

Faith Culture of Thanh Hoa Coast Residents (A Study in Vietnam)



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ABSTRACT: Thanh Hoa has a coastline of 102km, passing through districts from Nga Son, Hau Loc, Hoang Hoa, Sam Son, Quang Xuong to Nghi Son. Along the coast are the mouths of Hoat river, Ma river, Yen river, Lach Truong, Cu Nham, Lach Bang,... creating a long and relatively large coastal area. This is also a long-standing residence, labor, and production area of Thanh people. The desire to reach out to sea and the struggles to protect maritime sovereignty against foreign invaders have created a typical religious culture of the people in the coastal areas of Thanh - that is "marine culture".

KEYWORDS: Tsinghua, residents, sea area, beliefs, culture.

1. THE FORMATION OF RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES

The birth and formation of residential communities in the coastal area of Thanh Hoa, based on historical characteristics, can be divided into two types: spontaneous and according to the state's farming and plantation regime.

The earliest community formed in the spontaneous form was Hoa Loc residents (Hoa Loc commune, Hau Loc district). This community is distributed according to the coastal area from Hau Loc district to Nga Son district with the date of appearance about 4,000 years ago and has a cultural exchange relationship with other early Bronze Age cultures in Vietnam. In the Central and Northern regions of Vietnam are Phung Nguyen culture, Ha Long culture, and Con Chan Tien cultural relic group (Thieu Van commune, Thieu Hoa district). species of marine fish, freshwater fish, proving that fishing is an important occupation for them. Besides, the bones and teeth of domestic animals such as buffaloes, cows, dogs, pigs, and some wild animals such as deer, roe deer, wild boars, rhinoceroses, etc., have proven the resident community. In addition to fishing, Hoa Loc people are also good at breeding and hunting. The formation of the second residential community in a spontaneous form, representing the coastal population is Lach Truong residential community (Hoang Truong commune, Hoang Hoa district). At this place, archaeologists have discovered many burial tombs dating back to the Eastern Han Dynasty (1st - 3rd centuries) inside there are many artifacts influenced by Chinese and Indian civilizations. This place with the advantage of the sea mouth has become the residential land of residents, Lach Truong estuary has become an important trading port trade and an intermediary land in cultural propagation when monks and missionaries followed the merchant ships to Lach Truong estuary to propagate Buddhism and Buddhist teachings.

The coastal community formed under the feudal state's plantation and the farming regime was born relatively early in Thanh Hoa. The formation of these communities is associated with the task of protecting the sea and islands and fighting against foreign invaders. Historical books have recorded that, in the 10th century, during the reign of King Le Dai Hanh, there was a policy of sending people to reclaim the land. The King sent General Le Phuc to inspect several coastal areas in North and Central Vietnam to develop the economy and protect the country⁽¹⁾. During the Ly - Tran period, with its position as the southern border region of Dai Viet nation and convenient waterway transport, right from the Ly dynasty to resist the encroachment and harassment of Champa in the land of Ai Chau. formed 12 estuaries, estuaries, and correspond to the estuaries, which was the garrison mode of the imperial army. In the Tran Dynasty, before the invasion of the Mongols for the first time, many defenses and fortresses were built in the coastal area. After the victory to maintain and build coastal defenses, the Tran court assigned generals to develop this place into residential communities. Subsidiaries such as Tran Nhat Duat built a plantation in Van Trinh (Quang Thach commune, Quang Xuong district), Le Cong Bang built a plantation in Yen Duyen village (Quang Hung commune, Quang Xuong district) in the year of the Rat, year Thieu. Long (1264). With the policy of "staying in the army and being on the farm", many coastal plantations in Quang Thai, Quang Cu, and Quang Tien communes were also established, but this place was both the headquarters of the army responsible for the army. The task of protecting the coastal areas against encroachment from the South has just had the task of reclaiming production, when the country is peaceful, these places gradually become villages. After the 2nd Yuan victory in the year of the Rooster (1285) King Tran Nhan Tong allowed some clans to go and establish new villages on the coast of Thanh Hoa

⁽¹⁾. District Party Committee, People's Committee of Hau Loc District, Thanh Hoa Province (1990), *Hau Loc Geography*, Social Science Publishing House, Hanoi, pp.192-193.

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districts⁽²⁾. It can be seen that the coastal area of Thanh Hoa was a relatively early natural habitat of Vietnamese residents and formed a large-scale village community according to the state institution in the Tran dynasty.

2. BELIEF SYSTEM OF SEA DWELLERS

With the peculiarity of the place of residence, the people and the resident community here have relied on the sea to make a living, to create a life, and to build villages. To protect themselves, the people of the sea have entrusted their hopes, wishes, and beliefs to the gods, especially before each sailing trip. , returned safely, the boat was full of fish and shrimp. That spiritual belief is an expression of the aspiration for survival, the desire to conquer, and the desire for a happy and prosperous life of man. For that reason, the beliefs of the inhabitants of Thanh Hoa coastal areas are polytheistic belief systems, including:

- *Beliefs to worship the sea god:*

Typical in the sea god worship is the custom of worshipping the Ong fish, the Thanh people worship the Ong fish, calling the Ong fish with reverence by names such as *Nam Hai respects god, Nam Hai giant tribe worships god, Nam In the minds of the people, Ong fish is the God who saves lives, is the spiritual support, is the belief and hope*. Besides the custom of worshipping the Ong fish, the sea god Long Vuong is also worshiped by the people. In each region, each locality has a different way of worshipping and honoring the sea god such as *Long Vuong. worshipping God, Dai Hai Long Vuong worships god, Nam Hai Long Vuong worships god, Bat Hai Long Vuong worships god, Tran Ba Dong Hai Long Vuong worships god, Tuyen Long Vuong province worships god, ...* In the belief of sea god worship in Thanh Hoa The gods appear in many different images, but the special thing here is that most of the gods are worshiped at Christmas in the form of animals associated with rivers such as fish, snakes, turtles or a natural phenomenon such as lightning, waves, rocks. All have been deified by humans, given faith, it reflects the consciousness of belief and balance in thought life as well as in material activities.

- *Beliefs of worshipping gods:*

Different from the belief in worshipping the sea god about the image of the character, the people worshipping the god of the sea people in Thanh is worshipping real people and characters with history and clear behavior. Human deities worshiped by residents of the coastal areas of Thanh include national and local heroes and historical figures; The ancestor of the profession, the patriarch, etc. The god most worshiped by the inhabitants of the sea is the god Doc Cuoc, the god whose legend is that a young man used a hammer to split his body in half. Half of his body and one leg stood on the top of Co Giai to guard the village, and half of his body and one leg followed the boats to protect the fishermen out to sea. Later, Ngoc Hoang admired his heroic heart and deified him, and the people reverently called him Doc Cuoc, which means "One-legged God". See in the book *Thanh Hoa the gods⁽¹⁾*, Currently, Thanh Hoa province has 51 places of worship. The God of Doc Cuoc is a special phenomenon in the religious life of the inhabitants of the coastal area of Thanh Hoa. The god of Christmas has many different images, in some places with the image of a human god, in some places with the image of a natural god. God. With the image of a human god, the god Cao, named Son, self-proclaimed Doc Cuoc, won a Doctorate in the Tan Dynasty. After obeying orders to eliminate the enemy, he made great contributions to the country, was ordained as Father King, later became a god ⁽²⁾. With the image of a natural god, it is a large footprint more than a meter long ⁽³⁾. However, the image of a "one-legged" deity is familiar in the divine descent ⁽⁴⁾. Besides, depending on the locality, Doc Cuoc god has different titles such as Doc Cuoc worshipping god, Doc Cuoc Son Tieu, Cao Son Doc Cuoc, etc. is a symbol of heroic bravery in protecting the village, defending the country, fighting against evil, and the strength of the community.

The second deity that is worshiped a lot in the coastal community is Dai Can, Nam Hai Tu, the holy lady. The god was originally the Queen of the Southern Song Dynasty, King Tong Doan Tong was harmed by the Nguyen people, he and his two daughters drowned themselves in the river, the body drifted to the Can Hai estuary in Dien Chau district, Nghe An province. The belief of worshipping the four saints originally at Con temple, Quynh Luu district, Nghe An was then spread to Thanh Hoa. According to statistics at the beginning of 1905, the whole province of Thanh Hoa had 95 places of worship (5). A question arises, why is a character with such a history being worshiped in many places? It may be from the humanitarian spirit of the Vietnamese people, the sympathy for the unfortunate fate, and also the mother-worshipping beliefs in the Vietnamese tradition. Since then, they have accumulated and deified, giving this woman a new function as a goddess, a blessing of the sea, coastal people all respect her as the Mother, the Four Saints, and the four saints. consider him as the blessed god in the sea.

Besides the widely worshiped gods, there are also gods worshiped by one or a few localities, they are historical figures, heroic figures, people with meritorious services to the village, and the people such as General Sat Hai Dai Vuong Hoang Ta Thon who guarded the southern coast, Citadel of the Nguyen family who founded Du Xuyen village (Hai Thanh ward), Citadel Le Nhan

⁽²⁾ Pham Van Tuan (2008), *Traditional social organization structure of coastal Vietnamese villages in Hau Loc district, Thanh Hoa province*, Ph.D. thesis in anthropology, Institute of Ethnology, p.32

⁽¹⁾ *Thanh Hoa Gods Luc*, signed version VHv.1290 Library of Han Nom Research Institute.

⁽²⁾ *Thanh Hoa Gods Luc*, signed version VHv.1290 Library of Han Nom Research Institute.

⁽³⁾ *Thanh Hoa victory anniversary*, signed version VHv.1242 Library of Institute of Han Nom Studies. The legend of Ho Co village, Loc Son commune, Hau Loc district.

⁽⁴⁾ *The fairy tale of Mi Du village, Son Trang commune* (now Hoang Kim commune, Hoang Hoa district).

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Quy who built dykes and reclaimed land (Kim village). Coc, Mai Lam commune) in Tinh Gia district, Hoang Hoa district. Citadel Nguyen Thanh, who openly reclaimed land, founded villages (Da Loc commune, Hung Loc commune), Duc Thanh Ca (Ngu Loc commune) Hau Loc district. Saint Dai Giang (Hoang Truong, Hoang Hai, and Hoang Yen communes) and Emperor Vu Thieu (Hoang Dat commune) Hoang Hoa district. Western citadel General Tran Duc is worshiped in Ca Lap village (Quang Tien ward, Sam Son city), for Sam-Son fishermen, a Western general is a hero who has attached himself to the people living by profession. arduous sea fishing, he was honored as the blessed god of the whole Sam Son sea.

- *Belief in worshiping the ancestor of the profession*

In parallel with the traditional fishing profession, which attracts almost all the human resources of the inhabitants of the village, the people in the coastal areas know how to take advantage of the sea to develop side jobs, such as Mrs. Trieu taught the profession of weaving, tattooing, and silk to the people of Trieu Duong village (Quang Cu ward, Sam Son city). Salt making and fishing group in Diem Pho, Ngu Loc commune, Hau Loc district. Voting and silk crafting group in Hoang Dat commune, Hoang Hoa district. Fish sauce craft, boat building in Do Xuyen Ba Lang, Hai Thanh ward, Nghi Son town... The existence and development of coastal craft villages not only contribute to bringing a full and prosperous life but also a testament to the labor and intelligence that has been built up over time of the people here.

- *Belief in worshiping Buddha*

Along with the belief of worshiping the gods, the religion of worshiping Buddha is also respected by the people in the estuaries and sea mouths. Looking at the history and existing evidence, we can see that the Buddhist beliefs of the coastal residents of Thanh Hoa have existed since the Ly - Tran dynasties, the temples in the coastal villages such as Dien Linh Chan Pagoda Nga Son district; Sung Nghiem Dien Thanh pagoda, Hau Loc district; Minh Tinh pagoda, Hoang Hoa district; Dong pagoda, Ngoc Tra pagoda, Quang Xuong district; Bai Dong pagoda, Dot Tien pagoda, Tinh Gia district... are proofs of the devotion to Buddhism in the belief system of coastal residents of Thanh Hoa. According to our survey, Quan Am Nam Hai is the object of worship by seafaring people, they worship and believe in the rescue of Quan Am Nam Hai, hoping that he will help him every time the boat goes out. sea. That belief is expressed by the verse reminding each other that:

The east wind goes to the sea to sink the boat

Reciting the Bodhisattva's name, the waves dissipate immediately

With the specificity of production, labor is to stick to the sea to make a living, build and create a life. To protect themselves, in addition to caution and experience, the people of the sea also entrust their faith with gods with supernatural powers, that belief has gradually formed cultural beliefs. Activities The cultural and religious activities of the inhabitants of the coastal area of Thanh Hoa are not merely the wish and wish for a peaceful, prosperous and happy life, but it is also a landmark of cultural and moral life. , cultural traditions - history. At the same time, it also reflects the balance in cultural life and material life of each individual, each community.

3. MARINE CULTURE - A RESOURCE OF A TOURISM ECONOMY

Cultural and religious activities of coastal residents are expressed in many different forms, of which the most specific and obvious form of expression is through festivals and sacrifices. Currently, in the coastal areas of Thanh Hoa, there are many festivals and sacrifices, typical of which are: Ca Ong Festival and the Cau Ngu festival in Diem Pho (Ngu Loc commune, Hau Loc district). The festival of Doc Cuoc temple and the festival of "banh Chung – banh Day" day are held on the 12th day of the 5th lunar month, to commemorate the merits of the god Doc Cuoc in Truong Son ward; Ba Trieu Temple Festival, the ancestors of cattle and silk tattooing, is held on the 9th day of the 2nd lunar month to commemorate the person who made a career as a fishing tool in Quang Cu ward, Sam Son city. Quang Trung Temple Festival to commemorate the merits of the hero Quang Trung cloth shirt, Do Xuyen village festival and traditional swimming festival in Hai Thanh ward, Nghi Son town... These marine cultural resources are strengths and are a resource to develop spiritual-cultural tourism in addition to the existing marine ecotourism.

4. CONCLUSION

Located in the space of the marine cultural institution of the North Central Coast, Thanh Hoa marine cultural area with the presence of various types of historical-cultural relics has created a system of cultural values. material and intangible chemistry are extremely rich. This marine religious and cultural system not only enriches the cultural and spiritual life of residents but also serves as a resource and an important driving force in the development, attraction, and attraction of tourists.

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