

# FOLKLORE ACTIVITIES OF PEOPLE IN DONG NAI, VIETNAM

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**Abstract:** Throughout history, Vietnamese people have received positive elements of foreign beliefs and religions. Up to now, folk beliefs have been preserved, playing an important role in the spiritual life of people. The role of Vietnamese folk beliefs is expressed in the interpretation of natural and human phenomena; in moral education; promote democracy, solidarity and preserve the cultural identity of the Vietnamese people. This study analyzes and assesses the current situation of folk cultural activities of people in Dong Nai province, Vietnam.

**Keywords:** Folk beliefs; spiritual life; Vietnamese people

## 1. Introduction

Vietnam is a community of people with many ethnic groups living with many different types of economy. For this reason, the spiritual life and worship practices of Vietnamese people are relatively diverse. In addition to the existence of major religions, the majority of people also maintain folk beliefs and national rituals. Religion and belief have an important place in the spiritual life of the people here, it influences and dominates the customs, as well as the lifestyle of each segment of the population.

Folk belief is a type of religious culture, formed and developed based on the natural agricultural production activities of the people. In Vietnam today, folk beliefs still exist in the spiritual life of people in all parts of the country. There have been many studies on Vietnamese folk beliefs, but in the context of globalization and international integration, we need to continue to clarify its positive value in the cultural development of the nation. This article analyzes the role of folk beliefs in the spiritual life of Vietnamese people in Dong Nai.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Folk beliefs

Folk beliefs are the set of beliefs that form and reflect the wishes of a community of people. However, these beliefs do not necessarily constitute religious organizations.

These beliefs are based on worldly conceptions. People believe in gods, be it the spirits of the dead, trees, animals or anything in nature. From the fear of nature, gradually people are born cults and beliefs, folk beliefs form.

Not all beliefs are the same. Depending on the habits of living, habits or conceptions of each region, it will affect the beliefs of that region. For example, the ancient Northern peasants worshipped the Imperial Village. Or the Soc Son region worships Saint Wind as a hero and

ancestor. Although there is no certain organization, the number of people who believe in folk beliefs is the majority.

## **2.2. Major folk beliefs in Vietnam**

People have always believed that "there is worship, there is good abstinence" so spiritually there is a special meaning for existence and expansion of new lands. To meet that need "not only do they believe in existing religious beliefs, but they also seek to create new forms of religion for themselves", thereby forming folk forms of belief with distinct characteristics.

Worship at home

### **a. Ancestral worship beliefs**

This is a long-standing tradition, a cultural beauty in the spiritual life of Eastern people. For a long time, people believed that people have souls and bodies, bodies will incarnate into the universe but the soul still exists remembering the old place. Therefore, it is the duty of children and grandchildren to always serve and remember the soul, so that grandparents can support their children and grandchildren to live a peaceful, healthy and prosperous life.

"Where is the cultivation of the house?

Worshipping your mother is the true monk."

Ancestor worship, grandparents are considered important people, almost a religion - Grandparents religion. Depending on the circumstances of each family, ancestral altars are decorated differently. On the altar there are portraits of the deceased, incense bowls, flowerpots, lamps, well-off families, there is an additional altar top. Vietnamese people attach great importance to the anniversary of grandparents' death, considered as a measure of filial piety, reunion, and preservation of the family line. According to the development of society, anyone can organize a memorial service for grandparents, regardless of boys or girls, not necessarily only the eldest son. There are families and sons who not only worship their fathers and mothers, but also their fathers and mothers-in-law. Besides the ancestral altar, depending on which religion the subject follows, there is its own religious altar.

### **b. Worship of the Gods**

Worshipping the gods to protect the family is not strange in Vietnam. For Vietnamese people, worshipping grandparents at home is the main thing, placed in the middle of the house, in the middle of the altar, expressing the main desire of the family. Gods such as Guan Gong, Nine Heavens Maiden, Spirit Mountain Holy Mother, Earth Earth, God of Fortune... will add other desires of the owner. The God of Heaven, the God of the Moon, the God of Stars, the God of Thunder and the God of Lightning, the God of Storm, the God of Wind,.. are the patron gods in the folk beliefs of some regions. The gods often protect the owner from the disturbance of demons, evil gods, risks in life, and good evil.

### **c. Cultivating beliefs**

Cultivating the professional nest is a good tradition of the Vietnamese people, expressing gratitude to the founders, expanding industry knowledge for the people, showing the spirit of "respecting the teacher" for the initiator. The ancestors, also known as Patriarchs, Saints, and Artists, are the inventors, founders, founders of a profession or the first to bring the profession from elsewhere to the people of the region. Later, he was worshipped as a Saint by the next generation. The gods of industry are often worshipped by the people such as Nguyen Dieu – weaving group (Thanh Hoa people), Le Cong Hanh – embroidery group (real name Tran Quoc Khanh, Ha Tay people), Nguyen Minh No (Duong No Lo, Thanh Hoa people) – bronze casting

group, pottery group is Xu Vinh Kieu, Dao Tri Tien, Luu Phong Phu, Le Huu Trac, Hung Yen – the father of Vietnamese ethnic medicine... In addition, in Vietnam, there are professional masters in different localities who are still reverently worshipped by the people.

Every year, there is a commemoration day of the ancestors. People of the same profession often gather in common temples or in production facilities, families ... set up a commemoration table. The worship is meant to be grateful to the founder of the profession, and at the same time ask the organization to bless the increasingly seasoned workmanship and the large number of customers.

#### d. Worship of famous people and meritorious people

The belief of worshipping celebrities, historical heroes, revolutionary martyrs is a national cultural beauty, as well as the traditional morality of Eastern people "drinking water to remember the source", "eating fruit remembering the planter". This shows the gratitude of those who fought and died in the struggle to protect and build the homeland and the country through historical periods. These gods must be mentioned as: Hung Vuong, Hai Ba Trung, Holy Tran Hung Dao.... Recently, the worship of Uncle Ho has been quite popular in many places in the worship facilities of religions and individual families.

#### Worship at temples, shrines and village houses

In addition to home worship, the worship of gods, saints, and fairies of a certain profession such as carpentry, masonry, blacksmithing, salt making, net fishing ... is also very popular in temples. Each area will have great holidays, people together organize sacrifices and communion with the desire to "the nation is peaceful – the rain is peaceful – the people are peaceful", may the God protect the villagers healthy, peaceful, economically developed, and the country prosperous.

#### Worship of the Imperial Citadel

Worship of the Citadel has been the practice of the agricultural inhabitants of Vietnam for a long time. Originally, this belief originated in China, later introduced to Vietnam, combined with the indigenous culture that gave rise to this belief. The village emperor can be a god or a human god. Of course, gods can be Tree Gods, River Gods, Mountain Gods, even animals.... While gods can be ancestors, heroes with merit to the people or sacred dead souls. For the people, the god of the Village Emperor is the common patron god for the whole village. The god who reigns in the village blesses the people with favorable rains, good harvests, and prosperous villages. The one who eats in the sage is sustained, the fierce wicked will be punished. In this respect, the God of The Emperor has humanistic values, is the embodiment of discipline, rewards and punishment.

#### Matriarchal beliefs

Vietnam is a patriarchal country, i.e. the man is the head of the family. However, the woman's position was not therefore lowered. The worship of goddesses appeared thousands of years ago. Famous goddesses, worshipped as much as Lieu Hanh, Lord Kho, Guan Yin Thi Glass,... Vietnamese people also absorb the gods of the inhabitants of Khmer, Cham, Hoa ... making worship more popular and richer: The Queen of the Land, the Holy Mother of Heavenly Medicine, the Queen of Heavenly Spirits, the Seven Daughters, the 12 Midwives, the Five Elements... Vietnamese people believe that Nature is like Our Lady, people are children of nature. Therefore, people worship goddesses to be protected, protected, and brought to a peaceful life by Him.

#### Worship of sentient beings

It is also a belief introduced from the Northern Country. Every 7th month, Vietnamese people buy offerings to ancestors, parents, sentient beings, and demons. The worship of the spirit was

quite early and widespread, signifying the mercy of the people towards those who died in solitude, forgiveness, and unwilling death. It is believed that she often destroys guests, harasses, so she has to worship. This belief can be made at home or set up a common worship facility for the whole village.

Folk beliefs are one of the components that make up the cultural identity of ethnic groups in Vietnam. Rituals, customs, spiritualities, beliefs closely affect the daily life of the community, it reflects "people's belief in a phenomenon, that thing has a repercussion on the life of each person and community". With religious belief, people always aim for the good, express the gratitude and reverence of their children and grandchildren to their ancestors, emperors, and ancestors, and at the same time promote humanitarianism to enrich their spiritual life. Folk beliefs have contributed to preserving the national cultural identity, which binds together the cultural traditions of the resident community, contributing to making the national culture richer and more diverse.

### ***2.3. The role of folk beliefs in moral education***

Vietnamese people worship their ancestors to express gratitude to their born parents, and at the same time to pray that their ancestors will always be close to their children and grandchildren, encourage and support them in daily life. Because of the concept of "death is not the end", each family practices "new year, death" for parents; consider it moral, the order of the family, the family. Through the ritual of ancestor worship, people want to express gratitude, a respectful attitude towards the ancestors. In every family, ancestor worship has become the morality of "drinking water to remember the source", "piety" and a humane way of life. Each successful person pays homage to their ancestors, thanks their ancestors for their support and joins them in joy with their ancestors. Ancestor worship encourages people to aim for good, strive for good labor and study to succeed, brighten ancestors, clans, villages and homelands.

Vietnamese people not only worship those who have been born and raised deceased, but also those who have contributed to the community, villages and the country. That contributes to the connection between families and villages and the country; contribute to consolidating, maintaining and promoting the traditional moral values of the homeland (such as filial piety, compassion, community, community, industriousness, creativity, studiousness, progress, patriotism ...). Whenever faced with ancestors, with gods (i.e. with divine beings), people do not dare to deceive, do not dare to show disrespectful and rude attitudes for fear of being rebuked and punished. They must always be cautious and respectful with the best gestures and behaviors. Belief in an invisible divine being can cause misguided, lost people to awaken their consciences, to return to honest life; at the same time, helping people to live more compassionately and generously, ready to sympathize with forgiveness, "beat the runner, whoever beats the runner". The belief in the gods (the gods who punished those who did not know how to submit, obeyed the village rules, or those who had a mocking attitude, blasphemed the gods ...) made many people have to control their behavior in a right and appropriate way... Promises made to ancestors and gods (do not do deceitful things, otherwise they will be "beaten, punished", "retributed", "sinned" ...) also have a preventive effect, preventing bad acts that can take place. The mentality of fear of supernatural forces causes people to overpower themselves. The existence of the sacred element helps to regulate human perception and behavior, directing people to perfect the personality according to the general norms of society. Just like that, with a miraculous power, the worship of a god who patronizes the village, a holy mother saint or a deceased ancestor helps people perfect their own morality to better conform to the standard values and common

conventions of the community.

#### ***2.4. The role of folk beliefs in promoting democracy and solidarity***

Folk beliefs have the role of promoting democracy, orienting people to master and respect the general rules and conventions of the community. Democracy in the divine world gives impetus to the realization of democracy in real social life, because the spiritual life is an important part of real life. On occasions of practicing folk beliefs, worship rituals (regardless of young and old, girls, caste, religion or ethnicity) help people to come together, perform rituals together, have fun together. It is to show democracy, solidarity.

Folk beliefs are a glue that binds people together in a strong way. When it comes to the festival, whether old, young, girls, boys, rich, poor, everyone gets along with each other, immersed in the festival. People share the same belief in a saint or god when watching sacrifices, cheering with joy or anxiety when enjoying the performances. The festival brings people from all walks of life, all generations together. The festival is a form of cultural activities, the best demonstration of the strength of solidarity that binds all members to the community. There is a festival for the citadel to see the results of the villagers' activities every year. There are festivals that reenact battles (if the god is a martial general); there is a festival of remembering the gratitude of a god who openly founded the land, opened a new profession for the villagers... After the worship services at the court, processions were held around the village. The imperial palanquin always goes first, then the floats of other people. Although the procession is held within one village or several villages (if the emperor is worshipped in many villages), it has a resonance that spreads throughout the regions. The traditional festival has reminded people of their roots, eliminated all obstacles, discord, reunited and got closer to each other.

#### ***2.5. The role of folk beliefs in preserving and preserving cultural identity***

In each type of folk belief, myths, legends, myths ... are all very artistic. Many types of beliefs are associated with music and dance to tell stories, simulate, express the lives, merits and achievements of the gods. Moreover, these rituals are often performed in very sanctimonious and sacred spaces (such as in front of temples, temples, temples). Time to conduct family associations, pagodas ... it is also the time when man devotes himself to the relaxation of his soul to his sacred beliefs [8, p.27]. The combination of sacred music and dance makes people excited, integrated with the divine world. Many forms of dance, traditional music and theatre (such as adoration, rowing, peach singing, xoan singing, charm singing, performances...) have their roots in singing in the village association, especially in mother worship. Worship paintings and statues are not only born in the environment of folk beliefs, but also very close to everyday folk paintings, expressed through colors, composition, expression style, painting methods, painting, painting, sculpture. Through that, today's generations can see the brilliance and creativity of their fathers to be more proud of the past. In festivals, cultural and artistic activities are not only ordinary activities, but also standardized customs and rituals, which cannot be arbitrarily added or thrown away. Folk festivals are environments that arise, integrate, and preserve cultural values. The enjoyment of talent, winning and losing, in competitions are all related to the destiny of individuals or communities. For example, in boat races, swimming competitions, swimming, cockfighting, wrestling, buffalo fighting, tug of war, duck catching, etc., whoever wins will be honored at the ceremony. They believed that that year they would be blessed by Matriarch, blessed by the Emperor, avoid risks, have a lot of luck. Types of folk beliefs have enriched the traditional culture of the Vietnamese people in both areas: material culture and intangible culture.

The architectural works and sculptures also hide and mark the religious life of the fathers for generations. Religious activities that take place during traditional festivals every year are a way of preserving cultural values. Folk dance games (such as Ong Thiong, Ba Da dance, tiger chase dance, mallet frog dance, fan spear dance, lion dance ...), folk games (such as rice blowing contest, swinging, tug-of-war competition, boat race, swimming comb, chum catching contest, cockfighting, wrestling, duck catching, pipe sowing, water procession...) all reflect the unique culture of each country. People come to the festival not only to perform religious activities but also to admire the cultural landscapes, the miraculous creativity by the hands and minds of the fathers. The maintenance of folk beliefs, on the one hand, meets the spiritual needs of the people, on the other hand, arouses the pride of generations in their local cultural traditions. It is also a good way to educate the young generation in preserving and preserving good cultural values.

### **3. Current situation of folklore activities of people in Dong Nai, Vietnam**

Dong Nai Province is a province in the Southeast of our country, with an administrative center located in Bien Hoa City. Dong Nai province has a population of about 3,097,107 and license plates are 39 and 60. Dong Nai province has 12 districts and towns. In order to assess the folklore activities of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai, we conducted surveys and interviews with tourism and sports culture management agencies in Dong Nai, and surveyed local people. The duration of the study was 6 months from March to September 2022. We interviewed all 150 sports and tourism managers at the department of culture, sports and tourism and 385 local people in all 12 districts, the results were as follows:

First: The folk beliefs of Central Vietnamese people are the core. With the experience of production and "grandparents" "gods" brought with them, Vietnamese residents have the capital to integrate into the new land, not starting with "mythological inspiration" but with spiritual assets that have been shaped. With that property, the Vietnamese existed as social subjects, not slaves of nature. The faith and divinity brought with it were immediately applied to new life and quickly gained proper habitation. The altar of the ancestors, the worship of the gods, the gods of life in the house were formed at the same time as the roof: the temple, the temple, the miu also soon formed easily according to the institution in memory; experiences and rituals on vegetatives, marriages, funerals, anniversaries... is applied to the life cycle of new people according to the old method. Experiencing reality for about 3 centuries, the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in the Northern Plains are still at the core of the activities of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai and certainly in many other regions as well. The records of Le Quy Don, Phan Huy Trú and Trinh Hoai Duc in their works also show that the early Vietnamese people who exploited Gia Dinh – Dong Nai were mostly of Central origin. Thus, the traditional folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents from the cradle of the Northern Plains to Dong Nai – Gia Dinh have undergone the intermediate station "staining central colors". This can be evidenced by the expressions in folk beliefs of Northern origin but bold signs of Central. The package of lung sugar alum on the altar of grandparents on New Year's Day is clearly a nostalgia for Quang. Gods of central origin such as Bui Tá Han, Luong Van Chanh, Nguyen Phuc Dien ... are often invited in the court culture, the background of the goddess Dinh Co, the origin of singing and returning, the custom of worshipping Ong fish, the ruins of the earth worship ceremony, the supremacy of The Jade Lord, the Lady of The Cave, etc. along with the echoes of other sea gods in folk beliefs proves that the folk belief layer of Vietnamese residents in Central Vietnam has directly impacted Dong Nai, including the imprint of the "source belief" layer in the Northern Plains. The reign of Hung King, Lac Long

Quan, Au Co's mother, Tran Hung Dao and adoration singing at the shrine of Lieu Hanh Princess... is also an expression (almost intact) of the traditional folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in the Northern Plains but a new cultural layer introduced from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present, mainly associated with the group of Vietnamese residents "graves" and "migrants" who are still attached to the ancient homeland.

The traditional folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents consist of many layers, originating from the same root, coming to Dong Nai through two systems (Northern and Central) have created a common denominator in cultural activities – folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai; it is the binder of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai with roots, nuclear, "endogenous genes" in the process of exchanging and integrating beliefs of other ethnic groups.

Second: Chinese beliefs are imprinted in the folk beliefs of Vietnamese people in Dong Nai. After all, the traditional folk beliefs of the Vietnamese people have become the spiritual property of Vietnamese residents for a long time. This refers to the religious system of the newly immigrant Chinese from the seventeenth century onwards.

In Dong Nai, the Chinese conglomerate appeared almost at the same time as the process of exploring the village of Vietnamese residents with no less, if not more military, trade and economic potential. The Chinese soon asserted their role locally, encouraging trade and craftsmanship, promoting military forces, and establishing a system of residence for themselves and the gods. Chinese people have a tradition of organized living, mutual assistance, their beliefs in relation to other peoples. With such characteristics, Chinese people in Dong Nai have full conditions to dominate, even master the cultural and religious activities of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai. But that didn't happen. The religious heritages of the Chinese people are now easy to find in the daily life of Dong Nai people: the practice of burning a lot of gold and silver, worshipping the gods of Thien Hau, Nine Heavens Goddess, Quan Saint Emperor, Five Earth Dragon Gods, Tien Hau Landowners, Thai mothers... But it's a complement, not a replacement. The beliefs of Chinese immigrants to Dong Nai are not Confucian philosophy but new elements of the familiar agricultural civilization associated with ordinary traders and the exile of Vietnamese residents, so the two belief systems are easily reconciled, gradually Vietnamese and Chinese residents share the same folk gods, to the point that it is difficult to distinguish between Chinese and Vietnamese roots. The images of Buddha and Guan Yin, The Five Elements, Earth God, Earth God, Earth Lord, Lord Fairy, Lord Jade, Guan Gong, Apple Army ... have equal vitality in the spirituality of Chinese people as well as Vietnamese residents. Vietnamese gods who are related to Hoa are a common phenomenon in the South, but it is not because of the object that denies the "Vietnamese nationality" of those gods.

However, the tolerance of Chinese religious elements into the spirituality of Vietnamese residents is not mixed but selective and to a certain extent. Chinese people with abundant resources have been given a place for their gods such as: The Fall of Quan Vo Temple (worshipping Quan Thanh Emperor in Cu Lao Pho, Phung Son Temple (worshipping Quang Trach Ton King) in Quyet Thang ward, Thien Hau pagoda in Buu Long, his pagoda in Phuoc Zen... however, it is not for this reason that the supremacy of their gods casts a shadow over the gods of the Vietnamese people. These Chinese-born gods, when they are tolerated in the beliefs of Vietnamese residents, worshipped at home or at home, are all in harmony and equality with Vietnamese gods, even they will be isolated when they are away from the gods of Vietnamese residents. Therefore, the process of Vietnameseization of the gods of the Chinese people quickly on the basis of the beliefs of

Vietnamese residents has the foundation and always has room to tolerate new elements.

On the other hand, Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai have always had a sense of not copying the original Chinese people. Often change or stop to some extent so that our beliefs are not dissolved or distorted. The god of fortune sitting in a "chair" must be easily mistaken for Tai Bai of the Chinese army, but as a system with Mr. Dien, it is impossible to mistake the "nationality", the concept of mourning customs is the same, but looking at the direction of the box (turning the head in or turning the head out is enough to know Hoa or Viet. Similarly, see how to handle the cup of wine (drinking or pouring it on the ground) also distinguishes what is the way of Vietnamese residents.

While the spiritual assets carried were not enough to handle novel situations in the new land, the Nguyen Dynasty did not create anything more for the subjects to explore, the beliefs of the Chinese gave Vietnamese residents new images to enrich, more diverse cultural and religious activities in Dong Nai. The reception of the Flower element and its use as its property has shown the bravery and vitality of the traditional folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents that are always sustainable in cultural exchange and development process.

Third: The beliefs of the patrons are an important component in the formation of Vietnamese folk beliefs in Dong Nai. Dong Nai is the tail of the Truong Son strip to the south, where trade between the opposite and downstream regions often takes place in exchange as well as cultural exchange. The current midland area in Dong Nai currently has ethnic groups: Gil, Xtiêng, Chau Ro, K'ho, these minorities are still at a low level, living nomadically, with few cultural traditions; in which only the Gilded people left the most traces of relations with Vietnamese residents. According to legend, the Gilded people were once the owners of the land upstream along the Dong Nai Thuong River, had trades and fights with the Cham people, then had to give way to retreat to the highlands, leaving behind the "Go Mei, Da Nang, Da Dung ..." for Vietnamese residents to own. Unfortunately, the previous records often grouped ethnic minorities into the name "Man, All, Upper" making it difficult for the latter to distinguish, only roughly understood as the inhabitants of ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands. The remnants of their beliefs left in Vietnamese residents are not very many, only the silhouette of the "ó ma lai" in the abstinence of the woman giving birth and the power of the "rice goddess" in the role of the woman in choosing to keep the cotton at the seed, "welcome the rice mother" into the bo...

The archaeological site shows that the talented owners of Hang Gon dolmens, Binh Da rocks, through Long Giao dong, Mieu Mr. Weasel are almost ubiquitous but are human classes (probably) associated with Funan culture only have names inferred from the excavation results of ancient explorers. Therefore, there is currently no basis for expressing any opinion about the relationship in belief between the ancient Phu Nam people and the Vietnamese people.

Khmer people are a class of indigenous people who still have many traces in the cultural and religious activities of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai. History books show that the Khmer were present in the South earlier than the Vietnamese inhabitants; by 1888 there were 10,673 people in Bien Hoa province, but before that they were the owners of a large area. It is not clear if the Five Gong Temple at the headwaters of Bang Powder that Zheng Huaide thinks "These gods are named after the 5 dangerous waterfalls that according to Manchu emperor" belongs to the beliefs of the Khmer people, according to the names: Ta Ma duke, Ta Mon duke, Ta Nong duke, Ta Viet duke, Ta Dieg duke can be guessed to be related to Mr. Ta (Niek Ta), a land god of the Khmer people.



With Mr. Ta with a Khmer background, Vietnamese residents in Dong Nam have an additional earth god "Mr. Earth keeps the house, Mr. Ta keeps the field", and when necessary to help something. Mr. Ta and Mr. Earth were trusted, thanks to the vows: "Mr. Ta, Mr. Earth." Since then, Niek Ta has infiltrated the Vietnamese god of Earth God with the appearance of a strange stone. The remnants of Khmer beliefs are also manifested in Linh Son Holy Mother with the background of a Khmau goddess of the Khmer people, customarily called Ba Den worshipped by Vietnamese and Khmer residents. It is also possible to send a message to the Arab god who is often invited to coordinate at court ceremonies, as well; it is the goddess who takes care of the shadows in the khmer god hall, although it has lost its residence, but it still resonates in the beliefs of Vietnamese residents.

The most obvious element of the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai is probably the belief of the Cham people. Dong Nai does not have as many traces of Cham habitation as in Khanh Hoa, Binh Dinh, Thuan Hoa. The history books also do not show that there was significant direct exchange between the Vietnamese and Cham peoples in Dong Nai land. But Cham culture imprints its imprint on the cultural activities of Vietnamese residents. It is deeply embedded in the mind and manifests itself in daily life, from rituals associated with human life to community, family and social activities. It is possible that it penetrates the spirituality of Vietnamese residents with the "coat" of Vietnamese residents' beliefs in Central Vietnam, the cactus branch that holds the door for pregnant women can only come from the land of Cham tower. The custom of lying on the fire of the mother and the shell of the fire as a sign that Trinh Hoai Duc did not specify from where it originated from the ancient customs of the Cham people. Similarly, it is possible to trace the shadow of the Cham faith through a series of religious activities such as: Worshipping the earth, worshipping Thien Y A Na Ngoc Dien Phi, worshipping Ong fish. Most obviously, the "shadow dance" of the Cham country has been integrated in The Shadow Singing; the deity with the Cham Maha Urgent background is often formally invited at court festivals and always has an equal status with other gods. The Cham element integrated into the beliefs of Vietnamese residents is so strong that it is difficult to dissect into a layer of pure culture. It is these Cham factors that make the beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai many colors, moreover, it creates a bridge for the spirituality of Vietnamese residents to connect with the Land and People in Dong Nai. The element that appears in the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai is not addition but an integration, ultimately creating a result that is not only beneficial for Vietnamese residents.

Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai treat the culture not by the attitude of the victor, but by the attitude of the new owner who is grateful, faithful, and open to unknown owners. Plate of boiled vegetables – cups of seasoned fish sauce, land offerings, cakes offering cakes in the food ceremony, ancient offerings of The Earth in the field garden ... it is the religious gestures of Vietnamese residents that show their loyalty to indigenous people, which in turn creates peaceful coexistence, not conflict.

Fourth: The elements of Viet – Hoa – Cham – Khmer have a harmonious life that forms the "spiritual ecological balance" in the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents, in which, the traditional folk belief elements of the Vietnamese people are the axis, the core of the operation, develop. But this operation and development is not self-contained, one-sided, but takes place in the dominant influence of the three religions: Buddha, Confucian, Lao.

The traditional folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents as well as of the Chinese people have

been influenced by the Three Religions and shaped in the spiritual life of Vietnamese residents for a long time. Coming to the new land, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism have created a new basis in the spiritual life of Vietnamese residents, thereby having a reciprocal influence between folk beliefs and religious beliefs.

Buddhism is almost the main religion of Vietnamese residents, having the most far-reaching influence in folk beliefs. Buddhism was introduced to the South quite early, the original center was Dong Nai – Gia Dinh, thereby acting as a springboard for Buddhism to gradually move into the South and play an increasingly important role in the new land. According to Tran Hong Lien, Buddhism is transmitted into Dong Nai by many ways: A part from Thuan Quang to the Buddhist line no longer has orthodoxy, a part from Chinese zen masters who come to stay and practice in Central and Southern Vietnam mainly belongs to the Linji sect, but this Chinese Buddhism was quickly Vietnameseized through the influence of Southern Zen masters such as Thanh Iso, Buddha Will, Tong Tong, Hai Tinh; another section of Chinese zen masters followed Chinese immigrants to southern Vietnam with the Ming masters, the forerunners of later Tiantai Zenism. The main Buddhist lines mentioned above to Dong Nai have different starting points but share the same fate: Idyllic people, poor class, adventurous status ... therefore, it is easy to empathize with Vietnamese residents, easy to integrate into the flow of folk beliefs. Buddhist teachings aimed at freeing sentient beings should accompany those who suffer; but Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai seem to tolerate only the "Buddha mind" of Buddhism and are less immersed in the heaven and earth of teachings and asceticism. Shakyamuni Buddha is so great, people worship at the temple but are less familiar. Guanyin is only a bodhisattva but has the function of "poverty alleviation", so it is more associated with folk beliefs, which are worshipped mainly at home, at temples, and in temples. Buddhist rituals are used in the worship of Vietnamese residents: praying at funerals, fasting for food, offering spirits, monthly squirrel-vong day offerings, even monks and nuns also participate in the ceremony of praying for peace in the family and mieu before proceeding with the Dan ceremony. The social activism of Vietnamese residents, accompanied by the desire to pray for good peace, respect grandparents, filial piety to parents, good behavior to everyone, which is a good tradition of the Vietnamese ethnic community (also the morality of Confucianism) makes it difficult to discern the origin of folk beliefs or beliefs. Buddhism – Confucianism. On the other hand, it is thanks to quickly integrating into the folk belief circuit, even by the way of folk beliefs, that Buddhism clings easily to the spirituality of Vietnamese residents. The myths about the temples, the relics of The Buddha Of Kien Lien – Thanh De, Buddha legends about the results of Thu Huong's practice ... are fairytale according to the path of folk beliefs. Therefore, folk beliefs and Buddhist beliefs are intertwined in the process of social development, even in the face of the new French colonial power. When the French ruled, Confucianism was divided and in crisis, folk beliefs and Buddhist beliefs remained on the same line on the side of the nation, even serving as spiritual support for patriotic officers.

Confucianism – Confucianism is less religious in nature but has de facto power through the ruling apparatus of the feudal court. In addition to the qualities of Confucianism that have penetrated deeply into the lives of Vietnamese people for a long time, Confucianism came to the new land and also influenced the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai by two main paths: Orthodox thought through the administrative apparatus and knowledge of ordinary Confucians.

In Dong Nai, the administrative apparatus was born at least 20 years later than the formation of the community. Therefore, the orthodox thought reestablished in the Vietnamese people's psyche is naturally post-natal compared to folk beliefs. Called reestablishment because orthodox thought has its roots in Vietnamese residents since ancient times, but the Vietnamese who came to Dong Nai from the XVII-XVIII centuries temporarily escaped from that machine for quite a long time, enough to live cautiously and cautiously when re-receiving it through the imposition of the ruling apparatus.

Therefore, in Dong Nai, the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents have stronger roots than Confucian thought. Even at times, it won. The death of General Le Van Le and the "life" of Miss Nui Hien are an example. Another example can be taken from Trinh Hoai Duc's record, that: Chief Marshal Nguyen Cuu Van had to "silence the island bridge" in front of the ancient temple of the locals to escape the dangerous situation. However, with the dominant power, the Nguyen Dynasty still suppressed orthodox thought into folk beliefs by ordaining the Citadel, setting rules, issuing rituals of sacrifice and worship in villages. Accordingly, the worship ritual in Dong Nai goes into the mold, delineating hierarchy and religion. Folk beliefs have submitted to the Confucian word "Feast". But Confucianism itself must also acknowledge gods in folk beliefs. If Confucius has not officially acknowledged the demon god, the Nguyen Lords, from Nguyen Hoang onwards, have received and mobilized the gods of the folk to cultivate and protect their cause. Therefore, many gods such as the goddess in blue, the god of otters ... all have relics associated with honoring the Nguyen dynasty.

By the Tu Duc period, the mass establishment of the Southern Citadel to rally local gods around the "heavenly prince" power did not stop the cannon train, but at least created a spiritual barrier in the countryside that hindered the French colonialists' intention to annex the South.

Confucianism follows the path of popular martyrs to more mellow folk beliefs. These are the notions of morality that have been realized in the exemplary lives of confucians, the characteristics of the public to absorb into their value system and then re-enact in daily activities as well as in cultural activities – folk beliefs, long become the common property of the community. When the power of the Hue imperial court weakened, especially when they cut the three eastern provinces and then the Six Provinces to the French colonialists, many patriotic officers self-adjusted confucian ideals, leaving the symbol of "dragon adoration outside Hue" and integrating with the "Dong Nai sacrificial horse" with the people's resistance against the French. Thereby, the shrines of the family and mieu in Dong Nai as well as in the South of Vietnam added gods bearing the ideal of "national identity" of Confucianism. Thanks to integration into the folk vein, although the institution has declined and lost completely in Au society, the value of Confucianism still works in social life. On the contrary, in the framework of Confucianism, folk beliefs are systematic and have a place to survive for a long time.

Taoism in Dong Nai does not have a system of worship facilities like many other places, but its influence is very far-reaching in the life of Dong Nai people. The Vietnamese football game in Dong Nai – Gia Dinh is very confident that Trinh Hoai Duc mentioned in Gia Dinh Thanh has a ceremony that is a form of Taoist expression. Before that, Taoism developed such a profound influence that Lord Nguyen set up ti in the Lord's palace to employ shamans and Taoists to take care of the religion, including both sects: the Dharma and the Taoist (142:56); in 1789, Lord Nguyen found them no longer suitable and abolished them but failed to end the role of shamans and taoists in the folk. The most obvious benefit of Taoism in folklore is the role of the

shaman in worship. They are "brokers" between the human realm and the underworld, have magic that controls the underworld, transmits information from the underworld to the human realm and vice versa. Offerings: Earthworks, offerings, groundbreakings, extortions... the shaman is the main character; The shaman also cooperates with the temple master to run the rituals of offering spirits and experiments at the temple and temple. Due to practical needs, there are usually a few professional shamans in the villages who take care of the offerings.

The silhouette of Taoism is also reflected in the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents through military acts, alternating management of the human realm during the year, or magic dicks, charms ... in daily life. It can be said that the influence of Taoism has no depth in perception but is common in folk religious activities.

The folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai do not have a complete theoretical system of cosmological views, human perspectives, worldviews; the influence of religions made up for that void. The Buddha's mind, the confucian ceremony and the magic of the Tao have complicated cultural activities - folk beliefs; at the same time, it is also attracted in the process of folklorization, which makes the forms of expression of religion also follow the vein of folk beliefs.

Referring to factors affecting the cultural activities and folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai, it is impossible not to mention Christianity and Western civilization. Christianity joined late, its appearance caused anxiety to the national spirit, made folk beliefs and religion inch closer together, took steps to adjust themselves to improvise with the heterosexual god who is favored by the French and American authorities.

The domination of the French colonialists and the American empire created a fracture, dividing folk beliefs from the orthodox institutions of Confucianism. The spirit of the Vietnamese people returned to the idyllic position, both suffering from bombs and losses due to the decline of Confucianism. One more fracture when nine men long resisted the French, the people carried out scorched earth resistance, the headquarters of the gods was broken, folk beliefs were taken out of the new system. The existing cultural activities and folk beliefs are nothing more than inadequate recovery after decades of fracture. The more it must be acknowledged that Western civilization has modern science and technology in addition to pushing back folk beliefs into the past, the more effective it is to make Vietnamese residents awaken, find ways to integrate the new, transform their activities to suit the new pace of life. Thus, the irrational, mythical elements are eliminated, the rest are the core of the belief and the "reason" is acceptable.

Obviously, the cultural activities and folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai are not natural or available but too much from the integration of many factors. Vietnam - Hoa - the land in the impact of shrimp spears and foreign factors makes the folklore activities of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai have many colors, multi-systems, harmonize with different cultural systems without losing their core.

## **5. Conclusion**

Due to its origin and the relationships affecting it, the cultural activities – folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai reveal many characteristics; Here, only important characteristics that are closely related to the local socio-economic life are mentioned.

1. First of all, the folklore and belief activities of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai are mixed, or in other words, multi-system in structure as well as in expression. This is not a unique characteristic of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai, but it is shown in Dong Nai very boldly. Its

socio-economic basis is multi-ecosystem agriculture: Sea - rivers - fields - semi-mountainous with early development. Therefore, the subjects of folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents are composed of many components, in which the merchant class and the townspeople play an important role. All of them turned their faith in gods in accordance with the status of their classes and then reached the most common image of the community. For example, on the Earth section, for example, from one generic deity to many other gods, the generic deity diverges into many different gods whose functions are related to the land, and then integrates into a set of "Mr. Earth - God of Fortune" that is suitable for farmers, merchants and townspeople; even persuasive to the laity. It seems that any cultural activity - folk belief of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai also manifests multi-system in all three aspects: Origin, internal structure and external manifestation. Just the "lying on fire" of pregnant women has seen the Chinese-Vietnamese-Cham belief systems intertwined, integrated and co-manifested.

Multisystematic, mixed but not mixed, because the factor that constitutes folk beliefs is not mere community but systematic integration. Either way, the system is strong; folk beliefs complete with: Human life cycle - family community - social community, covering the realms: Heaven - Man - Earth, spread in the regions: Rivers - fields - forests and mountains, including belief systems: Traditional - foreign - land with the divine system including: grandparents (ancestors) - human gods - angels, have gender: Male - neutral - female, and name: Nominal - general concept - anonymous, in the form of: Individual - couple - set (consisting of many people), of the types: Orthodox - semi-orthodox - idyllic, related to: Confucianism - Buddhism - Taoism, distributed harmoniously between the center and the left - sect, before- after, inside - out, above - below... it's so strong that if there's a new entrant, it's an inclusion, not a replacement or a change of mechanism. But it is not closed, not conservative, but it is the multi-system and diversity that has created the ability to adapt, easy to "get acquainted" with East-West, needle-ancient culture... on the basis of keeping the traditions of Vietnamese residents (From this characteristic, it is possible to explain the liberalism, openness, sensitivity to the new but not leaving the ethnic roots of the Vietnamese people in Dong Nai.

The cultural activities and folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai are less mystical, the interpretation of gods is often based on logical reality rather than mythical imagination. Therefore, the irrational elements are reduced, the customs are not many, the gods have simple, reasonable backgrounds and relics, are less exaggerated or miraculous; from there closer and closer to the human realm. The Five Elements with the general idea of the workings of heaven and earth gradually became more commonly worshipped than other legendary women. The Imperial Citadel is also collectively associated with the role of 'protecting and managing the land' on the spot rather than finding a way to connect with the "superior" god by means of mythologization. The custom of avoiding killing when worshipping Phi Van general Nguyen Fu and abstinence: Abstaining from offering Quan Cong chicken and more than chicken crests, not offering Vo Tanh roast pig, not offering Left Army Le Van Browser pig castration ... for subtlety, not for abstinence.

Gods in the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai are not opposites, nor are they separated from the human realm, humanity is more than divinity, blessed than degrading, rarely seen evil gods, lewd gods; therefore, the Dong Nai people are more content with gratitude than fear and submission; even gods are tortured, annoyed, and ridiculed by humans. Mr. Earth's image, personality, and function are the best examples. Therefore, cultural activities - folk beliefs

of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai are not far from real life, its social positivity is realized in social activities very clearly: it often connects spiritual life and social activities: Ms. Garden is both a priest to satisfy the needs of folk beliefs and a physician who contributes to taking care of reproduction in the countryside when the grassroots health system is complete; the practice of marriage is at its core a contract of responsibility between the new couple and their families and society; mourning tends to mean death; family associations, mieu associations actively participate in the social work of the village such as mourning, smoking, teaching, reconciliation, charity ... (in 1996 alone, the income from Dinh Co festival contributed to local social work of more than 500 million VND). The inching between cultural activities - folk beliefs and real life is also the inching closer between the divine's residence and the grassroots cultural institution.

Cultural activities - folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai show a high level of human meaning. Dong Nai people reverently worship gods but do not depend on gods, much less framed in the available pattern. The ritual of worship follows the norm but is not 'serious', such as the use of flags, flags, and holes. The Nguyen court issued many regulations to regulate domestic sacrifice, but few were fully observed; Each family has a different way of doing things, in Mieu it is more bohemian, in the family it is completely compassionate. When the Nguyen kingship weakened and then collapsed, the feudal institutions collapsed accordingly, but the family remained intact in the meaning of folk beliefs; by the time the French colonialists and the American Empire ruled with a repressive institution, the family remained firmly rooted even though its material shell was severely damaged.

With a diverse number of goddesses worshipped; The humanity in the folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai is most clearly revealed. The goddesses of all three regions of the country almost integrated in all aspects and amplified the power in Dong Nai, it penetrated the divine hall of the pavilion and pagoda; enticing both goddesses of Buddhism, Christianity, even male gods. Through the results of Nguyen Dinh Dau's survey of geography, we have seen the special role of Bien Hoa women in land sovereignty, it will be easy to see their similar position in the village – which is the world of masculinity. In addition to the saints who had to participate, many families in Dong Nai also had altars of the "Great Father", with worship rituals that went beyond the usual posthumous rites. When there is a powerful goddess system in the mind, the cultural activities - folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai are not immersed in the framework of Confucianism, not bound in cumbersome ancient rituals; screened, eliminated many nonhuman factors. No matter how it changes, the human factor is still the human being who plays the subject role in the faith, not the gods or other pressures.

Due to the late formation and broken by many historical events, the cultural activities – folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai currently exist in the conflict between belief and knowledge. Belief in folk beliefs is still rooted in people's hearts, but knowledge of it has fallen much to the point of error, patchwork and arbitrary restoration, even to the original nature. The psychological phenomenon of "worshipping the sacred", "four spirits" is common. It is a wasteland for profiteers to sow harmful seeds. Mechanical restoration and sophisticated divine buying also originated here. Beliefs with faith without understanding are easy to accompany superstitions and superstitions.

Cultural activities - folk beliefs of Vietnamese residents in Dong Nai are an undeniable reality. It used to be a "spiritual food" for Vietnamese people in Dong Nai to form, develop, overcome hardships and wars; and now continues to be associated with the spiritual life of people on the

path of industrialization and modernization. Like it or not, the role and meaning of cultural activities - folk beliefs still affect the construction and development of society. How effective it is depends on the social institutions that deal with it. If we nurture, lead, exploit and transform the "rational nucleus in it", it is possible to direct folk beliefs to the goal of humanity, building a stable society imbued with national identity. On the contrary, if people reject or abandon folk beliefs in the process of construction and development, people's beliefs will be damaged, the "body" can be massive but the "soul", easily empty. In fact, human spirituality cannot be empty. When scientific truth has not completely taken over the center of consciousness, if the gods have left, the "devil" will come in, and then sabotage will take the place of good faith.

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