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The Epic Space of Dam San: A Cultural Picture of the Ede Ethnic Group in Vietnam

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Abstract---This article studies the epic space of Dam San that is associated with traditional beliefs, rituals in festivals, and contexts associated with Ede's productive labor and living activities. In that context, the image of the hero Dam San is an ideal leader with strength, talent, courage, virtue, great ambitions, and great ideals, and those ideals also represent the ideals of an ethnic group. The epic space of Dam San is just like a large theme reflecting the cultural life and anchoring, transmitting traditional cultural values of the Ede ethnic group in Vietnam.

Keywords---cultural picture, the Ede ethnic group, the epic space of Dam San, Vietnam.

Introduction

Literature and art are an important part of the national culture, reflecting the cultural process in which people and social life are focus subjects, expressing people's aspirations for the true, the good, and the beautiful. "Literature is an inseparable part of the culture. It cannot be understood but the intact literary style of the whole culture of the era in which it existed. It must not be separated from other parts of the culture." (Bakhtin et al., 1990), Epic is a long narrative poem appearing very early in the literary history of the nations to praise the heroic cause of universalism and great significance to the nation at the dawn of history. The Ede's Epic is the soul of the Ede ethnic group culture and is the true product of the shifting civilization. Epic narrative poems are long-standing folklore of the Ede community and have existed through oral tradition from generation to generation. The epic of *Dam San* is a description of customs and beliefs, a social and moral lesson of the Ede people. Epic reflects the concept of the universe and the divine world, reflects the ancient Ede society, the life of an equal and wealthy community, and the traditional customs, traditions, and beliefs of the Ede people. "The epic describes the simple normal daily and working life of villages; expresses human's legitimate aspirations and dreams for a better world between people and

people, between people and the natural world, and between people and the gods, etc” .

The epic space is both a place for what can happen and a place for what has been done - then, it represents the universe, an organized world (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1982). The epic space contains the whole diverse life of an ethnic group in the memorable moments of national history. “The truly unique epics offer a picture of the national spirit as it manifests in the morality of family life, in war and peace, in needs, in art, customs, and interests, in short, it gives us a complete picture of the stages where there is consciousness and the quality of consciousness.” The epic space must be a space with a high degree of generality, an abundance of realistic description, and the ability to contain many different types of spaces. This article uses systematic, analytical, synthesis, and interdisciplinary methods to study the epic space of *Dam San*, associated with beliefs, festivals, community activities, and the epic space of *Dam San*, which is an anchor for preserving and transmitting cultural values of the Ede ethnic group.

Contents of the Study

Spiritual space – a space associated with traditional beliefs and festivals of the Ede people

The Ede think that the world has three floors: heaven, the earth, and the underground. On those three floors, some gods dominate and govern human life (Phan, 1999). In the life of every Ede person, from birth to death, he/she has to experience many indispensable rituals in the life-cycle beliefs and festivals associated with the beliefs of the community (Ngo, 2000). *Dam San* is an epic about the hero named Dam San in his struggle against the customary laws. *Dam San* is a long story with hundreds of characters, appearing all over four levels of space: in heaven, on earth, underground, and underwater, all in literature with rhyme. Furthermore, all are performed by music with different melodious tones, melodies, and rhythms. Through these works, the life of Ede village seems to come into view, with a full range of vivid manners and customs.

Space associated with traditional beliefs

In the epic of *Dam San*, the spiritual space is associated with the rituals of god and supernatural power worships and is mentioned 14 times with rituals held in the longhouse space of the village. In which, Naming ceremony (Ear-blowing ceremony) has been reflected in detail with many different rituals. Babies cry a lot when they are born, their crying makes everyone in the family extremely worried and sympathetic. Therefore, seven days after a child was born, the family would hold a Naming ceremony and an Ear-blowing ceremony. Ede people name the child by a name of a deceased person in a family or clan. These people were rich, talented and their names were still mentioned by the lineages and villagers with admiration. When the son of H'Ang (Dam San's sister) was born, he was also noisy, he cried all day and night and until morning. The family invited a midwife and a fortune teller to ask to name their child according to religious practices. During the naming ceremony, the family fully prepared offerings to worship the gods and chose a lot of names but the child cried loudly with all the names. One

day, when H'Ang slept for a day and dreamed that the god named the child Dam San and since then on the child did not cry anymore. The child asked to eat cow's liver in a brass, eat buffalo meat in a tray and drink stem wine like his previous uncle. The family prepared a ceremony of five jars of wine and a buffalo to worship the ancestors and the family prepared seven jars of wine, and a male buffalo to hold a naming ceremony for the child (Son et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2019). The family believed that when he died, Dam San's soul was reincarnated and entered into a dewdrop and the family prayed that the child will become a rich chief like his old uncle to fulfill the hero ideal of the community that is to protect and enrich the village (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007).

In the epic of *Dam San*, rituals wishing for health are not narrated in detail and meticulously, but the epic characters still experience these rituals at different stages of their lives. Wishing ceremony for health is an important ritual in the spiritual life of the Ede people. This is a ritual to show the respect and filiality of the descendants to grandparents and parents and to pray for the spirits and ancestors to protect and support their children to be healthy and successful. Worshiping ceremony for health is organized by Ede people in each stage of human life, including the following main ceremonies: Ceremony for guessing the future of the child, Ceremony of Adolescents, Ceremony of Adulthood, Praying Ceremony, Celebration of Longevity. The worshiping ceremony is performed in the order of steps: making offerings to ancestors, worshiping deities, and offering ceremony to the ceremony owner (the person being offered health). Worshiping ceremony for health is also held when the people have bad dreams or when the illness lasts for a long time and does not improve. Sometimes, this ritual is held at weddings or when the hero who defeated the enemy returns to the village, it is used to pray for the gods to give new strength "as strong as cast iron, as ductile as copper, as hard as iron" and to express human gratitude to the supernatural through the worshiping of deities: "Oh brothers and sisters near and far in the village, come to my house! This afternoon, I have to use the water to pray to the spirits for my body to be healthy. The ceremony to worship my body includes three jars of wine and a cow." (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). For Ho Nhi and Ho Bhi, because they had not proposed to Dam San, they "could not stand still, can not sit stable, the hands pounding rice pestle without agreement. Pain in the head like trembling, pain in the leg as if to break, pain in the heart like a stab, the body was weak like a chicken being pounced on by a hawk." (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). The brothers of the two girls were extremely worried so they organized a worshiping ceremony for health for the two girls. When Dam San agreed to marry the two girls, he held a very big party and invited many guests to come over and over (Tameryan et al., 2021; Lasut et al., 2021). He prepared five jars of wine and a buffalo to thank the gods, the ancestors, and the spirits of the former chiefs. He prepared seven jars of wine, a male buffalo, to worship for his health.

The Ede people always care about human health and life. They think that if people want to be healthy and successful, they must perform rituals with the gods to pray for the blessing of the gods, which, worshiping ceremony of adulthood is a very important ritual in one's life. when a boy is between 15 and 17 years old, his family will the Ceremony of Adulthood. After this ceremony, the boy will be recognized as an adult by the community, can take on the heavy work of family

and village. In the epic of *Dam San*, there are no official rituals of the Ceremony of Adulthood but it is shown through the fighting. For men, the battle is a place to show their talents, strength and a place for them to show their heroic qualities to win the “foreign aggressors”, bringing peace and happiness to the community. War is a place for the hero to prove his quality, talent, and victor on the battlefield is considered the greatest. The central character of the epic always represents the dreams and aspirations for strength, talent, and quality of the community. The heroic character in the epics is someone with pre-eminent health and talent, making great deeds not achieved by ordinary people (Propp, 1968).

The wedding ceremony is an important ritual in the life cycle ceremonies and is one of the unique cultural activities of the Ede people (Ngo, 2000). The epic of *Dam San* also reflected this “chue nue” custom (matchmaking) and detailed the wedding ceremony rituals of talented young men and women of the Ede ethnic group. Marriage not only ties a man to his wife but also a man’s gens with his wife’s gens. Once they are attached, nothing can break their relationships, even death.” (Do, 2008). The Wedding ceremony of a talented hero with beautiful and resourceful girls reflects the concept of free love, the desire for happiness. In the epic of *Dam San*, the two sisters, Ho Nhi and Ho Bhi, have reached the age of adulthood and according to the custom of the Ede, the eldest daughter has to ask for a husband to help guard the upland fields and help the wife’s family at work. Ho Nhi and Ho Bhi were informed by A Du, A Die in the dream that they had to marry Dam San so that they would not become “Servants and lackeys cleaning the floor, wiping the gongs, wiping the eaves and washing dishes for the rich.” Therefore, the two girls drove the elephants to Dam San’s house to convince him. When Dam San saw the beauty and ingenuity of Ho Nhi and Ho Bhi, he agreed to marry the two girls as wives.

The epic of *Dam San* reflected the role of the spirit to interfere with human life or to govern the customs and institutions of the society. The wedding ceremony of Ho Nhi and Ho Bhi with Dam San was held at the two girls’ families in the village and the majestic Central Highlands forest with the sound of gongs resounding. Ho Nhi and Ho Bhi’s family have prepared 5 jars of wine and a buffalo to hold an ancestral ceremony, giving thanks to the gods and praying for Dam San’s health, and prepared a blessing ceremony for the sisters of Dam San. At the wedding ceremony, the brides’ family also prepared “one male elephant to first and last cases” and cooked rice, prepared wine, and pork for Dam San’s family to enjoy (Tran & Walter, 2014; Vuong et al., 2019). The Wedding ceremony in the epic of *Dam San* has reflected the characteristics of matriarchy the pure love, and the strong desire for the happiness of the Ede boys and girls.

For Ede, having a new member is the joy and happiness not only of the family but also of the whole community. The Wishing ceremony for childbirth is often associated with the magical births of heroes. In the epic of *Dam San*, H’Ang’s pregnancy and childbirth are also very unusual. In the morning, H’Ang went to the field to cut the weed and fix the huts. She stayed for one day, one night, and one more afternoon, in the morning, she found her belly grow bigger, and her nipples become black. Then she became pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). The Ede’ wishing ceremony for childbirth expresses the desire for “a healthy delivery” and expresses the people’s

respect for the gods, ancestors, and supernatural forces regularly dominating the human life. In the epic, the wishing ceremony for childbirth was told in detail by the narrator to let the listeners know about the extraordinary strength, talent, and courage of the hero in the future.

The spiritual space in the epic of *Dam San* is also associated with funerals and the Grave-leaving Ceremony of the Ede people. The funeral of Dam San is epic and not sad, it was told by the narrator in detail from the scene of making the coffin, the funeral scene, the grave lowering scene, and the sacrifice ceremony. At the funeral, everyone celebrated the sacrifice ceremony to worship the souls of the deceased and organized party just like when he was alive. According to the Ede people, after death, people must do *Grave-leaving Ceremony* (farewell ceremony to the soul of the dead), then the soul can return to the world of the ancestors, not stay around the living people and the soul can be reborn in another life. The tomb space is a community living space associated with rituals of grave-leaving rituals and beliefs of the Ede people. The Grave-leaving ceremony in the epic of *Dam San* creates a community atmosphere imbued with the villagers' affection towards their heroes.

Space associated with the rituals in the agricultural festival

The upland field space is associated with the agricultural festival of Ede people and is conducted throughout the farming season to show the customs and practices in shifting cultivation, to thank the gods of the mountains, and to pray for a bumper crop, a well-off family, and a peaceful and beautiful village. The rituals are performed on the way to the upland fields, on the upland field, and at home. The epic of *Dam San* described the ritual of land finding and land clearing ceremonies of Ede people: This is the place where people worship the wharf and the forest for the convenient construction of a hut. (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007) The Ede working process is associated with spiritual beliefs, with the belief that the spirit will help the rice grow well and have a good harvest, this agricultural festival is held in the upland field space with the involvement of members of extended family and villagers. This festival is a community living environment of Ede people and a space where agricultural rituals are imbued with the culture, customs, and beliefs of the Central Highlands people. A spiritual space with the belief in the gods plays an important role in the festivals and rituals of the Ede people. In the epic of *Dam San*, the spirit always appears and plays a very important role in the spiritual life of Ede people with the concept that everything is spiritual [*Yang*]. It is this belief that creates the soul of Ede's epic in general and the epic of *Dam San* in particular (Van de Walle & Gunewardena, 2001; Ho, 2010).

In the worshipping ritual of the Ede people, gongs are indispensable things. This type of music has a special role in the life of the Ede people and ancient epic. The sound of gongs is the connection between the hero and the village, the community, and the powerful gods. At the hands of the hero Dam San, the sound of gongs has a soul, it's also full of power and strength: "Hit the gong so that its sound can cross the floor, come down the ground. Hit the gong so that its sound can overcome the roof, echo to the sky and spread throughout the country". In happy events, the hero would bang the gong to beat the news and called on the

villagers to join in the fun. The sound of gongs is also a rallying call, a drum signaling a battle, a song celebrating the victory, and a cry to see off the dead. All of these sounds are described as mysteriously inspired by the majestic highland mountains and become a miracle in the spiritual life of the Ede people at the dawn of history.

Earthly world space - the community living space of Ede people

The epic of *Dam San* pays attention to describe the earthly world space in the picture of the Ede ethnic group culture in a meticulous way. That space is associated with productive labor, community living space, mountain space, and fierce battlespace. In that space, the hero *Dam San* appears with perfect beauty. The image of the hero *Dam San* is an ideal leader with strength, talent, courage, and virtue, great ambitions, and ideals and those ideals also represents the ideal of an ethnic group.

Productive labor space

In the epic of *Dam San*, the community living space associated with productive labor is the upland field space. In productive labor, Ede people mainly hunt, gather, work on fields, catch fish, weave and do things collectively, so they enjoy and divide things collectively. “The group of people went in crowded, the rich were riding on elephants, and the poor were carrying baskets for fish shoveling, holding fishing nets, some carried cages and snaps to catch fish” “Children cut down trees to make huts, the older went to the forest to pick bamboo shoots and the rattan tops to cook soup. If this group went hunting, the other group would make a platform to dry the meat.” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). The workers depicted in the epic of *Dam San* are strong, healthy, and collective people. They are a large group of all members, regardless of whether they are old or young. The spirit and strength of the community are closely linked, united in labor with epic characteristics.

Production labor is a prominent space with a great social-historical significance of epics, which is praising the talents and feats of heroic characters. The achievements in labor and feats on the battlefield created a complete picture with the harmonious beauty of the hero (Propp, 1968). The productive labor space has exalted the quality of an ideal hero of the village. *Dam San* is a talented productive leader, building a prosperous and favorable life for the villagers. He led villagers to hunt in the forest, catch fish in the stream to find food “Even alligators were caught in the rock. Even water snakes have not been able to escape”. He came to heaven to bring back seeds for the villagers “One hundred people should plow, one thousand people should dig holes.” And “People see hundreds and thousands of people walking in crowds like clouds, as many as swarms of termites and ants.” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). *Dam San* and the villagers went to the jungle to clear the upland fields for cultivation, *Smuk* trees, and catching elephants “He caught the west, the elephant ran to the east, he came to the east, the elephant ran to the west.” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). *Dam San*’s process of conquering nature, tame, and ride the elephant has confirmed his strength, talent, skills, and mighty power in the fight against nature. *Dam San* and the villagers catching elephants in the forest

reflected the work of taming wild animals and conquering the nature of the Ede people. The image of the hero Dam San and the villagers in productive labor has increased the strength of the collective and community. Collectivism and community are one of the main characteristics of the epic hero *Dam San*.

Community living space

When the Ede people explore new lands to settle down, they always choose the criteria of water sources. Therefore, every village of the Ede people has a wharf, this is a clean water source, a source of water to feed the villagers. In the epic of *Dam San*, the wharf space is depicted as both realistic and lyrical. The wharf is a convergence space of all activities of the Ede people. Therefore, the wharf space also reflects the life and economy of the village “Dam San looked around the wharf where there were undulating hills and mountains in the middle of the village. How beautiful! It is the village of the rich”. The wharf space is the place where Dam San found happiness and his wife, Ho Nhi, who was kidnapped by the enemy when he and the villagers went to the forest to hunt for food, clear and burn the fields. “He searched of a dead-end knife that had fallen in the mud.” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). Worshiping the water god and the wharf is a very important ritual of the Ede people. It is one of the forms of community cultural activities that have many positive meanings in the spiritual life of the Ede ethnic group.

Fire kitchen space is an epic space associated with human emotions in daily life. The Ede people believe that the fire is sacred, the fire will dispel many unwholesome things, bring good luck and happiness, and the fire is the soul in the stilt house, is the sacred kitchen in the spiritual life. The Ede people always keep the red fire with the desire to bring fullness and happiness to their families, to love each other and the red fire is to show sincere hospitality. When the villagers organized a celebration or the New Year, they also made a large fire in the middle of the open space and they called the sacred kitchen so that the spirits could see the fire in that direction and witness and persevere for the villagers to be successful and wealthy. The fire is simple but has a profound meaning about the specific culture, associated in the daily life of Ede people with wild mountains and forests (Condominas, 1997).

The Ede village is made by coresidence, links of families of the same blood, and different lineages that create community cohesion. “We are in the same village, the same forest, the same grass, and the same house with one crossbar.” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). Therefore, the village space is a livelihood space, a residential space, and an environment for nurturing and transmitting cultural values of the Ede ethnic group (Marquette, 1998). A highlight in the Ede village living space is that people are in harmony with nature, gather together in happy crowds. This form of residence shows the community in the epic space and the Ede people consider the village as their life. The epic of *Dam San* reflects Ede’s village image which has been determined in terms of residence territory, spiritual space, and unique characteristics of the village. “The gate of the rich village is made of bamboo and female bamboo, tied with jute rope. The beneath of the rich’s fence is tied with copper wire, the above is tied with gold wire, they are glistened and dazzled the eyes”. The village space with its

characteristics reflects the ethical standards and values expressed as one of the greatest principles of community relations. Besides, the village space is also a place where Ede people organize religious activities to create communication between the earthly world and the spiritual world. In particular, the continental law is one of the most fundamental features of Ede village and it has become their flesh and blood, imbued with all behaviors of the whole community. The scope of customary law is wide and the commandments in customary law have great implications for community members. The village of the Ede ethnic group is not only a socio-economic community but also an ideological community (Nguyen & Hamid, 2016; Nguyen, 2019). The village space creates favorable conditions for individual people to express their affection and ability to associate with the community to create a symbiotic power for the community.

Mountain and forest space

The Ede people often take forests to define boundary boundaries of their village and all activities of Ede people are associated with the forest space. Forests are not only a place to live, but it is also a place to shelter and cover, and the people here see the forests as the flesh and the blood to feed their bodies (Hickey, 1982). The life of the Ede people depends on the forest with hunting and gathering activities. “The traditional political unit is the bon, which is a group of families that form a mass of population within a forest area. From this land, they seek for materials, food, dress, house, tools, but most notably, food source by catching fishes, hunting, picking wild vegetables and cultivating.” (Condominas, 1997). Forests play an important role in the cultural life of the Ede people and the forests are the performance environment for many folk art forms. In the epic of *Dam San*, mountains and forests are mentioned as a prominent feature of the art space. Familiar images in the epic of *Dam San* are the atmosphere of urgently working on the fields, the excitement of boys in hunting elephants, in big and wild forests. The image of forests is repeated many times and has a deep and rich symbolic meaning (Pham, 2012). Forests are the embodiment of immense, magnificent and the mountain and forest space is associated with the hero Dam San throughout his life from the productive labor to the fighting to protect the village. The forest is full of dangers, so the extraordinary actions of the hero are often associated with the mountain space.

Ede people think that mountain and forest space is the residence of the gods and the residence of the ancestors’ souls and the forest is a sacred forest that is the place where the customs of life and customary laws are born. In epics, the forest is a concern of the hero and the community. The image of sacred forests always appears in the thoughts and actions of the hero Dam San. Mountains and forests in the epic of *Dam San* are still imbued with the original colors, not separated from the outer space and still imbued with the power of the mystery, the intense power that dominates the people of mythological space (Pham, 2012). Besides, the epic of *Dam San*, images of animals and plants of the mountains are often used to describe the beauty of people, the agility, and extraordinary health of the hero. The beauty of the Ede girls in the epic is both concrete and abstract. “Ho Nhi is very beautiful, her face is like a new melon, just like a big young watermelon, her nails are long and sharp like bamboo shoots, her legs are smooth and shining like snakeskin, her body is flexible, her voice and laugh like the voices of bamboo and

female bamboo tubes.” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). The image of the hero Dam San with healthy beauty and agility: “He walked on the main road as fast as a prao hue snake, he walked in the grass as fast as the prao home snake. He was like a big tree.” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). Human beauty is associated with the image of the unspoiled and mysterious forests, embodying the unique aesthetic conception of the Ede people. In the epic of *Dam San*, images of mountains and forests also contribute to the beauty of the Ede people’s souls.

Battlefield space – a space that expresses the beauty of a hero in protecting the community

In the Epic of *Dam San*, the battlefield space is a place for the hero Dam San to fight against hostile forces from the outside to regain his wife, fight against the enemies to bring prosperity to his chief and villagers. When Dam San won the battlefield, the people of the defeated villagers voluntarily followed Dam San with their properties. “The villagers followed Dam San, some carried chicken cages, some carried pig, some carried cattle, and others carried jars and gongs. They left the old village to follow Dam San.” (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2007). The victory on the battlefield brought Dam San and the villagers more wealth, the people of the village were more crowded and the village’s residential land was expanded. Dam San’s strength, wealth, and reputation mainly occurred in the battlefield space, which reflects the Ede people’s vision and way of thinking about the good relationship between the hero and the community (Jones & Hagen, 1980; Anderson, 1994).

The image of Dam San winning the battlefield has shown the talent, bravery, courage, and strength of the hero. The Epic of *Dam San* does not emphasize the tragic nature of the war, does not re-represent the post-war battlefield as a gruesome graveyard, there are no mournful cries of mothers who lose their children, and wives who lose husbands. The war took place on the battlefield where only the leaders were killed and the servants and the villagers were protected. When the hero wins the battle and calls on the servant and the loser’s villagers, they will be happy and voluntarily take each other to the hero’s village. The act of winning on the battlefield reflects the hero’s personality with a longing for glory. “The end of the battle and the epic ending is the jubilant bustle with gongs, drums, wine, and meat.” (Phan, 2003), and then day by day, people only hear the sound of gongs, drums with continuous parties. The hero Dam San always has a great sense of honor and is willing to fight the enemy to protect his wife, protect the peace of the tribe and bring wealth to the village. “The war and the organization to wage war have now become the daily functions of the people.” “The war is the midwife of history.” (Phan, 2009). The wealth, strength, and prestige of the leader are also the wealth and reputation of the village. Only with a society with a community nature like Ede society in the “heroic age”, this beautiful relationship appears. That relationship creates an epic atmosphere. The strong wealth and prestige that the hero - Dam San achieved has made him “the mighty guardian.” (Niculin, 1972). The battlefield space in the epic of *Dam San* is both monumental and chaotic, and fierce. In that space, the hero is exaggerated and measured by the dimension of the universe, great and magnificent. The entire community is proud of its hero. The hero’s health and talent are the support and

hope of everyone. “The whole *Dam San* story radiates a life close to real life, but richer, more open, and farther and higher. That is the main point that makes people like to listen to *Dam San* story many times, without any satiety.” (Dao, 1959).

Conclusion

Epic is a complete picture of people’s lives in the form of telling about the heroes in the past. Central Highland epics have reflected the formation and shaping of cultural life and the development of ethnic society in the Central Highlands region. *Dam San*’s epic featured the ethnic culture and directly reflected the heroic aspirations of the early history of forming the Ede ethnic groups and the leading famous work of the oral literature of the ethnic groups living in the interior of Central Vietnam, and is still a masterpiece beyond dispute today. The epic space in *Dam San* is a large, imposing, and majestic space and is measured by the cosmic dimension associated with the development history of the Ede ethnic group. The space in the epic is manifested vividly and variously with traditional beliefs and rituals in religious practices and festivals and associated with productive labor space, living space, and cultural identity of the Ede ethnic group community. Epic space is a creative art space of the Ede people in the original time under the combination of indigenous beliefs and religions. Therefore, the epic space has become a resonant environment for heroic characters to fulfill their ideals and aspirations with the community and the epic space is an anchor for preserving and transmitting the cultural values of the Ede people. Over thousands of years of existence, the epic of *Dam San* still contains a strong attraction for readers and listeners in any place and any era.

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