

# Values Of Chinese Folk Beliefs In The Mekong Delta, Vietnam

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## Abstract

The Mekong Delta in Vietnam is one of the largest and most fertile deltas in Southeast Asia and the world. With many rivers and canals, therefore, the Mekong Delta is also a wild land with many wild animals and natural disasters: "The first half of season is dry, the rest of it is monsoon"; "When you row a boat, you are afraid of crocodiles biting your feet. When you get off the boat, you are afraid of leeches, and when you go to the forest, you are afraid of ghosts". Besides the harshness of nature, this land has flat terrain, fertile alluvial soil, and a mild climate. Therefore, this place has long been inhabited by many different ethnic groups. Since the 17th century, (the Mekong Delta) has received many ethnic groups: "Vietnamese, Chinese, Khmer, and Cham. Ethnic groups come here to make a living and bring their ethnic beliefs with them as a protection to help them stay strong in a foreign land: "When I go away, please take care of yourself and call God for help". Each ethnic group has different beliefs where the Chinese worship Ba Thien Hau, worship Duc Quan Thanh, worship Ba Quan Am, and worship Thien (with the concept: it is the river gods, the sea gods, the gods specializing in saving people at sea like Ba Thien Hau who have blessed them a lot on their long journeys to Vietnam, so the temples are often built on the riverbank, is for the gods to guard, prevent all bad luck, bring good luck and good things). All the above good cultural and religious elements need to be preserved, protected, and handed down. Experiencing hundreds of years of history, along with indigenous folk beliefs, folk beliefs of the Chinese people are becoming social consciousness, connecting the community, contributing to meeting the needs of the people's cultural and spiritual activities, and consolidating. The improve moral values, and ways of life of the Vietnamese people have practical significance for the people of the Mekong Delta.

**Keywords:** Mekong Delta, folk beliefs, ethnic Chinese.

## Introduction

The Mekong Delta has a natural area of nearly 4 million hectares, with more than 18 million people living, accounting for 19.8% of the country's population, of which the Kinh people account for more than 90% of the population; Khmer people have about 1.2 million people, accounting for 6.7% of the population; the Chinese have about 192,000 people, accounting for 1.1%; Cham people have about 15,000 people, accounting for 0.08% (General Statistics Office, 2020). The region occupies 13% of the country's area but accounts for nearly 18% of the country's population. The Vietnamese are the key ethnic group who have

discovered and laid the foundation for administrative management in the Mekong Delta. The Khmer were present very early in the Mekong Delta, they chose the high ground on the hills along the banks of the Tien and Hau rivers, relying on nature to survive. The Chinese stood side by side with the Vietnamese in the process of reclaiming land in the Mekong Delta and building this land.

The Chinese came to the Mekong Delta mainly from the provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, and Hainan at different times, including several large migrations into Cochinchina from the 17th century to the present such as the migration in 1671, of Mac Cuu (Mac Kinh Cuu), a merchant from Loi Chau,

Cantonese specializing in long-distance trade at sea, leading a Chinese immigrant group and his family to the land of Mang Kham, Ha Tien, in Kien Giang province). In 1679, a group of Chinese generals Tran Thuong Xuyen and Duong Ngan Dich from Guangdong with 3,000 men and over 50 ships came to Dang Trong to seek political asylum because they did not submit to the Manchu court because they were the subjects of the Ming Dynasty. At that time, Lord Nguyen let them into the southern land to reclaim and divided them into two groups, the group of Tran Thuong Xuyen and Tran An Binh came to settle in Tran Bien (present-day Bien Hoa). Duong Ngan Dich settled in My Tho (Tien Giang province). In the 19th century, the French created favorable conditions for the Chinese to settle in Saigon, Cho Lon.... In 1949, the Chinese Communist Party liberated China, then some Chinese went to Vietnam. In the Mekong Delta, the Chinese community uses five language groups: Cantonese, Chaozhou, Hokkien, Hainan, and Ha. The Chinese people in the Mekong Delta are mostly of Chaozhou origin. Therefore, the main language is Chaozhou (Tieu). Most of the Chinese in the Mekong Delta know Vietnamese and use Vietnamese in daily communication. Particularly in the Mekong Delta, the Chinese settle the most in the provinces: Soc Trang, Kien Giang, Bac Lieu, Can Tho, An Giang, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long, Ben Tre...

Thus, from the 17th century to the middle of the 20th century, the Chinese came to Vietnam in four large waves, by waterways and land routes. When coming to the Mekong Delta, most of the Chinese live interspersed with the Kinh and Khmer in hamlets, hamlets, or squires. The Chinese in rural areas both work as farmers and do small businesses. In the cities of Soc Trang, Tra Vinh, Bac Lieu, Ha Tien, etc., Chinese people often produce and trade goods with the appearance of a Chinese town such as ceramics, food processing, leather and footwear, and garments... grocery stores, traditional medicine, and even shrines bearing the spirituality and beliefs of the Chinese.

## Results and Discussions

### Chinese folk beliefs in the Mekong Delta

- The concept of religion. In the folk mind, people often think that "all things are animate". The Chinese believe that in addition to the existing world, there is another world, which is the world of gods and demons. This world has the power and governs the real world of people. Gods will help people, so respect them. It can be seen that when people's perception of the world and things is still limited, people cannot explain things and phenomena in nature, and society and think from a scientific perspective. The spiritual world will replace, and help people strong, and confident in a foreign land. When the ancestors came to the Mekong Delta to establish a hamlet, they brought all kinds of folk beliefs to the new land. This land, with harsh natural conditions shrouded in mystery, raging wild beasts... Therefore, it is the "land" for all kinds of folk beliefs to arise and develop. The Mekong Delta region has more than 1,230 festivals, of which, folk and traditional festivals account for nearly 70%, religious festivals account for more than 21%, historical and revolutionary festivals account for more than 8%, and the rest are festivals and events other festivals (Hong, 2010).

The Chinese set up shrines, temples, palaces, etc. to worship the gods, not only continuing the spiritual tradition in their homeland but also as psychological therapy to help people stand firm against the harsh nature in the early days of the place guest land. People rely on invisible power to stand firm in life, and belief in cause and effect to do good things; At times of extreme difficulty, they pray for help and protection. However, the nature that surrounds them is full of mysteries and often threatens their lives that they cannot explain and overcome. And, so they assumed nature with a divine power, which was personified in a very manifold and very mixed manner. Natural forces have been deified in various forms of belief.

The term creed means general belief or belief in someone or something. There are many types of beliefs, but when using the concept of belief, it means people's belief in a supernatural being with a bit of mysticism, a creator, this belief is one of the

basic and important factors constituting religion and belief.

The Vietnamese Great Dictionary defines belief as the belief and worship of a religion (Y, 1998, p.1646). Such understanding means that belief exists only in religion and also means religion.

Scholar Liu Peng (China), who is very knowledgeable about mandarin terms, said that the connotations of the concept of "religion" and "religion" are not the same. "Religion" is a concept related to theism, and "belief" is much broader, can be theism, but can also be atheism, or a concept, a form of thought some form of consciousness, perhaps even a form of thought activity in the mental realm. In "religion" has included the factor "belief", while "belief" does not include the element "religion".

Our Party determines: "Unity of people of different religions; unite religious and non-religious compatriots" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2006, p. 42). The latest legal document, the Law on Beliefs and Religions of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, promulgated on November 18, 2016, effective from January 1, 2018, defines: Beliefs are human beliefs that can, through rituals and customs, convey spiritual peace to individuals and communities. The active signal is the first work to live; soul symbols, commemorate and honor those with meritorious services to the country and the community; folk rituals represent historical, cultural, and social values. A signal festival is a religious activity that can be organized according to traditional rituals to meet the spiritual needs of the community. The grassroots faith is the place where the community's signals operate, such as communal houses, temples, shrines, family churches, and other establishments.

Although there are still many conflicting points, most scientists and managers agree:

Belief is a concept used to refer to subtle practices in folklore, polytheistic cults, not following a certain ritual (with different rituals in each region and locality); there is no guru/initiator, no doctrine, canon law, and no signal or unstable signal.

In the Main Report of the 12th Party Central Committee at the 13th National Party Congress, in building and promoting the cultural values and strength of the Vietnamese people, our Party clearly stated: "To actively promote humanities and factors in religions and beliefs. Criticize and prevent typical, superstitious, and strange expressions" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p. 144). The 13th Party Congress also oriented: "Promoting good cultural and moral values and resources of religions for the cause of national development" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p. 17). At this congress, our Party continues to emphasize valuable and ethical documents of religions. Promote "positive and humane factors in religions and beliefs" into stocks and improve social media ethics.

- Chinese folk beliefs in the Mekong Delta. Vietnam and China are two countries located adjacent to each other in terms of geographical territory, so in terms of social existence, there are basic similarities. The geographical homogeneity has facilitated the similarity in culture, belief, and religion. Vietnam is a multi-faith and religious country, therefore, to build national unity, President Ho Chi Minh always cherishes good cultural and ethical values in religious beliefs. Sharing the same cultural and religious flow of the Vietnamese people, the spirit of solidarity between people without beliefs and religions and people with beliefs and religions in the Mekong Delta is also evident when The people here have to go through many difficulties: conquering nature, drought, epidemics and always having to deal with the invading enemy forces, Kinh's village with Soc of the Khmer and Bang, the Association of the Chinese have created a strong community cohesion.

The Chinese believe there is a soul, and after death, people will be punished or rewarded depending on their actions and merits in the present life. Therefore, the Chinese have actively worshiped many gods residing in different realms, to ask for more support. When settling in the Mekong Delta, the Chinese community had cultural exchanges and acculturation, including folk beliefs, both in terms

of architecture and rituals.

The Chinese come to the Mekong Delta to make a living mainly from trade, so the Chinese in this region strongly believe in the patronage of the gods in the family as well as in the community. There are two very popular forms of traditional beliefs of the Chinese: worshipping gods in the family and clan and worshipping gods in the community as follows:

The first form, worshipping ancestors and guardian gods at home. Every Chinese family has an ancestral altar, which is placed in the most solemn place in the house. Express the gratitude of children and grandchildren to grandparents, ancestors, and deceased people. In addition to worshipping ancestors in each family, the Chinese also have a strong belief in the worship of the guardian gods for the family with the hope of peace and luck for the family. The Chinese worship Mr. Thien (worshipping Troi - Ngoc Hoang God); worshipping Mr. Dia and Than Tai; Worshipping Ong Tao (the Three Gods of God).

The second form, worshipping the gods worshiped in the community. These are the gods who protect the Chinese community in all aspects of life, such as: Worshipping Ba Thien Hau; Worshipping Quan Thanh De Quan; Worshipping Ong Bon;

The Chinese in the Mekong Delta believe that Mr. Bon is the reincarnation of the envoy Trinh Tu Hoa, and Chau Dat Quan - two Chinese ambassadors, who have created a stable life for the Chinese immigrant community. , in the Mekong Delta. Worshipping Ong Bon shows the principle of gratitude, drinking water, and remember the source of the ancestors of the Chinese in the Mekong Delta.

The cultural and religious activities of the Chinese community are held at the above religious institutions, including Lunar New Year, Nguyen Tieu, Thanh Minh, Doan Ngo, Trung Nguyen (Vu Lan), and Mid-Autumn Festival, which There are the two biggest festivals, the most typical of the Chinese people: Nguyen Tieu festival (Full moon of January) and Vu Lan festival (Full moon of July).

Some festivals are meant to pray for peace, happiness, good rain, and a good harvest, and help people remember their ancestors and grandparents who lived more harmoniously and loved each other on the land. In this case, the belief is Worshipping ancestors and guardian deities at home such as: worshipping Mr. Thien (worshipping Troi - Ngoc Hoang God); worshipping Mr. Dia and Than Tai; worshipping Ong Tao (the Three Gods of God); Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. Worshipping gods worshiped in the community such as: worshipping Ba Thien Hau; Worshipping Quan Thanh De Quan; Worshipping Ong Bon. Specifically: Worshipping ancestors and guardian deities at home.

Thien Altar: Heaven is worshiped by the Chinese as the Jade Emperor of God, a leading deity among the gods who have the power to govern and decide earthly affairs as well as human fate. The altar of God and Buddha is in front of the courtyard of the house in the countryside", in front of the houses in the city, it is a small train, inside there are 4 words (heaven's blessing) including a bowl of incense, a small vase of lilies. water container. Thus, the Thien table is God's altar. In the Mekong Delta, the form of worshipping God is represented by the Thien table placed in front of the house - the place where people's wishes are sent to the high heavens. This is an early form of human belief when working in agriculture, with the wish that heaven will give favorable rain and wind, to have a bountiful harvest and a full and prosperous life. The Thien altar has a very special meaning when the Chinese community is wandering in a foreign land, with many silent worries, the Chinese community sends peace, favorable rain, peaceful wind, and good harvests. bountiful to the high heavens. "May the rain and wind be favorable for you / Let the rice plant bloom, let the cassava bloom".

The Chinese altar of Thien is now popular in Vietnamese families in the Mekong Delta. The process of coexistence with other ethnic communities Kinh, Khmer, Cham ... Chinese culture has penetrated, integrated, received, and exchanged with the cultures of the Vietnamese ethnic community. That process has helped the ethnic groups to better understand the Chinese and

the Chinese to understand more about the communities. Since then, the solidarity relationship between the Chinese and other ethnic groups in the Mekong Delta has become stronger and stronger, together building this land to become richer and stronger.

The custom of worshipping Ong Dia - God of Wealth. The Chinese attach great importance to Mr. Dia - Than Tai because most of them live by trade and handicraft production. The Mekong Delta originates from the process of contact and cultural acculturation of the Vietnamese with the Chinese community. Ong Dia is considered to be the god who looks after the land where the homeowner's house is located, he is a blessing to prevent evil spirits from entering the house. The God of Wealth is considered the god of fortune and good luck in trading and earning a lot of profit. The two gods are often worshiped together in a shrine on the floor, inside there are two statues. In Vietnamese culture, there are land gods with different names such as Tho Dia, Tho Than, Tho Cong, Ong Dia... Which, the image of Ong Dia in the South has brought the abstract concept of Tho God into one specific image and imbued with the culture of the Mekong Delta.

When the Chinese migrated to the Mekong Delta, in Vietnamese culture there was a god of the land, and in Chinese culture, the god of land was also a god of fortune. Therefore, the Vietnamese have accepted the image of the Chinese people, but only accepted the function of the god of fortune. Entering Vietnamese culture, the image of an old man with a long and silver beard, wearing a mandarin uniform, wearing a crown, holding a gold bar in his hand... is called the God of Wealth by Vietnamese people, not Tho Dia as in the original. After the Vietnamese adapted, forming the unique image of Ong Dia - God of Fortune in the Mekong Delta, the Vietnamese and Chinese communities also influenced each other in the form of worship. The Chinese are influenced by the Vietnamese in worshipping Ong Dia with items such as fruit, coffee, tobacco, and even grilled snakehead fish. In contrast, the Chinese think that Tho Than likes to eat garlic, so when Worshipping Ong Dia has the

custom of offering garlic, which is also accepted by the Vietnamese. In addition, the Chinese shrine for Ong Dia - God of Wealth also has a tablet or glass picture written in Chinese characters with the content "Five Phuong Ngu Tho Long Than - Former Hau Land Lord Tai Than". This form later influenced the Vietnamese. Worshipping the god of the land and the god of fortune is a common phenomenon in many ethnic groups around the world, especially in agricultural cultures, including Vietnam with diversity in beliefs and practices. In Vietnamese culture, Ong Dia - Than Tai is the result of the process of intercultural exchange and the communities have skillfully handled it in a harmonious way to accept each other's good values. Through the belief of Ong Dia - God of Wealth, ordinary people send simple dreams in daily life, hoping to be protected and blessed by the gods.

The custom of worshipping the Tao, the Book of Vietnam, and the customs of Phan Ke Binh also records: The twenty-third of December is the New Year of the Tao Army. I usually consider that day to be the day when the kitchen king ascended to the heavens. Originally in Lao Tzu's religion, it was said that: On the twenty-third of the 12th month, the Tao Army ascends to the heavens to report the good and evil deeds of the world. I followed that rule, so on that day, I bought two hats for him and one for her to worship and bought a carp to make a horse for the Tao Quan to go to heaven.

Bep is an indispensable belief in Vietnamese life. Ong Tao or God Bep is a god commonly worshiped in every Vietnamese family in general and in the Mekong Delta in particular. This custom is closely related to ancient fire-worshipping beliefs, or in other words, Ong Tao's custom is a concretized form of fire-worshipping beliefs of early humans.

The custom of worshipping the gods worshiped in the community. The worship facilities of the Chinese community in the Mekong Delta are commonly called "Flower Pagoda", "Ship Pagoda", "Ba Pagoda", "Ong Pagoda"... ", "palace", "palace". etc. such as "Thien Hau Thanh Mau", "Thien Hau Cung"... The custom of worshipping Thien Hau as the mother god of the community was

formed in the Bo Dien area, Fujian, and later expanded all over the world. coastal areas of South China, Taiwan, and the lower reaches of the Yangtze River and spread throughout the world. According to "Dai Nam Nhat Thong Chi": the "Temple of Thien Hau", has the talent to call the rain, call the wind, and used to fly to the sea to help ships in distress. Thien Hau understands astronomy, meteorology knows hydrology, and predicts weather changes, merchant ships or fishing boats in that area are often indicated for relief. When the Chinese sailed across the sea, Lord Nguyen allowed them to settle down in the Mekong Delta, to commemorate the merits of Thien Hau for saving boats in distress that were caught in the middle of the sea by strong waves and wind. Therefore, the worship of Thien Hau's mother is also understandable. In the Mekong Delta, there are many places to worship Thien Hau to remember her help when the Chinese sailed across the sea. In Sa Dec city, Dong Thap province, there is a Ba Thien Hau pagoda of the Fujian group, in Vinh Long, a Thien Hau pagoda was built by the Cantonese Chinese community, in Rach Gia, there is a Ba pagoda of the Hainan, Guangdong group... It can be seen that in the big and small cities and towns of the Chinese in the Mekong Delta, almost every place where the Chinese live, there is a Ba pagoda. The 23rd day of the third lunar month, every year is the day of Ba's life, the Chinese people often gather in large numbers at to "Ba temple" to celebrate and celebrate.

Thien Hau shrines are named in many different forms, such as Thien Hau palace, Thien Hau temple, Ma To the temple, Ma To, Thanh Mau temple, etc. rustic, idyllic times (such as peace, happiness, fortune, accidents, etc.), of local communities. Thien Hau is a symbol with a rich system of meanings but focuses mainly on the meaning of the sea god, the god who gives blessings. However, the values of this custom will change depending on the object - the community worshipping Ba Thien Hau. For example: In May of the year Nham Ngo (1882) there was a big epidemic in Vinh Long. In the face of a critical situation, the two states of Quang and Trieu together went to Cho Lon to ask Thien Thai Hau Nguyen Quan to come to the rescue, and then for many reasons, the epidemic was extinguished.

Also in Bac Lieu Phuoc Duc Co Temple or (Pagoda Bang), also known as Bon Dau Cong (Ong Bon), Quan De, Than Nong, Tho Cong, Mr. and Mrs. Cong Mau, etc. Also because Ong Bon is the main worshiper, it is called the "Temple of Ong Bon"; It was later changed to "Phuoc Duc ancient temple" because the Chinese believed that Bon Dau Cong was also Phuoc Duc chief god - a god who was considered to have openly reclaimed land and supported people to have a good fortune. peaceful life in the new land.



Figure Phuoc Duc Co Mieu - Bang Pagoda (74 Dien Bien Phu Street, Ward 3, Bac Lieu City - Internet Source)

In Tra Vinh province, the Chinese reside scattered but have a certain concentration in Tra Vinh City, Cau Ke district, and Tra Cu district. Here, Chinese beliefs exist for hundreds of years, creating their national cultural nuances and contributing to the cultural identity of the Tra Vinh people. In particular, the most prominent is the worship of Ong Bon (the high deity in charge of settling down and settling down). The legend of Ong Bon when he returned to Cau Ke land has a certain change compared to the original of the Chinese people. To remember the merits of the ancestors who went to reclaim and open the realm of the Chinese people in this land to worship the four sworn brothers. In which, Minh Duc Cung (Going Lon pagoda, Hoa An commune, Cau Ke district) worships Mr. Nhut; Van Ung Phong Cung (Church between, Hoa An commune, Cau Ke district) worships Mr. Nhi; Van Nien Phong Cung (Cho temple, Cau Ke town) worships Mr. Ba and Nien Phong Cung (Cay Sanh temple, Tam Ngai commune, Cau Ke district) worships Mr. Tu. According to the ancients, they were all credited with bringing the first generation of Trieu Chau people to migrate to this land along the Hau River, when they died, they were all saints. It can be seen that the object of worshipping Ong Bon of the Chinese people in Tra Vinh no longer has the same meaning as before. When they settled in the Mekong Delta, they were transformed by the

Chinese into ancestors of skin, and flesh, and Migration to a new land, creating a prosperous life for the Chinese community in Tra Vinh.

Worshipping Quan Thanh De Quan also known as Quan Cong, a figure in ancient Chinese history, whose real name is Quan Vu, the nickname is Quan Van Truong. Quan Cong is the embodiment of the good qualities of a macho personality, loyalty, filial piety, and filial piety. He is considered a person of faith, so he is respected and revered by the Chinese as a saint. Everywhere there is a Chinese community, it is called Quan Thanh Temple or Ong Pagoda. Quan Cong's death day is on the 24th day of the 6th lunar month, in addition, on the full moon day of the first month, the Chinese make a solemn ceremony to worship him. Wherever there are a large number of Chinese living, they all set up an Assembly Hall to worship him as the embodiment of their temperament and way of life. The Chinese also think that Quan Thanh De Quan is the guardian deity of the man in the family, living a miserable life in a foreign land. Beliefs brought from home combined with indigenous beliefs were come to life to enrich the spiritual life of the Chinese. In the Mekong Delta, when the Chinese came to this land, they settled with respect for their loyalty and heroic spirit. They carry the image of a saint with good qualities to worship, in the hope that Quan Thanh

De Quan will bring luck, good luck, and protection to the man in a foreign land. Quan Thanh De Temple is not only a place where a large number of Vietnamese - Chinese people come to worship but also a place to mark the settlement and development of the Chinese in the Mekong Delta.

It can be said that in addition to the beliefs of the Chinese community in the Mekong Delta, there are other shrines and deities such as Ngu Hanh Niang, the Twelve Pregnant Mothers, Confucius, Lao Tzu, etc. In addition to the main spiritual holidays, on special occasions, Tet, the full moon, and the first day, Chinese people gather quite a lot to worship and pray at temples and pagodas.

### **Values of Chinese folk beliefs in the Mekong Delta**

In the Party's documents, the view is always consistent: Belief and religion are a spiritual need of a part of the People who are and will exist with the nation in the process of building socialism in our country. Religious compatriots are part of the great national unity bloc. The Platform for National Construction in the Transition to Socialism in - a document with the highest legal value of the Communist Party of Vietnam also clearly states: Respect and ensure the People's right to freedom of belief and religion and non-belief and religion by law. To fight and strictly handle all acts of violating freedom of belief and religion and taking advantage of religious beliefs to harm the interests of the Fatherland and the People. As can be seen, beliefs in the Mekong Delta have typical values:

First, contribute to preserving and building a love for the homeland and country. Beliefs and culture of the Chinese people in the Mekong Delta, not only meet the cultural and spiritual needs of the people but also contribute to consolidating and building the great national unity block as well as building the build and defending the country. The festival not only helps people in the Mekong Delta express their gratitude to generations of their ancestors who have reclaimed and established hamlets but also reminds people of their responsibility to preserve and build a love for their homeland and country. Therefore, patriotism

becomes "the focus of the focal points, the values of the values" as "the greatest emotional driving force of the nation's life, and at the same time the highest ladder in the system of moral values virtue of our nation" (Hanh, 2013). When the French colonialists invaded, witnessing the cowardice of the Nguyen Dynasty, the people of the Mekong River Delta resolutely joined the uprising movement, fighting against the French invaders to protect the homeland, led by soldiers patriotic husbands Truong Dinh, Nguyen Huu Huan, Nguyen Trung Truc, Do Thua Luong, Do Thua Tu... leaders After 1945, the French colonialists returned to invade the South, and the comprehensive resistance war against the French colonialists attracted a large number of compatriots to participate. Through the Association of Solidarity of Patriotic monks and nuns, in the Mekong Delta, many examples have appeared against the French people and the American imperialists.

Second, promote a strong sense of national unity Kinh - Khmer - Hoa- Cham. The tradition of community solidarity and cohesion of the people of the Mekong River Delta is more clearly demonstrated when the homeland has to go through many difficulties: conquering nature, drought, disease and always having to cope with invading enemy forces. When entering the new land, Kinh's village together with Soc of the Khmer and Bang, the Chinese Association created a strong community cohesion. It is the cultural and religious festivals of the Cham, Chinese, and Khmer, along with the Vietnamese festivals, that have created a strong community cohesion. Arriving in the newly settled land, all ethnic groups understand that this land is full of dangers lurking, with the mood: "Departing is a risk / As foolish as a child playing a kite with a broken string" without knowing the date. what will happen tomorrow... Therefore, to survive, they must link strangers to each other. When researching this issue, Son Nam also said: "In general, the mood of the poor and exiled people who rush to a "strange land", is to try to transform swamps, melaleuca forests, The mixed forest became a rice field, then built a hut to live and work. The future is not clear..."(Nam, 2018).



The Chinese have a very high spirit of cohesion and mutual affection in community life. They are ready to help those in need or anything if they can. In Soc Trang, the Chinese Assembly Halls, Mutual Associations, etc. have long shown a very high spirit of solidarity and community cohesion. Moreover, the temple, "the palace", "the palace", etc. also show the spirit of solidarity with the villagers. It is the Buddha's kindness, compassion, and charity that makes strangers unite, love, and help each other.

Today, the community of ethnic groups has had harmony and cohesion among the three indigenous Kinh, Hoa, and Khmer ethnic groups through communication, productive labor, homeland defense, language, and blood relations. traditions, cultures, and beliefs. The Kinh's sense of community cohesion is also expressed through the spiritual beliefs that are communal houses and pagodas. In January, although they are not Buddhists, Vietnamese people feel it is their responsibility to go to pagodas, burn incense, and pray. it is a gesture to remember the national morality, love of the country... Moreover, temples and pagodas also show the spirit of solidarity with the villagers, Phum, and squirrels. It is the Buddha's kindness, compassion, and charity that makes strangers unite, love, and help each other, and benevolent and meritorious because they are all Buddhists. It reminds humanity, morality, self-discipline, and solidarity to remember the merits of those who reclaimed and founded hamlets... However, the common characteristic of the population of the Mekong Delta is openness, therefore In daily life, activities, and beliefs, there is also clear confusion. According to research by Tran Minh Thuong and Bui Tuy Phuong: "...It is easy to see that many altars of Ong Thien sometimes also combine with Mr. Ta. Next to the incense burner, or at the foot of the God altar, there are sometimes stones, the symbol of Neak Ta. On the anniversary of the death of grandparents, or on holidays, New Year's Day, worshiping job ancestors, career ancestors, etc., people also worship God" (Thuong & Phuong, 2016). In the Mekong Delta, cultural activities such as Du Ke, Ro Hash, etc. are unique folk theater forms of the

Khmer people. Due to the community life, this type of culture is influenced and interfered with the art forms of Cai Luong, Don ca tai tu of the Vietnamese people, and Quang singing of the Chinese people.

Third, promote kindness, chivalry, and morality in the lifestyle of people in the Mekong Delta. The benevolence of the people of the Mekong Delta is shown through the lens of those who go to "reclaim and open the land", which is the love of people, helping others to overcome difficulties and integrate into the region. the new land is the support of others when "falling into trouble, unlucky in a foreign land"... In times of difficulties and tribulations, it is kindness, chivalry, and mutual sharing that help them overcome real situations. in. Therefore, for those who are far away from home, loving people is "loving people as if we love ourselves"; "One horse hurts the whole ship to leave the grass", "The wind brings the la da fruit branch / That isle of Dung is so far away / The star is cooked with poor sauce / Heavy has a light earth love to raise people's love"... has long become The way of thinking, behavior, philosophy of the people here, governs the relationship between people here. Respect for love and morality is to put the common on the private and if necessary, be ready to sacrifice the private for the common. When living with Vietnamese people together with Chinese and Khmer people living in Soc Trang, the thought of respecting love and morality has become a moral principle, a principle of life. It can be seen that this is the land of the inhabitants of the four lands, people do not know each other, but also need to help each other, so the basis of their relationship here does not love but meaning.

On the other hand, we cannot deny that the "benefit" of Confucianism and the "compassion" of Buddhism have quite profound effects on the kindness of the people of the Mekong Delta, when settling in a new land, The majority of the population is Chinese from China, Kinh people from Ngu Quang with feudal Confucian thought and Khmer people with heavy Theravada Buddhist thought, the kindness of the people of the Mekong Delta will be affected. deeply influenced by the

"benefit" of Confucianism and the "compassion" of Buddhism.

Fourth, an optimistic spirit, looking at life with meaning in the Chinese culture of the Mekong Delta. For the Chinese in Soc Trang, the optimistic spirit, looking at life with meaning is also rooted in their background, because of the movement of "countering the Thanh and restoring the Minh" that came here. When asking Lord Nguyen to reclaim the land of Soc Trang, the original people in Guangxi - Guangdong brought a spirit of optimism, hoping that the new land would be better, more convenient in life, settled, and more peaceful. ancient country.

In another aspect, in their father's hometown, their ancestral land has faced many risks, in that situation, they have to be optimistic and humorous to encourage themselves "when the rain stops, the sun will rise", and "have great merit". For the Chinese in Soc Trang, the optimistic spirit, looking at a meaningful life also stems from their background, because of the movement "anti-Thanh and restore Minh" that came here. . When asking Lord Nguyen to reclaim this land, the Chinese bring optimism, hoping that the new land will be better, more convenient in life, settled and peaceful than the old country.

### **Solutions for building and developing Chinese folk beliefs in the Mekong Delta**

In the face of the globalization trend of the world today, no country can develop in isolation from the world, we need to have a relationship, it is the principles of Marxism-Leninism that are the guideline. male for us. Therefore, international integration is an objective condition for the development of ethnic groups, but with bravery integration, we should only inherit and promote the good values of other ethnic groups and serve as a premise to preserve and promote the culture and beliefs of the Vietnamese nation. In the Document of the 13th Party Congress, on tasks and solutions, our Party emphasized: "Create conditions for religious organizations to live by the provisions of the law; proactively help and solve the needs of religious, belief and spiritual activities of the

masses, and at the same time proactively prevent and resolutely fight against acts of taking advantage of beliefs and religions to divide, undermining the great national unity bloc. Improving the capacity, effectiveness, and efficiency of state management of religious affairs" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, vol2, p.141). To do the above problems well, we need to do the following solutions well:

First of all, the State promulgates and effectively implements appropriate mechanisms and policies for religions with good conditions to promote positive values and fight against non-profit constructions using religion and superstition. , weird. The State must legalize the religious contents stated in the Document of the 13th Party Congress: "Create conditions for religious organizations to operate by the provisions of the law; proactively help and solve the needs of religious activities, signals, and spirituality of the masses... Improve the capacity, effectiveness, and efficiency of state management of religious affairs" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, vol.2, p.141). Doing this good thing will contribute to creating conditions for religions to promote positive and humane activities in the current conditions.

Second, all levels, authorities, national fronts, and mass organizations continue to drink alcohol, deploying in departments, people in general, and compatriots with religious beliefs in particular about the work done. , decisions and policies of our Party and State on beliefs and religions. Sectors and levels should step up the communication and dissemination of legal education for the people in the region to educate and well implement the Law on Belief and Religion and relevant legal documents.

Third, granting authority and authorities at all levels should strengthen leadership and direct the work of propagating and disseminating the Law on Belief and Religion. To be effective, all levels need to strengthen the leadership, direction, organization of surgery, and implementation of the behavior "Plan for the implementation of the Law on Belief and Religion" as well as Decree 162/2017/ Decree-CP stipulates in detail several controls and

measures to implement the Law on Belief and Religion. From there, develop programs and plans to propagate and disseminate the Law suitable to each audience and actual conditions. In addition, it is necessary to promote the role of the management team, which is key in inspecting, urging, managing, and removing difficulties and problems arising; do well the job of synthesizing, summarizing, and drawing experiences on communication work and disseminating the Law on Belief and Religion.

Fourth, calling for investment and strengthening the implementation of programs and projects for economic, cultural, and social development, raising people's knowledge; strengthening and strengthening the political system, their clothes have religion, religion "good life and good faith", actively participate in revolutionary styles, charity, and humanitarian activities, charity activities to help each other overcome difficulties and difficulties. Timely settlement of legitimate and legal problems of organizations and individuals, furniture, and signals.

Fifth, improve the material and spiritual life of the functions and beliefs of religions' new policies for prestigious people among ethnic and religious people. At the same time, continue to create favorable conditions for believers to access financial support from the state budget to develop the family economy, increase income, and improve living standards in the spirit of: "Cohesion closely, harmonize economic development with cultural development, and implement social justice and improve people's lives" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, vol.2, p.134).

## Conclusion

Through studying some features of beliefs and types of beliefs of the Chinese in the Mekong Delta, we see that the Chinese believe and worship many gods, expressing their conception of the universe and human beings. very rich people. The forms of belief also show the trend of exchange and acculturation in the process of living with indigenous people in the Mekong Delta. The types of beliefs and cultures of the Chinese people in the

Mekong Delta contribute to educating the community on how to live with dignity, help the community, and be mean, building an optimistic and humane world. Literature, kindness, chivalry, respect for morality, remembering the source when drinking water, gratitude to ancestors as well as a sense of national unity, love for the motherland, etc. preserve, promote and create internal strength to develop the country, together with the cultural identity and beliefs of other ethnic groups in the community of ethnic groups in Vietnam.

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