CHARACTERISTICS OF HÁT XẨM IN NAM PHONG MAGAZINE

Nguyễn Thị Thanh Vân

Institute of Theatre-Cinema
Hanoi Academy of Theater and Cinema

Hát Xẩm was a column in Nam Phong magazine, which published 29 Xấm songs by different authors over a 17 year period. Discussions of Hát Xẩm appeared in the “Văn Uyển,” (literature) section, one of the fixed segments of the Nam Phong magazine, along with old poetry, prose, phú (Chinese rhymed prose), văn tế (funeral oration), tứ (word), phong dao (proverb), and hát ả đào (ca trù).

This essay provides research into all 29 songs which appeared in the magazine from 1917 to 1934 and uses statistical studies, synthesis, analysis, and nghệ thuật học (artistic research) methods to uncover the characteristics and roles of these Xấm songs. The essay analyzes the content and literary linguistic forms of Xấm song that reflect not only everyday life and bad habits in the community but also changes in society generally. Hopefully, this article will contribute to the movement of promoting Hát Xẩm, formerly only associated with visually impaired artists and transforming it into a unique intellectual performing art.

Keywords: characteristics, Hát Xẩm, Nam Phong magazine.