as the combination of singing and sacred dances, and the roles of performers are formally organized. The theatrical elements and setting make singing Songs for the Spirits a unique and attractive form of performance art.

The lyrics, tunes, orchestra and performance method for singing Songs for the Spirits, as well as other genres of folk music, have developed over time, attesting to the valuable and important role of singers and musicians.

In Nam Định, from the 1960's onwards, singing Songs for the Spirits occurs in two forms:

- As a (religious) ritual performed on a stage
- As a folk music genre praising the glorious Party, Great Uncle Ho, beautiful mountains, rivers, and country.

c.3.2. Procedure of practice of singing Songs for the Spirits:

Typically, there are two forms of spirit possession ritual practiced in singing Songs for the Spirits for Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms: *hầu xuôi* (forward mediumship) and *hầu ngược* (backward mediumship). The findings of the

survey show that in Nam Định singing Songs for the Spirits is performed by the forward mediumship custom. Accordingly, the order of the forward mediumship is as following: Tam tòa thánh Mẫu (Three Palaces of worshipping Mother Goddesses), Đức Thánh Trần (Trần Spirit – if under the destiny of Trần Dynasty), Tứ phủ Châu bà (Four Palaces of Ladies of Honor), Ngũ vị Quan lớn (Five Great Mandarins), Ông Hoàng (the Princes), hàng Cô (the Royal Damsels), and hàng Cậu (the boy attendants). The order of the backward mediumship is as following: Tam tòa thánh Mẫu (Three Palaces of worshipping Mother Goddesses), Ngũ vị Quan lớn (Five Great Mandarins), Tứ phủ Châu bà (Four Palaces of Ladies of Honor), Ông Hoàng (the Princes), hàng Cô (the Royal Damsels), and hàng Cậu (the boy attendants).

In a spirit possession ritual session, the singers and instrumentalists musicians invoke spirits (those who the mediums incarnate) and work as mandarins also known as *hầu mở khăn* (incarnation with the opened scarf). The mediums who only sit and listen to singing Songs for the Spirits are called *hầu trắng mạn* (incarnation without the opened scarf). Typically, Mother Goddesses only sit and listen to singing Songs for the Spirits but does not work directly. Those who follow the Đức Thánh Trần (Trần Spirit), also known as *kiều Đức Thánh*, only sit and listens to singing Songs for the Spirits and have rarely worked (*hầu mở khăn*). If the sacred dances of *kiều Đức Thánh Trần* are for expelling demons, treating diseases and healing patients, it is necessary to undertake sensational acts such as piercing through the cheeks with a pin, holding fire in mouth, cutting tongue and taking blood to apply on tissue paper. However these types of dramatic performances are now rare.

According to the 84 -year-old singer and musician Hoàng Thị Lương, in Ngọc Chấn village Yên Trị commune, Ý Yên district, spirit possession rituals, in the past, especially at time of prohibition, usually take place in the evening. He also describes spirit possession rituals as being carried out by the following people: a young/female medium, a singer (who may also be the musician), an offering medium and a disciple.

Current spirit possession rituals often include a young medium, one to three singers and instrumentalists, two to four offering mediums, a band, and many disciples.

Procedure of the spirit possession ritual is as follows:

- Preparation:

+ Temple guardians prepare the ceremony space (palace, sanctuary, temple) and necessary items for the ritual, including a vegetarian meal and meat.

+ Mediums eat vegetarian food, purify their bodies for a week in advance, and prepare their costumes.

+ Singers and musicians prepare musical instruments (drums, castanets, cymbals, etc.), and other sound equipment such as microphones and speakers.

The order, content and time of the sacred dances: the duration of the ritual depends on the content of each sacred dance; the singers and musicians will perform songs of the legend and virtues of each spirit according to the following format:

- + Step 1: Inviting the Spirit for incarnation
- + Step 2: Telling the legend and merit
- + Step 3: Praying for support from the Spirit
- + Step 4: Farewell

If the singers sing well and correctly, they will receive gifts from the gods. Everyone become ecstatic while singing and dancing, and from the good performance of singers, musicians and mediums .

d. Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and transmission of the heritage:

d.1. Existence of religious and cultural activities:

Material facilities for Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in villages were established by the community long ago in the form of communal houses, temples, pagodas and shrines. Among them, the Temples and Palaces are most respected. Relics associated with indigenous religious activities (the Mother Goddess worship, the worship of the village tutelary god) are more revered than the relics of Buddhist worship (pagodas) and Spirit Worship (communal houses). Based on the historical data sources relating to the "three lives three worlds" of the Mother Goddess Liễu Hạnh and the history of Dầy palace festival, it has been recognized that the ritual of singing Songs for the Spirits in Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in Nam Định was began in the sixteenth and the seventeenth century.

By the end of the Nguyễn Dynasty (late nineteenth century and early twentieth century), the restoration and renovation of the relics of the Mother Goddess worship (Vân Cát, Tiên Hương palaces...) or building the mausoleum of the Mother Goddess in 1938, were undertaken by everyone from the king, the mandarins to the local officials. This was the period when the ritual of singing Songs for the Spirits was thriving.

Since the August Revolution in 1945, due to limited awareness and misconceptions by the government, along with the impact of time and natural climate, many relics of worship (communal houses, temples, pagodas, shrines, palaces and sanctuaries) have deteriorated or become ruins. Relics were seriously damaged or destroyed in 1956-1957, 1961 and 1975. It was not until the early 1990's that many regions were attributed legal conditions and material facilities for restoration,

reconstruction and repair of worship places for the cultural and spiritual needs in each locality.

d.2. Transmission and teaching:

- Generally, guardianship of the content and protocol for Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms is held by elders who have directly participated in ritual practice and festival happenings. Most of them are elderly; few people understand the ritual, ritual practice and festival; some have been members of the Festival Organizing Board and Relic Management Board in villages. Direct participants in the belief practice are mainly middle age (50 or older) ; however participants in festivals are young adults (between 15 and 25 years old).

- According to the survey, there are currently 86 people who practise and teach skills related to the ritual of singing Songs for the Spirits in Nam Định province. Transmission and teaching is mainly conducted by singers and musicians. Based on the inventory results, Nam Định province currently has 240 singers and musicians, including 30 who are over 60 years old (8 in Nam Trực, 7 in Nghĩa Hưng, 6 in Ý Yên, 2 in Giao Thủy, 4 in Xuân Trường, 2 in Nam Định city and 1 in Trực Ninh). They are knowledgeable about the traditional art of singing Songs for the Spirits, but most of them are elderly and weak, so the teaching is difficult. Many of them also intend to teach their children, but very a few of them want to participate. Those who are enthusiastic about learning are taught by senior singers and musicians. . Typically, each class has only four or five students and operates for a few months, or a year; the resulting quality is inadequate. According to Hoàng Thị Lương, an 84 years old in Ngọc Chân village, Yên Trị commune, Ý Yên, five people took up training but only for three months, and now would like to practise.

Method of teaching: According to elderly singers and musicians, singing Songs for the Spirits was previously only taught to their descendants. The Đào family in Yên Đồng, Ý Yên counts six consecutive generations who performed singing Songs for the Spirits. Their famous singers and musicians include: Đào Thị Sại (1914, deceased), Đào Thị Sợi (1916, younger sister of Đào Thị Sại), Đào Thị Phòng (1942, child of Đào Thị Sại)... Other well-known families are the Nguyễn family in Xuân Tân commune, Xuân Trường district including father and son (Nguyễn Đức Hiệp and Nguyễn Thế Tuyền), father-in-law and son-in-law (Nguyễn Đức Hiệp and Bùi Văn Đông), parent's cousin – brother's son-in-law (Nguyễn Đức Hiệp and Đoàn Đức Đan) are famous singers and musicians in Nam Định. Nguyễn Đức Hiệp (1904-1979), a famous singer and musician in Nam Định is the father of Meritorious Artist Nguyễn Thế Tuyền (1939) - former official of Nam Định Chèo Association, conferred meritorious artist in 1992. In the past, the teaching method was mostly transmitted

orally. Nowadays, in addition to the face to face method of teaching and learning, students can purchase CD for self-study or learn directly from books....

F. Issues in the safeguard and development of heritage value:

F.1. Situation and positive effect of the heritage:

- To date, most of the religious and cultural activities associated with Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in 10 districts/towns/city in Nam Định have been concerned and recovered by the community in terms of tangible culture (places of worship) and intangible culture (singing Songs for the Spirits, spirit possession ritual and festivals). In most localities, the restoration of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms is contributed to and built by the community. This is best expressed in districts of Vụ Bản, Ý Yên and Nam Trực.

- Older people in the villages feel a sense of responsibility to preserve and maintain the traditions and make the effort and material contribution. Although in the late half of the twentieth century the participants in the cultural and spiritual activities in general are the elderly, since the 1990's the practitioners of the Beliefs also include young people in the villages. Participants in festivals include all ages, men and women, all occupations and positions. Survey results of participation in ritual practices and festivals in the worship relics show that 90.9% of people in the area regularly participate (directly or indirectly) in festival. Only a small percentage of people (9.1%) occasionally participate in practice rituals and festivals in the relics of the Mother Goddess worship. Therefore, the relics of the Mother Goddess worship and festival activities have attracted a lot of participants not only locals but also tourists from elsewhere.

- In the last ten years, a number of localities have restored festival activities in Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms (Giày Palace, Vụ Bản and Nấp Palace/Quảng Cung, Ý Yên district). This action has, in different forms and degrees, helped many, but especially the younger generation, understand the cultural and traditional values of the nation, especially the younger generation. And this has had a positive impact on the education relationship between schools and society in contemporary circumstances and raised awareness to safeguard historical – cultural and traditional values in the locality. From the data collected, 88.8% of interviewees say that the practice of the Mother Goddess worship and participation in the Mother Goddess festival has a positive impact on their lives, and that the practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and participation in festivals contribute to maintaining cultural traditions; 85.3% say that it is valuable to teach the younger generation "when drinking water, remember its source"; 84.9% say it serves to strengthen the village solidarity; and 86.2% say that it preserves the intangible cultural

heritage of locality. In addition, the practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and participation in festivals also helps people have a sense of well-being in their life and work.

The correlation between age of the respondents and assessment of positive impact of the practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and participation in festivals is as follows: most of the age groups said that the practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and participation in festival have positive impact on educating the younger generation "when drinking water, remember its source", maintaining the cultural traditions and strengthening village solidarity making up relatively high percentage, especially the group of people under 35 years old (90.0%), and from 36-70 years old (84.0%). When practising Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and participating in the festival, the people have a sense of well-being, with the group aged under 35 and 71 or older (80.0%), the group aged 36-70 accounted for 49.0%. For those find their work less stressful after practising Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and participating in the festival, the group under 35 years old is higher than the group aged 36-55 (37.0%) and aged 56-70 (29.6%).

- Surveys in Tiên Hương Palace and Quảng Cung Palace, which have festival activities associated with Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in two districts considered to be two centers of practice of Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms, shows that the government and the culture management authorities at all levels, though especially at commune level, have directly taken the responsibility for organizing, operating, monitoring and inspecting all phases of human and material resource preparation, rehearsal and practice, obtaining the public consensus and praise, maintaining the culture and beliefs in a sustainable manner and creating positive effects in society.

- According to statistics, 90% of public opinion supported the initial steps of the local authorities in the restoration, preservation and organization of festival associated with Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms.

- Data collected in villages show that the members of the following associations actively participate in festival activities related to Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms: highest percentage is that of the Women's Union (87.5%), secondly, the Farmers' Union (84.1%), thirdly, the local youth Union (76.3%), and Veterans' organization (49.1%). Some members of associations in surveyed areas do not actively participate in the festival activities such as Veterans' organization (38.4%), Professional association (41.4%); other clubs (34.5%). However, considering the large numbers of members who do actively participate in festival activities, it is clear that

the associations and organizations play an important role in preserving the festival of the Mother Goddess worship, especially the local Women's Union, Farmers' Union and Youth Union.

F.2. Some risks for the heritage:

- According to the survey, 85% of the villages and resident areas participating in discussions confirmed the weaknesses and limitations in collecting and recording the history of cultural and spiritual relics as well as the process of local traditional festivals (there is a decrease in the number of people who know Hán and Nôm script;, in certain localities no one knows these scripts any longer). Most methods, contents of ritual activities and traditional cultural activities in general (processions, folk games, etc) are only transmitted and practised orally. A number of elders in some villages have noted but in spontaneous manner, by personal perception, have not exchanged, supplemented and popularized in the community. The valuable intangible cultural resources that was created and practised in the past was lost, making the current cultural and spiritual activities fall into repetition, become slapdash and lose its unique and attractive identity.

- 90% of people surveyed indicated the weaknesses of government at all levels in organization and intellectual and effort investment to collect, record, publish and distribute to all members of the community the intangible cultural heritages relating to local traditional culture in general and activities of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms in particular.

- In addition to the positive impacts of practice of Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms and participation in festivals on the lives of people, some people state that the negative impacts include: 1/ Divination, superstition (36.2%); 2/ Environmental sanitation surrounding the festival (26.7%); 3/ Commercialization, gambling and games (14.7%). Other negative impacts include public order problems and discord.

- 90% of people said that the government at all levels have not been active and creative in expanding relations and mobilizing the interest from non-governmental organizations and different sectors of society in preserving, developing and promoting the value of local cultural heritage. Therefore, due to potential limitation in socialization for preserving the cultural heritage, there is not enough endorsement and heritage transmission between generations. Many relics have not been planned for restoration or reconstruction, maintenance.

- 90% of opinions suggested that the government should urgently undertake and apply the Cultural Heritage Act to meet the aspirations of safeguarding the cultural

area, landscape and space as well as intangible cultural heritage of each relic in the villages.

F.3. Ideas from community representatives on preservation and promotion of the values of "Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms":

According to survey results from 400 individuals directly or indirectly related to the religious activities (mainly practice of singing Songs for the Spirits) in two centers of the Mother Goddess worship in Nam Định province (male and female mediums, singers and musicians, relic managers, disciples and participants), the majority said that to preserve and promote the values of the Mother Goddess worship, including the rite of singing songs for the spirits, it is necessary to have synchronized collaboration between the government at all levels, research institutions and people through the following solutions:

- It is imperative to take care of, facilitate, build infrastructure between, fund restoration and reconstruction of relic system related to the practice of the Mother Goddess worship, especially the practice space of singing Songs for the Spirits.

- The authorities should develop programmes, establish clubs and classes to teach, train, provide guidance for the young singers and instrumentalists musicians who are dedicated.

- It is necessary to provide remuneration policies for the artisans who are temple guardians, young mediums, especially singers and musicians who preserve and transmit the ancient lyrics and tunes for the next generations. Providing economic support to needy folk artists enables their commitment to the art of singing Songs for the Spirits in Nam Định.

- It is advisable to organize the Festival of singing Songs for the Spirits in and outside the province; regularly open the competitions of singing Songs for the Spirits in the great centers of religious activities such as Dầy palace (Vụ Bản) and Quảng Cung (Ý Yên) on in Nam Định and centers in other provinces in the whole country, to select good singers and musicians to preserve the traditional lyrics, melodies and rhythm in Nam Định.

- The research agencies need to find out more about the historical, cultural, scientific values of the Mother Goddess worship, including the rite of singing Songs for the Spirits of the Việt in contemporary society, to promote the value of the Mother Goddess worship to the community at home and abroad.

- It is necessary to research and establish curriculum of singing Songs for the Spirits to teach this art in the Arts and Culture schools.

- It is imperative to raise awareness of the general public and all levels of cultural managers of the cultural intangible heritage to the value of "Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms" and expand exchanges with the religious heritages of other ethnic groups in multiethnic and multinational community in the present and over the long term.

With awareness for the value of Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms, 240 individual representatives of groups, clubs, and villages in Nam Định have signed their names consenting to the nomination on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

Overall, Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms, whose high point is the singing Songs for the Spirits, is an indigenous, intangible cultural heritage of unique value in the traditional cultural treasures of the Việt in particular, and multi-ethnic community of Vietnam in general. The undertaking of researching and building scientific dossier "Việt Beliefs in the Mother Goddesses of Three Realms" by Vietnamese Government for submission to the UNESCO for recognition as the representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity had unanimity among the community. Recognition by UNESCO intangible cultural heritage of humanity is right direction to preserve and promote a unique genre of folk beliefs to maintain the tradition and build an advanced Vietnamese culture deeply imbued with its national identity.

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